

# Inspection of an outstanding school: St Richard Reynolds Catholic High School

Clifden Road, Twickenham, London TW1 4LT

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Inspection dates:

6 and 7 February 2024

## **Outcome**

St Richard Reynolds Catholic High School continues to be an outstanding school.

The principal of this school is Richard Burke. The school is part of Ascension Catholic Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Richard Burke, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Michael Metcalf.

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

This is an exceptional school where pupils flourish. The school has the highest expectations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils in the school, including in the popular sixth form, rise to these expectations at every opportunity.

Pupils take great pride in their school, and their behaviour is impeccable. They work hard in lessons and thrive when challenged.

Pupils achieve very well in public examinations. They are also supported to develop more widely. They feel happy and safe. The ethos of the school ensures that pupils are taught to be responsible and caring citizens and to 'become the person that God created us to be.' The 'college parliament' represents all year groups. Pupils say they are listened to. For example, after pupils were asked for their views about the school's personal development programme, leaders made appropriate changes.

The school's curriculum is broad and ambitious. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. These pupils also access the exceptional range of clubs, trips and activities that the school organises to enrich the curriculum. For example, nearly all pupils in Year 9 visited Rome last year.

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

The school curriculum builds pupils' knowledge and skills over time. Leaders have thought carefully about the key knowledge they want pupils to learn and the order in which they should learn it. In English, for example, teachers introduce the theme of power in Year 7

through the study of past and present powerful voices. In Year 8, pupils learn about the abuse of power in the novel 'Animal Farm'. This means that by Years 10 and 11, pupils are confident when exploring more challenging Shakespearean texts.

Teachers are experts in the subjects they teach. They present new knowledge clearly and help pupils build links between different topics. This ensures that pupils become independent and resilient learners. As a result, pupils have the confidence to attempt work that significantly challenges them. For example, in mathematics, teachers introduce some A-level content in Year 11. In history, learning is made more relevant by linking the study of nineteenth-century crime to modern events. Pupils have the opportunity to visit Hampton Court and Belgium to deepen their historical understanding.

Teachers routinely check what pupils know before moving on to new work. They use assessment well to measure the impact of their teaching and address any gaps in learning. Teachers and support staff have the knowledge and skills needed to help pupils with SEND to excel. The teaching in the sixth form is supportive and challenging. Teachers ask probing and targeted questions. This results in students having a secure understanding of their learning. They demonstrate exceptional engagement in their studies.

The school places great emphasis on reading. Pupils read widely from a diverse range of authors and texts. Leaders identify pupils who need support with reading and put in place expert help to enable them to catch up. The popular library hosts a range of exciting visits from authors and poets to promote the importance of reading for pleasure.

The school has a sharp focus on raising attendance rates. Leaders work tenaciously with families and other agencies to develop pupils' positive habits of regular attendance. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptional.

The school has a rich and varied programme for personal development. Pupils learn about how to look after their physical and mental health. They are taught to respect difference in the world. Pupils value learning about the importance of equality and diversity. The school has embedded a programme of careers education from Year 7 to Year 13. This includes opportunities for work experience and regular visits to and from universities. Pupils listen to a wide range of speakers from different backgrounds and industries.

The school offers a vast range of enriching activities beyond the classroom, particularly in music and physical education. These include both traditional and less well-known sports and many choirs, instrumental lessons and performance opportunities. For example, the piano scholar programme enables talented pupils to excel.

Staff are proud to work here and love the strong 'family ethos'. They appreciate the efforts of leaders to reduce their workload and promote their well-being. Governors and trustees support leaders while holding them to account for the quality of education at the school. They take their safeguarding duties seriously. Parents and carers are very positive about the school and the exceptional education it provides.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 predecessor school to be outstanding in May 2019.

## 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	149297
<b>Local authority</b>	Richmond Upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	10290392
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy
<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>	1,113
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	249
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Michael Metcalf
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Richard Burke
<b>Principal</b>	Richard Burke Sorrel Simmons (head of school)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.strichardreynolds.org.uk">http://www.strichardreynolds.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Richard Reynolds Catholic High School converted to become an academy school in December 2022. When its predecessor school, also called St Richard Reynolds Catholic High School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is part of the Ascension Catholic Academy Trust. There are five other schools in the trust. The head of school takes responsibility for this school when the principal is carrying out his CEO responsibilities.
- The school works in partnership with St Richard Reynolds Catholic Primary School. Staff sometimes work across both schools.
- The school uses three registered and one unregistered alternative provision currently.

- The school has a Catholic ethos and is within the Diocese of Westminster. The last section 48 inspection took place in December 2022.

## **Information about this inspection**

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, the chief executive officer of the trust and other members of the school leadership team. Inspectors met with the chair and vice-chair of the trust board, as well as representatives of the local governing body, including the chair.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils and staff members and reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online pupil and staff surveys. They also considered the views of parents who made responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

## **Inspection team**

Susan Maguire, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nigel Clemens

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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