

Inspection of a good school: Ribston Hall High School

Stroud Road, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL1 5LE

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 May 2022

Outcome

Ribston Hall High School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this school. They feel well cared for and describe Ribston Hall High School as being like a family. Many parents who responded to Ofsted Parent View say their child is happy and thriving at the school. A minority of parents feel there could be an improvement in the communication between school and home.

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This includes pupils' academic outcomes, as well as the development of their character. The school has the values of compassion and tolerance as themes running through the curriculum. Pupils talk about these as being important to them.

Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning in lessons. Their behaviour around the school site is calm and respectful. Pupils say that bullying is rare. They are confident that leaders act quickly to resolve any incidents that do occur. Pupils say they feel safe and have a trusted adult they can go to.

There are a range of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils. These include a variety of sports, art and music. Pupils are excited about the return of theatrical performances. Many are attending auditions for the next school production.

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

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. For example, pupils benefit from learning two modern foreign languages at key stage 3. Sixth-form students have a wide variety of courses to choose from.

In most subjects, leaders plan the key knowledge that pupils should learn well. There has been careful thought about the order in which pupils learn this content. However, in some subjects, the sequencing of knowledge is less effective. This means that pupils do not build their knowledge successfully over time. Overall, teachers use assessment effectively to check pupils' understanding. Most pupils are confident to use feedback to develop their

knowledge further. There are a range of effective teaching strategies used to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Where the use of assessment during teaching is less effective, teachers do not check carefully enough what pupils know and remember.

Leaders prioritise reading. Most pupils enjoy reading at school and at home. Pupils have regular opportunities to read for pleasure. Sixth-form students use a range of academic reading materials to support their learning across the curriculum.

Leaders accurately identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities early in their learning journey. This ensures the needs of pupils are met across the curriculum. Pupils who were spoken to feel well supported with their learning and make progress through the curriculum in line with their peers.

Low-level disruption in lessons is rare. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons. Pupils show a love of learning and are keen to offer their ideas in class discussions.

There is a rich personal development curriculum in place from Year 7 to Year 13. This has been adapted to respond to pupils' needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Pupils learn how to stay safe when online. Pupils also learn how to manage conflict and understand their emotions. Leaders invite parents to participate in workshops on key themes.

Staff encourage pupils to be individuals. The school celebrates the achievements of women throughout history and across the world. This leads to pupils being ambitious about what they can achieve. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. The school is inclusive, and pupils say they have a voice and are listened to. This includes boys spoken to in the sixth form. They say they feel part of the Ribston community.

Pupils benefit from a wide and varied careers programme. They discuss their skills and interests with a careers adviser. Staff organise visitors to share examples of different careers. Students in the sixth form visit a convention to explore future academic and career opportunities. The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Leaders, including governors, understand their responsibility to support staff's workload. Most teachers say they feel supported by leaders and can talk to leaders about any concerns.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have clear processes to manage safe recruitment. All staff receive appropriate and regular safeguarding training. This enables them to identify any pupils who may be at risk. Leaders then secure any necessary help quickly.

The school raises awareness among pupils of safeguarding risks. Leaders react quickly to any local concerns and share advice with pupils.

There is an appropriate curriculum, and school-wide policies and practices, in place to educate pupils about sexual harassment, online sexual abuse and sexual violence.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A minority of parents and pupils feel that staff do not always communicate key messages or respond to enquiries in a clear and timely way. This can lead to some parents and pupils not having the information they need to support the school effectively. Leaders should ensure that all parents and pupils receive specific and timely communication.
- In some subjects, teaching does not check pupils' understanding carefully enough. As a result, some pupils are not able to build their knowledge successfully over time. Leaders should ensure that the use of assessment during teaching is consistently effective across all subjects.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2012.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	136767
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10206981
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	862
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	145
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lynda Frall and Dr Fergus O'Sullivan (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Sarah Colombini
Website	www.ribstonhall.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 December 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders and a group of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at

curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke with leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record of adults working in the school. The lead inspector met with the deputy designated safeguarding lead to consider how well the school identifies pupils who are at risk and engages with external services. Inspectors also spoke with a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered 187 responses to the online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including 130 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered 56 responses to the staff survey and 314 responses to the survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Kelly Olive, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Teresa Hill

Ofsted Inspector

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