

Inspection of a good school: Strathmore School

Station Road, Twickenham TW1 4DQ

Inspection dates:

31 January and 1 February 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Sarah Hurtado. This school is part of The Auriga 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, Ivan Pryce, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Harry James.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to come to school and thrive on their strong working relationships with staff. The highest expectations are set for all pupils to achieve their individual goals. Pupils and their families highly value being part of the school. They appreciate the caring community. Across the school, pupils of all ages show high levels of respect for each other. This creates a warm atmosphere where pupils can openly display their feelings. Pupils know to approach a trusted adult if they have any worries.

Pupils behave very well. This is because of the set routines in place and the skilful support they receive from staff. If there are any concerns, then these are followed up immediately by staff. This helps pupils stay safe at school.

Families appreciate the great support they receive from the school. They value information workshops on topics such as transition to adulthood, coffee mornings and family bike loans. Pupils benefit socially from family events, such as international evening and family BBQ, where everyone comes together. Leaders ensure that the school is a nurturing community. They think carefully about pupils' individual needs so that they can be fully ready for the next stages in their education.

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

The school has an ambitious, bespoke curriculum that supports pupils to achieve well. Leaders, at all levels, plan for pupils to learn through a broad range of subjects. The

content and order of the curriculum help pupils to develop their communication, literacy, and mathematical skills very well. This leads to pupils becoming more independent in their learning. The curriculum is personalised so that everyone can work towards achieving their targets on their education health and care (EHC) plans. For example, in the early years some children learn about capacity using sand, water and containers. This learning is built on with older pupils following recipes to make cakes for the café and stocktaking in the tuck shop. Teachers regularly check and assess pupils' learning and amend their personal targets. They address any gaps in learning and help pupils by adapting the curriculum further.

Teachers receive high-quality training to know how to be successful in their role. They know and understand their pupils' educational needs very well. There is a systematic approach to behaviour and communication across all sites. Staff are skilful at working as a team. They apply their training to support pupils to regulate their emotions. There is little disruption to lessons due to pupils' exceptional behaviour. The school has very effective systems to monitor pupils' attendance. This helps to make sure pupils attend school regularly.

Staff motivate pupils with a wide use of resources and experiences. This helps pupils to focus and enables them to succeed. For instance, pupils develop their physical skills through learning to ride a bicycle, swimming and for some, horse riding.

Communication, language and reading are priorities for all pupils. From the start of early years through to the sixth form there is a well-thought-out programme. Every opportunity is used for pupils to develop their communication skills. For example, during lunchtime, staff encourage pupils to communicate their thoughts and to make choices. This includes through the skilful use of resources. Pupils show their love of books by following stories and looking through books independently. Pupils' early reading is developed effectively through a consistently delivered phonics programme. Pupils have books that match the sounds they are learning. Their books and recall activities in lessons support pupils to develop some fluency in early reading.

The school's vision to prepare every learner to become an active contributor to their community is evident across the curriculum. Leaders ensure that there is a strong integration between school communities. The school offers a rich programme to develop pupils' characters. Volunteer Inclusion Partners from collocated mainstream schools lead in this work. The school has excellent links with the local community. Pupils go into their local community to support their understanding of what they learn in school. Pupils' learning includes staying safe on and offline, safe relationships and how to manage public and private places. As part of learning about different lives and religions, pupils visit different places of worship. Pupils take part in different sporting competitions, including swimming galas. They take pride in their success. The school's '10 Promises' assures pupils of experiences in a wide range of environments. All pupils between 14 and 19 have experience of work. They receive advice and support about opportunities when leaving school.

Staff feel well supported by leaders and governors who care about their well-being. This contributes to a community where pupils learn and flourish.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 February 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 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

Unique reference number	143318
Local authority	Richmond upon Thames
Inspection number	10296745
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	117
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	18
Appropriate authority	The Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Harry James
Headteacher	Sarah Hurtado
Website	www.strathmore.richmond.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher was appointed in 2022.
- All pupils have EHC plans. The school caters for pupils with severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties, and autism. All pupils have associated speech, language and communication needs.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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 the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication, language, literacy and reading, practical numeracy and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection.
- ☒ Inspectors spoke with the chief executive officer, headteacher and other senior leaders. They also spoke with the chair of trustees and the chair of the governing body. In addition, they spoke with a school improvement partner. Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including looking at records of pupils' behaviour.
- ☒ 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 considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils, respectively. They also spoke with some parents.

Inspection team

Janice Howkins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Emma Watford

Ofsted Inspector

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