

Inspection of a good school: Rooks Heath School

Eastcote Lane, South Harrow, Harrow HA2 9AH

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

Outcome

Rooks Heath School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Miriam Manderson. This school is part of the Tithe 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, Dr John Reavley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Pauline Ann Hughes.

What is it like to attend this school?

Rooks Heath School is a diverse and vibrant community. It is a welcoming, inclusive school, where pupils are safe and happy. Pupils from different backgrounds and cultures and with a range of needs learn together here successfully. Frequently, pupils join at different times during the year and they are welcomed. The school ethos, 'strive to be your best' is at the heart of the school.

Pupils, including sixth-form students, are clear that behaviour has improved. They enjoy a culture of clear expectations. Pupils are confident they have someone to speak to if they need help. If incidents of bullying occur, the school takes action to ensure that pupils get the help they need.

The school has designed a curriculum which is ambitious, including for the sixth form. Most pupils respond well to this ambition and remain focused during learning.

The school provides a range of extra-curricular activities, including music and sports clubs. Some pupils spoke highly of their involvement in these activities, including the school production. Students in the sixth form often lead events. For example, pupils organised a disco for younger pupils and the 'Pride Club' delivered assemblies. Parents and carers speak positively about the range of enrichment activities on offer at the school.

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

The curriculum is broad and balanced. For example, in design and technology pupils complete a range of creative and practical activities, including textiles, graphics and electronics. The school has thought very carefully about the content of its curriculum. The

knowledge pupils need to learn has been clearly sequenced from Years 7 to Year 13. Staff make sure that pupils' learning builds on what they have learned before.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They usually check how effectively pupils are learning and tackle any misconceptions. Regular assessments help teachers to check pupils' understanding and recall of information.

The school is ambitious for all pupils. Pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are accurately identified. Leaders know each pupil well, and much of the information they give to teachers about pupils is helpful to support learning. On occasions, teaching does not use well-considered activities that help pupils to remember the most important content. When this happens, pupils do not secure important subject knowledge as well as they could.

Pupils and staff understand the behaviour policy. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school during social times. When poor behaviour does occur, staff take effective action. Routines are embedded in the school. Pupils are polite and respectful to adults.

Pupils' attendance is a priority and has improved. When attendance falls below what is expected, the school works effectively to secure improvements. School staff work alongside the local authority to support families, where required.

The school has prioritised literacy across the curriculum. Staff provide support for pupils to improve their writing and to learn new vocabulary. During form time, adults read carefully chosen short stories to pupils. Some pupils arrive at the school already several years behind in their reading. The current programme aimed at helping these pupils to catch up lacks precision. This limits the effectiveness of support and practise that pupils need to read fluently.

Pupils' personal development is considered carefully by the school. This teaches pupils about how to make good life choices. Pupils are taught about different faiths and relationships and how to keep themselves safe, especially online. There are opportunities for student leadership, for example sixth-form students elected to the general assembly.

Pupils benefit from a well-planned, wide-ranging careers programme. They have opportunities to engage with employers and training providers. Sixth-form students learn about university as well as other options. This helps pupils to have high aspirations and make informed decisions about their future. The school prepares pupils well for their ambitious next steps.

Leaders have an accurate evaluation of the school's work and well-thought-out plans for further improvements. Staff are proud to work here. They enjoy working in an environment where their well-being is a priority. Governors know the school well. They provide appropriate support and challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, the curriculum is not successfully adapted or developed to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. This means that sometimes these pupils do not develop their knowledge and skills securely. The school should ensure that all staff develop expertise and confidence to support pupils with SEND to secure learning well.
- On occasions, the school's reading programme is not implemented precisely to support pupils who struggle with their reading. This means that some weaker readers do not make the rapid improvement they require. The school should strengthen the rigour of its reading programme and ensure that training is provided to teach the weakest readers to read fluently.

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 on 29–30 January and 19 March 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

Unique reference number	137198
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	10313895
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1177
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	136
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Pauline Ann Hughes
Headteacher	Miriam Manderson
Website	www.rooksheath.harrow.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 January and 19 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Tithe Academy Trust.
- Leaders make use of one registered alternative provider.
- 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.

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 meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing board and board of trustees, members of the school leadership team and members of staff, as well as a range of pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, classics, mathematics, design and technology. 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 gathered the views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff through both discussions and responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

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His Majesty's Inspector

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