

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: The Richmond upon Thames School

Egerton Road, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW2 7SL

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 March 2025

Outcome

The Richmond upon Thames School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this school and feel safe. They appreciate that staff value their effort and offer praise and rewards. In addition to highlighting pupils who excel in particular subjects, staff also celebrate pupils who exhibit the school values, such as 'kindness' and 'participation'. Pupils recognise and appreciate that they are part of a diverse community. They show consideration towards each other. In lessons, pupils work hard and do not usually disrupt learning because they know well the school's high standards for their behaviour and conduct. When needed, staff remind pupils of the school's standards to sustain positive attitudes towards learning. Staff deal with any incidents of bullying promptly and provide effective support to those involved. Consequently, there is a harmonious atmosphere around the school.

Leaders have a sharp focus on ensuring that pupils experience success in their education. The school has high expectations for pupils' academic work and pupils mostly achieve well. The school has established a noteworthy programme of enrichment and personal development. Pupils participate in activities which extend their interests and talents. These include first aid, creative writing, netball, badminton, musical theatre and playing in a band. Pupils recognise that the opportunities provided prepare them with skills beyond the curriculum.

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

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, work well together to continually improve the school. They have established a rich curriculum offer that gives pupils access to the full range of subjects. This has included the recent expansion of modern foreign

languages to include Spanish. As a result, the proportion of pupils being entered for the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects has increased to be in line with national averages.

There is significant support in place to promote pupils' reading skills. The school has identified that this is an area which will lead to pupils accessing the curriculum with more success. It has put in place a range of extra support and resources to ensure that the weakest readers catch up quickly. As a result, many weaker readers make significant progress towards reading with fluency.

Teachers are happy to work here. They agree that their workload is manageable and that their wellbeing is looked after by the school. They use their strong subject knowledge to build on pupils' understanding of the topics they are learning. Typically, lessons start with a refresh of what has been taught previously and this helps pupils to be prepared for the activities they are expected to complete. The school uses its training time to extend teachers' skills effectively. This has led to stronger practise around checking what pupils know and remember before moving on to new learning. For example, pupils learn about 'slumping' in geography so that they can write with detail when explaining erosion.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are a priority for the school. It works well with external professionals and parents and carers to determine the best way to support these pupils. As a result, the attendance of pupils with SEND is high and they feel a welcome part of the school community. In lessons, pupils with SEND access the same curriculum opportunities as their peers. Nevertheless, sometimes, the way in which classroom activities are presented to pupils with SEND does not help them to fully access the expected learning. Over time, these pupils do not achieve as well as their peers.

The school has a successful approach to teaching pupils about careers. From Year 7, pupils explore options and ideas for further education and the world of work. Mentoring sessions, a range of in-school webinars, work experience and interview practise skills all form parts of the comprehensive offer in place. As a result, pupils are confident of the choices available and the expectations of the destinations they aspire to attend. The school maintains working partnerships with a range of colleges and employers to ensure that pupils can pursue their career interests with success.

The school's personal, social and health education programme provides pupils with information about relationships and ways to maintain both physical and mental health. Pupils are encouraged to explore and try new activities and ideas through the school's extensive enrichment programme.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, strategies to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum successfully are inconsistent in their application. This means that pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could. The school should strengthen the support it offers to these pupils, ensuring that this support is of consistently high quality.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in January 2020.

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	143022
Local authority	Richmond Upon Thames
Inspection number	10377510
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	741
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jason Hughes
Headteacher	Kelly Dooley
Website	www.richmonduponthameschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Richmond upon Thames School Trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision and two unregistered alternative provisions.
- 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 evaluation 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 met with the headteacher, trustees and members of the school leadership team.
- An inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- 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 visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through surveys.

Inspection team

Karim Ismail, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Duncan Kamyra

Ofsted Inspector

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