

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Ricards Lodge High School

Lake Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 7HB

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Inspection dates:

13 and 14 September 2023

## **Outcome**

Ricards Lodge High School continues to be an outstanding school.

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

The school provides all pupils with an exceptional education. There are extremely high expectations of pupils, which ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve very highly.

Pupils are hard-working and highly motivated to learn. They are polite, kind and proud of their school. Working relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive. Staff know their pupils very well, which ensures that pupils are safe and happy in school.

Behaviour in the school is exemplary, including around the school site. Pupils' attitudes towards learning in the classroom are excellent. Leaders make sure that this is a calm and welcoming place. Pupils have the opportunity to become peer mentors, who are trained to support younger pupils in the school.

All pupils have access to a wide range of additional opportunities in the school. These include a range of sports and music clubs, philosophy club and writing for the school paper, 'The Ricardian'. Students in the sixth form all take part in weekly enrichment to help prepare them for when they leave the school. These opportunities include volunteering, cooking on a budget and 'art for relaxation'.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that is highly ambitious. This includes high-quality support and aspirations for pupils with SEND. The curriculum in all subjects develops progressively, which allows pupils to build on their prior knowledge over time. For example, in art, Year 7 pupils learn the basics of line drawing and tone. By Year 9, they create their own self-portraits by using texture and tone carefully.

Teachers have very strong subject knowledge. They present information clearly and make adaptations to ensure that pupils with SEND access the curriculum effectively. Teachers

use a range of methods to check pupils' understanding and address any misconceptions swiftly.

Pupils consistently produce work of an extremely high standard. They are highly articulate when discussing what they have learned. Pupils understand and use key subject vocabulary confidently and demonstrate a deep understanding of content they have learned. Staff identify and meets the needs of all pupils, including those pupils with SEND, exceptionally well. This helps all pupils to develop their knowledge and skills so that they are ready for future learning.

The school swiftly identifies pupils who may struggle with reading. Staff identify pupils' individual needs and put in place bespoke support quickly. This ensures that pupils make rapid improvements in their reading fluency and confidence. All pupils read widely and often in school and at home. Staff check that pupils read rich texts widely and regularly. The school has put in place a range of events, competitions and rewards to help pupils develop a love for reading.

Leaders have developed a well-planned personal development programme. This helps pupils to develop an understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. Staff develop pupils' understanding of important topics in an age-appropriate manner, such as online safety and healthy relationships. Staff assess and address any gaps in pupils' understanding of these topics with great expertise. They make sure that pupils concentrate during lessons so that learning time is not wasted.

The school provides a range of outings for pupils to broaden their wider development. These include visits to the theatre and to the Houses of Parliament. There is also a range of leadership roles that pupils and students in the sixth form can access, for example as diversity, charity or environment ambassadors. Students in the sixth form have also received training to support the mental health of their peers.

Leaders make sure that all pupils access high-quality careers advice and guidance. The school welcomes a range of external speakers, including from universities, and a variety of employers. A variety of talks and workshops ensures that pupils are well informed about their future options. Students in the sixth form receive high-quality guidance to support their future education and employment. Leaders make sure that pupils' attendance is high. They have robust procedures in place to enable pupils to attend regularly.

Leaders look after the health and welfare of all its staff. They are conscious of the pressures of workload and explore strategies to minimise this where possible. Staff felt well supported, valued and highly motivated.

## **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 school to be outstanding in November 2017.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>                    | 102673   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                            | Merton   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                          | 10289852   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                             | Secondary comprehensive  |
| <b>School category</b>                            | Community school   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                        | 11 to 19   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                           | Girls  |
| <b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>   | Girls  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>        | 1,361  |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b> | 236  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                      | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>                    | Chris Roberts  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                                | Kate Page  |
| <b>Website</b>                                    | <a href="http://www.ricardslodge.merton.sch.uk">www.ricardslodge.merton.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>               | 7 and 8 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                   |

## Information about this school

- The school uses one alternative provider.
- The school has a specialist centre for pupils to support speech and language. It caters for up to 10 pupils.
- 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 had 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, members of the senior leadership team and a range of staff members. They also met with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in art, mathematics, geography and science. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and with pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. The curriculum in other subjects was also considered.
- 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 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

Bec Allott

Ofsted Inspector

Dr Ogugua Okolo-Angus

Ofsted Inspector

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