

# Inspection of Rutlish School

Watery Lane, Merton Park, London SW20 9AD

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Inspection dates:	24 and 25 September 2024
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

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

Leaders have created a welcoming and aspirational culture. The focus on both academic rigour and personal development enables pupils to excel. The school has extremely high expectations for pupils. This ensures all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive an exceptional education and achieve very highly.

Behaviour in the school is exemplary. Pupils demonstrate great enthusiasm towards their education. They are friendly, polite and kind. Pupils are proud of their school community. They are very well supported through strong working relationships with staff. This ensures pupils are safe in school.

The development of pupils' character is a focus throughout the school. There are a wide range of roles in the school for pupils to develop their leadership skills. These include the school council, 'learning leads' and charity ambassadors. Pupils have contributed to the school community in many ways through these roles, including raising money for charity, building a well-being garden and leading a Year 7 team building day.

Pupils take part in many clubs that develop their interests and talents. Alongside a range of sporting and creative clubs, many pupils also take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award and the Combined Cadet Force.

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

The schools' curricular thinking is highly developed and ambitious. Subject leaders have designed the curriculum to build pupils' knowledge progressively over time. This helps pupils to learn and remember new concepts quickly. Leaders' curricular thinking embeds subject-specific vocabulary, which pupils routinely use confidently. The school identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEND highly effectively. Staff receive extensive training and use a range of strategies to ensure pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and present information clearly. They check for pupils' understanding systematically and address any misconceptions quickly. This supports pupils to produce work of extremely high quality. The school has developed precise systems to ensure any pupil who is falling behind in a subject is identified quickly and provided with appropriate support. Pupils routinely perform extremely well in national examinations, including in the sixth form. Students in the sixth form achieve exceptionally well. The strategies that the school has put in place mean students studying vocational qualifications in the sixth form are now producing work of a similar exemplary standard to students studying A level qualifications.

The school identify pupils who struggle with reading and handwriting when they join the school. Staff identify pupils' individual needs and put in place bespoke support quickly. This ensures pupils make improvements to their reading fluency and confidence. Staff have received effective training to ensure they make texts accessible to all pupils during lessons.

Pupils are highly motivated and resilient. They consistently demonstrate excellent attitudes to their learning. The attendance of pupils in school, including pupils with SEND, is high. Leaders work effectively with parents and carers to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

The school's personal development curriculum has been carefully planned to ensure that pupils' knowledge and understanding deepens and builds over time. Teachers support pupils to build an extensive understanding of relationships and how to keep themselves safe in an age-appropriate manner.

Pupils attend a wide range of trips and welcome external speakers to the school. Opportunities include subject-specific visits abroad and trips to historical and cultural landmarks. These offer pupils a variety of experiences and broadens their cultural understanding. Students in the sixth form all take part in weekly enrichment activities that are designed to give them valuable skills to ensure they are ready for the next stage of their education.

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

The school has developed a very strong professional development programme for staff. It checks the quality of teaching and implementation of the curriculum in detail. This leads to sustained and continuous improvement in the quality of education. Governors understand the strengths and priorities of the school. They have a clear strategic vision and provide appropriate challenge and support to leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **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>	102679
<b>Local authority</b>	Merton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10366422
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1489
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	300
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Peter Norrie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Laura Howarth
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.rutlish.merton.sch.uk">www.rutlish.merton.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> April 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has a specialist centre for pupils with speech, language and communication needs. It caters for up to 10 pupils.
- The school use two unregistered alternative providers.
- 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

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and

management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher members of the senior leadership team and a range of staff. They also met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: Art, history, languages, mathematics and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, discussed with pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. The curriculum in other subjects was also considered.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils and staff, including through responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

## Inspection team

Simon Conway, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Russell Bennett	His Majesty's Inspector
Rebecca Iles-Smith	His Majesty's Inspector
Sam Johnson	His Majesty's Inspector
Christian Hicks	His Majesty's Inspector

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