

Rooks Heath College

Eastcote Lane, South Harrow, Harrow HA2 9AH

Inspection dates

29–30 January and 19 March 2019

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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders are ambitious, setting high expectations for achievement and behaviour. Pupils from all backgrounds are welcomed and treated equally well. Pupils' personal development and welfare are outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Attendance is above the national average. The previously very high levels of exclusion are falling.
- Teaching is good, leading to pupils achieving good outcomes in their work and examinations. A clear assessment policy recognises the needs of different pupils and requirements of different subjects. Most, but not all, teachers follow this policy.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, although, on occasion, classroom activities do not make the best use of pupils' time.
- The curriculum is broad and provides an offer for all pupils, including the most able and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Provision for modern foreign languages and classical languages is particularly strong. Limitations in the way the curriculum is organised have inhibited some pupils' progress, including in science, and in individual subjects at key stage 3.
- Leaders and governors have a good awareness of the challenges facing the school. However, their evaluation of the school's performance is too generous.
- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress; they receive good advice and support.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the monitoring of teaching has a greater focus on what pupils are learning. This includes how well lesson time is used to promote outstanding progress.
- Continue to review the key stage 3 curriculum, ensuring that all aspects of planning allow for depth of learning across the full range of curriculum subjects.
- Ensure that leaders' and governors' evaluation of the school's performance is based on an accurate analysis, and that school improvement planning has a sharper focus on how to bring about further improvements where they are needed most.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers have created a welcoming and inclusive school community. They successfully embrace the challenge of large numbers of pupils joining and leaving the school at different times in the year. They ensure that teaching is good and that pupils make good progress. Expectations are high.
- The curriculum is broad and diverse. Separate sciences and a range of arts subjects, including music and drama, are offered in key stage 4. Latin and Ancient Greek are taught from Year 7 to the sixth form, alongside French, German, Italian and Mandarin. Opportunities are provided for pupils to take examinations in community languages. Basic skills programmes in literacy and numeracy, and in personal development, are provided for pupils with specific learning needs.
- Past timetabling arrangements led to too few pupils taking two or more science GCSEs in 2018. Leaders have amended the key stage 4 science curriculum this year. However, the key stage 3 curriculum remains restrictive in some respects. A rotation operates for teaching art, design technology and food technology in Years 7 and 8 over alternate terms; and Year 9 is deemed a 'bridging' year, when pupils can drop some subjects that they might not go on to study in key stage 4. These arrangements mean that curriculum coverage in key stage 3 lacks depth across the full range of subjects. Plans are in hand for changes to the key stage 3 curriculum in 2019/20.
- An extensive range of enrichment experiences are on offer. Through these and through the curriculum, pupils develop a good understanding of the opportunities available in modern Britain.
- The school's self-evaluation correctly identifies where challenges lie but is too generous about the school's current performance. Additionally, the improvement plan is written from the premise that the school is outstanding, rather than good. Consequently, strategies for further improvement are not as sharp as they should be.
- Leadership of teaching is good. Staff are provided with coaching and support to improve their practice, as appropriate. However, leaders' regular monitoring of classroom practice focuses more on teaching activity than on the impact of teaching on learning. This is one reason why the school's self-evaluation is overgenerous.
- Pupil premium funding is spent on a range of activities, including intensive personal tuition, reading programmes and music tuition. This helps disadvantaged pupils make broadly average progress in their studies and outstanding progress in their personal development. The Year 7 catch-up funding is also used effectively.
- The school's annual report on pupils with SEND provides a clear, detailed summary of the support strategies used in the school. Pupils with SEND are provided with effective help in lessons, including one-to-one support.

Governance of the school

- The governing body includes representatives from the trust and from a range of professional backgrounds. They make systematic checks on safeguarding records and visit the school regularly.
- Governors ensure that statutory requirements are met for the publication of important information on the school's website. This includes the evaluation of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's context and the challenges it faces. However, informed by the school's self-evaluation, governors' view of the school's effectiveness is also overgenerous.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that all safeguarding procedures and arrangements are rigorous. They have created a culture of vigilance that keeps pupils and staff safe. All checks on staff are in line with statutory requirements; records of these are kept correctly. The designated lead and other safeguarding leaders keep accurate records, making timely referrals to the local authority and external agencies. The school acts appropriately to ensure that the destinations of pupils who leave the school are properly recorded and reported.
- Leaders have brokered strong partnerships within and across schools and organisations locally. This includes drawing on the expertise of a local police officer who is based on site.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have sound subject knowledge. In most instances, subject content is sequenced to ensure that knowledge is learned in a logical fashion. Languages are taught particularly well.
- Pupils are willing learners. Typically, pupils are attentive and compliant with teachers' instructions.
- The school has a clear, simple assessment policy. This includes recognition that feedback can be given in different ways, as appropriate to the subject being taught. Scrutiny of pupils' books, together with classroom observations, show that the school's policy is followed by most teachers.
- Literacy is promoted well through the curriculum. The role of teachers in the promotion of good spelling, punctuation and grammar is clearly set out in the assessment policy. The school uses a commercial scheme to help pupils catch up with reading skills. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said they found this motivating and that it helped them to improve. However, poor presentation of writing is not always challenged; this is particularly the case for boys.
- In key stage 4, the school teaches mathematics to some pupils in single-sex groups. The school's rationale is that, while all receive the same quality of teaching and the

same curriculum, this approach allows girls more opportunity for discussion without boys dominating. Inspectors' observations suggest that this approach is effective in improving progress for all in mathematics.

- Pupils' numeracy skills are promoted well across the curriculum, for example in science.
- Pupils' progress is sometimes slowed when time in lessons is not used to good effect. Examples include excessive copying-out, cutting and sticking, and colouring-in activities. Conversely, in other instances, pupils are moved through activities too swiftly so that they do not have time to complete work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is taught for an hour each week by specialist teachers. Pupils speak positively about how these lessons give them a sound understanding of issues such as e-safety and bullying. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well, including through religious education lessons.
- Vulnerable pupils benefit from bespoke packages of support to meet their individual needs. Well-targeted intervention keeps pupils safe and allows them to make very strong social and emotional progress.
- Leaders are firm about their expectations for good behaviour and take appropriate action when it is needed, in the pupils' interests. Leaders ensure that, when pupils are permanently excluded from school or require a temporary change, their next placements are secured. This includes in the alternative provision that has close ties with Rooks Heath College.
- A comprehensive programme of careers education, information and guidance is provided. This includes regular access to a dedicated careers adviser. Partnerships are strong, including providing pupils with appropriate access to other options for post-16 education.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Attendance has improved and is above average. Over the past year, rates of persistent absence have decreased slightly.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is orderly; they are polite, showing respect for staff and visitors.
- Typically, pupils comply with adults' expectations in the classroom and around the school. Although fixed-term and permanent exclusions have fallen, there are still occasions when sanctions are required for inappropriate conduct. The recently established 'support hub' is helping to keep these pupils in school. Leaders have yet to undertake a formal evaluation of the hub's effectiveness. Inspectors' observations suggest that more could be done to ensure that the work set for pupils in the hub is

more appropriate and challenging.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Due to the high number of pupils joining Rooks Heath without key stage 2 test results, published GCSE information accounts for only 80% of the 2018 Year 11 cohort. These pupils made average progress overall, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. Strong progress was made in modern foreign languages. Those pupils who took two or more science GCSEs also achieved well in these subjects. Pupils made average progress in English and mathematics.
- In 2018, pupils who joined the school without key stage 2 test results attained very well in mathematics. The standards they achieved were not nearly as high in English, science and humanities. Nevertheless, compared with in-school assessments made when these pupils joined the school, this all represents sound progress. This includes those for whom English is an additional language.
- Work seen in the books of current pupils and observation of their work in lessons confirmed that, overall, they are achieving good outcomes. This is the case for all groups of pupils, including those who have recently joined the school and those with SEND. Work seen in books confirmed that pupils are making good progress in the science subjects.
- Pupils are prepared well for the next stages in their lives. In 2018, nearly all the Year 11 cohort continued in education or training. Around one third stayed at Rooks Heath for their sixth-form education, with just under two thirds moving to another school or sixth-form college.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Sixth-form provision is good. Over 30 A-level subjects and a much smaller number of diploma qualifications are offered at Rooks Heath, within the umbrella of the local sixth-form network. This arrangement enables students to choose full and flexible programmes of study that meet their interests and needs.
- Leadership of the sixth form is strong. Students are well supported to make the transition to becoming independent learners. This is evident through the amount of self-study required, and the encouragement they are given to work hard.
- Students, including disadvantaged students, achieve well in the sixth form. This is due to well-planned learning, teachers' knowledge of each student, and tailored support. From below average starting points, A-level students made average progress in 2018. The proportion of students gaining pass grades was in line with the national average. The proportion of students gaining grades A* to B was below average.
- For students who speak English as an additional language, support and intervention continues in the sixth form. This helps them reach a high level of proficiency.
- Through the programme of careers information and guidance, students are helped to make informed choices about work experience and further or higher education. A programme of work experience is provided for all Year 12 students.
- Retention rates are above average. In 2018, nearly nine in every ten Year 13 students

went on to university. Others took up employment, apprenticeships or embarked on a gap year. The destinations of a very small number are not yet known.

School details

Unique reference number	137198
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	10059000

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
School category	Academy converter
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	1,087
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	120
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Pauline Hughes
Headteacher	John Reavley
Telephone number	0208 422 4675
Website	http://rooksheath.harrow.sch.uk/
Email address	info@rooksheath.harrow.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Rooks Heath College is an 11 to 18 secondary school. Since the predecessor school was last inspected, it has converted from single academy trust status and now sits within Tithe Academy Trust. The school is managed by a governing body which sits within the trust. The executive headteacher also oversees an alternative provision, the Jubilee Academy, which is used by the school.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and over half speak English as an additional language, which is above average.

- Around one third of pupils are eligible for pupil premium funding.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND who receive support is average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is average.
- Across the school, over one third of pupils join after the start of the autumn term. Similar numbers move out of the school and/or the local area throughout the school year. Around half of these pupils arrive from abroad or leave to go abroad.

Information about this inspection

- The school was initially inspected on 29 and 30 January 2019. On 19 March 2019, two of Her Majesty’s Inspectors returned to the school to gather further evidence about the quality of teaching, pupils’ outcomes and pupil mobility. The evidence gathered over all three days was used to inform the inspection judgements.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout, including joint visits with senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils at breaktimes, as they moved around the school and at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors held discussions with school leaders, groups of pupils, staff, and the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ work, including in books and practical subjects such as art, music and drama. They listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documents, including the school’s evaluation of its work, improvement planning and records of pupils’ progress.

Inspection team

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Verity Lane	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Phillips	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Amanda Carter-Fraser	Her Majesty’s Inspector

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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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