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Richmond School

Darlington Road, Richmond, North Yorkshire DL10 7BQ

Inspection dates	17–18 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
Effectiveness of leadership and management	**Good**
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	**Good**
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	**Good**
Outcomes for pupils	**Good**
16 to 19 study programmes	**Good**
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors know their school well. Through this knowledge, they have an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they target resources, including additional funding, appropriately.

- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. Through their passion and commitment, they enthuse their pupils and, because of this, pupils make at least good progress. However, there is room to challenge further the most able pupils.

- Leaders and managers ensure that opportunities for professional development continue to improve the quality of teaching in the school. Teachers value the opportunities afforded to them and work together to share good practice.

- Through a robust and rigorous performance management system, there is accountability at all levels for the progress pupils make. Leaders challenge teachers to ensure that pupils work hard and achieve well.

- Pupils are considerate, polite, courteous and confident. They are proud of their school and value the opportunities they are given.

- Leaders ensure that a comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic education is in place. However, not all teachers use form time well to support this.

- Leaders and governors have created an open culture in the school around safeguarding. Staff training is regular and up to date with important safeguarding information. All staff understand how to keep pupils safe.

- Pupils who are vulnerable or experiencing difficulties receive first-class support. Through highly effective on-site provision, staff look after and help pupils so that they do not fall behind with their progress.

- Leaders of attendance have a rigorous approach to tackling persistent absence. Through this, the number of pupils who are persistently absent is decreasing. However, some strategies have not been evaluated so their impact on attendance is unclear.

- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is broad, balanced and challenging for key stage 4 and 5 pupils. This approach is not as rigorous at key stage 3 and leaders have recently begun to address this.

- Sixth-form students are very mature and articulate. Students receive effective support and make strong progress in both academic and vocational qualifications.

- Leaders ensure that all sixth-form students have high-quality careers advice and work experience to support their future aspirations.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - taking a more rigorous approach to ensuring that the impact of new strategies is reviewed, especially those around the attendance of groups of pupils and sixth-form students
  - reviewing the use of form time to ensure that all opportunities for learning are maximised
  - applying the same rigour to the key stage 3 curriculum as in key stages 4 and 5 to enable all pupils to make good progress.

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - further developing the provision for the most able pupils so that they are challenged to excel and are moved on quickly in their learning to enable them to make even better progress
  - ensuring a consistent approach across the curriculum to supporting pupils with literacy errors, such as spelling
  - ensuring a consistent approach to adapting learning for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they can access work in all areas of the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good

- The strong leadership of the headteacher and school leaders has created a culture in which everyone can succeed. Through their commitment to the school and their expertise and knowledge of the school, pupils and staff alike are part of a positive and ambitious ethos.

- Through a well-rounded, well-thought-out and comprehensive approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, leaders have an accurate, evidence-based picture of the strengths and areas to improve within teaching. For example, they have developed and implemented strategies to support disadvantaged pupils to make better progress in lessons.

- Teachers value highly the opportunities for their own professional development. Leaders ensure that opportunities support the further development of the school and have an impact on improving pupils' progress and outcomes. Recently, governors created four associate leadership roles to develop leadership skills and target areas such as improving progress for disadvantaged pupils. This has led to the development of strategies to tackle underperformance, which are beginning to have an impact.

- Leaders model high expectations and high standards. Through a robust and rigorous performance management system, there are high levels of accountability throughout the school. This helps middle leaders to develop their leadership skills in holding teachers to account.

- Leaders review the curriculum and make changes to ensure that pupils of all abilities have the opportunity to succeed in academic subjects; for example, all pupils now have the opportunity to study separate sciences at GCSE. This has led to more challenge and a more positive attitude to learning in science.

- Leaders ensure that through 'Learning for Life' lessons, pupils are well educated in personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils value these lessons because they learn about topical issues such as extremism, the dangers of drugs, online safety and healthy relationships. This helps them to stay safe.

- External reviews commissioned by leaders have supported the school to make improvements. Leaders have adopted recommendations from a recent review of key stage 3 English. The impact of these strategies is clear and seen in the high-quality work, consistent approach to feedback and the strong progress pupils make in this subject.

- Leaders think carefully about the spending of additional funding for pupil premium pupils, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who need to catch up when they arrive in Year 7. Through this, pupils achieve well. However, leaders do not evaluate all strategies thoroughly so they cannot say where the impact has been the greatest.

Governance of the school

- Governors are knowledgeable, effective and rigorous in holding the headteacher and senior leaders to account. Their questioning is well thought out, challenging and leads to high-quality discussion and decisions that lead to improvements.

- Governors take advantage of opportunities for training and make use of their expertise, for example in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. They are knowledgeable about the progress pupils make in school.

- Governors hold leaders to account and provide high levels of challenge. Through this, strategies for improvement, such as the '10 steps to improving outcomes' for disadvantaged pupils, are well thought out and are having an impact on progress for this group of pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- Leaders and governors are stringent in their approach to safeguarding. Checks made on staff, volunteers and governors are robust and well recorded.

- Leaders ensure that they take swift action when safeguarding concerns arise. Regular training and updates ensure that all staff have a strong understanding of the importance of safeguarding and know the associated policies within the school.

- Leaders ensure that pupils' online safety is a priority and follow up all concerns rigorously to ensure that pupils are safe.

- Pupils are safe in school and pupils overwhelmingly say that they feel safe. They value the work of pastoral leaders, who listen to their concerns and take action when necessary.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good

- Teachers plan their lessons well and take account of pupil information to ensure that all pupils can make good progress. Time is used well to maximise the opportunities for learning.

- Teachers are very enthusiastic about their subjects. They are knowledgeable and pupils respect this knowledge. This leads to a vibrancy in the classroom and inspires pupils to learn. Consequently, they make good progress.

- Teachers use a variety of assessment strategies to identify pupils who are struggling. Teachers adapt their approaches to ensure that pupils understand the work and keep up with their peers.

- Teachers' effective use of questioning ensures that pupils think hard about their learning. Questions challenge pupils to reflect on their answers and deepen their understanding.

- Teachers have high expectations for all pupils. All pupils are keen to do well and to succeed in their learning. Pupils take pride in their learning and the work in their books.

- Although the most able pupils make good progress overall, in some subjects teachers do not challenge the most able to make the rapid progress that they are capable of.

- Expectations for basic skills, such as spelling, are not always as high as for subject-specific skills. Some teachers do not pick up spelling errors, which leads to pupils misspelling words over time.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare   Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- The school promotes respect, teamwork, creativity, resilience and independence. Through this, pupils are confident and self-assured learners.

- Supporting pupils' mental and physical health is a real strength of the school. Through the effective use of on-site provision, staff support pupils who are vulnerable, experiencing difficulties or struggling with their behaviour. This support helps these pupils to keep up with their studies and make good progress.

- Pupils are happy and confident. Pupils say that they are safe and feel safe in school. Pupils are secure in the knowledge that they can approach staff for help if needed.

- Bullying incidents are rare in the school. When pupils report bullying, teachers and pastoral leaders take appropriate action to deal with any concerns swiftly.

- Pupils' experience of form time is varied. Some teachers make good use of the time to promote the theme of the week, which centres on personal, social, health and economic education and British values. However, some teachers do not make effective use of this time and pupils do not reap the same benefits as their peers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves well around the school and at social times. At the end of lunchtime, pupils move swiftly to lessons and leave the dining area tidy and ready for the next set of pupils to have lunch.

- Pupils are polite, courteous and respect one another and their school. In lessons, disruption to learning is rare. When disruption does occur, teachers deal with it swiftly so that learning continues and the disruption does not affect the progress pupils make.

- Attendance for all pupils is close to the national average. Where attendance is slightly lower for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, leaders have strategies in place to improve their attendance. There is some evidence that this is an improving picture, especially for those who are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils   Good

- Over time, pupils make good progress from their starting points in both academic and vocational subjects. This is in line with or better than the progress made by other

pupils nationally with similar starting points.

- Progress information for current pupils indicates that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are on track to make good progress. Leaders have carefully targeted additional funding to ensure good progress for these two groups. Work in books and in lessons, particularly in English, shows strong progress for most pupils.

- Pupils eligible for support through the catch-up funding make excellent progress in catching up because leaders ensure that they spend the funds on appropriate strategies and staffing, to have the maximum impact on their progress.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities typically make good progress. This is because teachers are aware of their needs and most teachers adapt the learning to ensure that they can access the work. However, this is not consistent across all curriculum areas.

- Pupils who are the most able make good progress. However, this group of pupils, particularly those who are also disadvantaged, could make more rapid progress, especially at key stage 3. School leaders recognise this and are reviewing the key stage curriculum to improve the level of challenge.

- Pupils experience a comprehensive programme of appropriate careers guidance, which allows them to think carefully about their future choices. Through a variety of activities including visits and external speakers, pupils learn about post-16 choices, including different providers of post-16 education, apprenticeships and other employment pathways. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps.

- Pupils read widely and often. When selecting books, staff support pupils in choosing books that will challenge their reading ability and support them in making progress. Pupils say that they enjoy reading. Pupils who struggle with reading receive support and extra time for reading, which develops their skills and allows them to make progress.

16 to 19 study programmes   Good

- Leadership and management of the sixth-form provision are exemplary. Through thorough monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance, students receive targeted support and very effective teaching to enable them to make excellent progress over time in most subjects. Leaders are fully aware of the subjects where students have performed less well and are taking effective action to improve these areas.

- Teachers and students have excellent relationships in the sixth form, which leads to a positive environment for learning. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use this to motivate and inspire students. Students have a thirst for knowledge. Through this, expectations are high and teachers challenge and support students to make strong progress.

- Outcomes over time for both vocational and academic courses are strong, particularly for psychology, applied information and communication technology, French, computing and the BTEC National Diploma in health and social care.

- Rates of retention and completion are high and improving, with very few students

leaving their courses before the end. This is because leaders have discussions with each student individually to ensure that their choices are right for them and for their future aspirations.

- Behaviour in the sixth form is exemplary. Students are excellent role models for the younger pupils in the school.

- Leaders have ensured that an extensive programme of careers advice and personal, social, health and economic education is in place in the sixth form. Students say that they are well prepared for their future because they are aware of a number of pathways available to them. Almost all students progress to higher education, employment or training, with a significant number progressing to Russell Group universities.

- Students who enter the sixth form without a good pass in GCSE mathematics or English receive taught sessions to support them in gaining the grade. Success rates are higher than the national average in both English and mathematics and current students are making good progress towards securing a grade C or above.

- Attendance in the sixth form is an improving picture; however, some students are absent too often and could make better progress with attendance that is more regular.

School details

Unique reference number	121680
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10023856

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1457
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	268
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr James Robson
Headteacher	Mr Ian Robertson
Telephone number	01748 850 111
Website	www.richmondschool.net
Email address	admin@richmondschool.net
Date of previous inspection	28 January 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Richmond School is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the

national average.

- The proportion of pupils eligible for special educational needs support and those who have an education, health and care plan is slightly below the national average.
- The school has a very small number of pupils who are currently accessing part-time alternative provision at Hambleton and Richmondshire Pupil Referral Unit.
- A new governing body was formed in 2016, following an interim executive board and a shadow governing body.
- The school has a large sixth-form provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 parts of lessons across a range of subjects, in all year groups. Two short visits to different lessons were conducted with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in detail alongside school leaders. Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read, including some of the most able pupils.

- Meetings and discussions were held with pupils, middle leaders, senior leaders, teaching staff, a representative from the local authority, the headteacher and governors, including the chair of the governing body.

- Inspectors took account of 208 responses to the Ofsted online parent questionnaire, Parent View, including 137 free text responses and a number of emails and letters from parents. Inspectors considered responses to 180 pupil questionnaires and 85 staff questionnaires.

- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation including the school's website, the school's self-evaluation and development plans, records from external reviews, records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, the school's own information and data relating to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and minutes from governors' meetings and meetings with the local authority.

- Inspectors reviewed the single central record, safeguarding records and associated policies and procedures, including checks on the suitability of staff.

Inspection team

Debbie Redshaw, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Steve Rogers	Ofsted Inspector
Gordon Watts	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Cook	Ofsted Inspector
Jill Bowe	Ofsted Inspector
Gina White	Her Majesty's Inspector
Linda Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Diane Buckle	Ofsted Inspector

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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