

Inspection of Rugby High School

Longrood Road, Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 7RE

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders, staff and pupils embody the school vision that, 'At Rugby High School we set heights in our heart'. Staff set high standards for pupils' behaviour. They expect pupils to work with determination and purpose. Pupils take up the challenge with vigour and gusto. They are dedicated and committed to their learning and to the school. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They work alongside teachers who want the very best for every pupil.

Pupils are active members of the inclusive school community. They relish coming to school, and staff ensure they are safe. Pupils do not worry about bullying. They benefit hugely from a rich array of clubs, trips and visits. There really is something for everyone, from chamber choir to debating and from football to poetry. Staff and sixth-form students give up their time willingly to provide these opportunities. Leaders listen to pupils, for instance, through an active and involved school council. This all helps to foster a community founded in mutual respect where all know each other well.

Leaders continually strive to improve, and they know the school well. They know there are elements that could be enhanced. For instance, they recognise that some aspects of pupils' personal development need to be strengthened.

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

Pupils and students learn a challenging curriculum. Key stage 3 pupils learn two languages, including Latin. Pupils select from a range of academic qualifications in Year 10. Key stage 5 students benefit from a similarly extensive offer that ranges from politics to physical education.

Leaders have judiciously thought through the knowledge that pupils will learn in each subject. They have ensured subject curriculums are full of ambitious content. This gives pupils a deep insight into each subject. Subject leaders have ordered this content appropriately. They have made sure it builds over time to help pupils make links between different facets within and across subjects. For instance, in mathematics, pupils' geometrical knowledge is woven through a range of other topics to help pupils make wider connections.

Teachers have an in-depth knowledge of the subjects they teach. They use this to explain concepts well. Sixth-form students take advantage of and appreciate teachers' subject expertise. Teachers choose resources carefully that help pupils learn the curriculum. They share and develop these within departments effectively. Pupils discuss their learning with their peers productively. Their enthusiasm contributes strongly to their learning. Leaders share information about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This helps teachers meet the needs of these pupils. However, a small number of teachers do not systematically check the learning of pupils in lessons, including pupils with SEND. They do not

notice quickly enough if pupils need further explanation, and some pupils worry about asking for help. As a result, some pupils do not develop the deep knowledge and understanding they need.

Pupils are avid readers. Teachers promote reading at every opportunity across all year groups. Sixth-form students help run the book room, modelling good reading habits to younger pupils. Staff provide pupils with information about books that will interest and challenge them. In lessons, teachers encourage pupils to read to support their learning. As a result, pupils know the importance of reading widely and the enjoyment a good book can bring.

Pupils and students in key stages 3 and 5 benefit from a considered personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. This promotes equality and diversity and enhances pupils' knowledge of the wider world. In the sixth-form, leaders deliberately start with some 'blanks' in the programme. They add in content that is pertinent to students during the year. However, key stage 4 pupils do not benefit from a similarly well-rounded programme. Here, pupils learn in discrete infrequent chunks. They do not get sufficient opportunity to discuss, debate and revisit learning. Consequently, this aspect of pupils' education is less thorough than the academic curriculum.

Students in sixth form receive a comprehensive careers education. Expert staff help students as they consider their next steps beyond school. However, careers education for younger pupils is weaker. Pupils told inspectors that they would like more information about different careers and pathways. They said that they would like this earlier in their education so that they are better informed.

Leaders are conscious of staff well-being and workload. Staff appreciate this. They go the extra mile because they know that leaders care about them. Leaders support staff with relevant training. However, this has not fully addressed the need for all teachers to ensure all pupils are learning the curriculum well in lessons. Leaders know this. They have formulated and are implementing clear plans to further develop staff.

Trustees are committed to the school. However, they do not have a sufficiently robust understanding of leaders' strategic plans and the quality of provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff training is up to date and comprehensive. All staff are alert to the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff report incidents quickly and ensure that the information gets to the right people.

Leaders follow up swiftly any concerns that staff report. They know each student well and this means that they can offer the right support at the right time. They review any new information in light of what they already know to help develop a full

picture of each pupil. Leaders seek help and support for pupils and their families from external agencies when needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers use assessment effectively to systematically check pupils' understanding in lessons, including pupils with SEND. This means that some teachers are reliant on pupils asking for support, rather than consistently and accurately identifying the pupils that need help. Leaders should ensure that all teachers are making regular and effective checks on the learning of all pupils in all lessons so that they can address gaps in knowledge and provide timely support.
- Leaders have not ensured that all pupils in key stages 3 and 4 benefit from a high-quality careers education. As a result, some pupils do not have an in-depth knowledge of the full range of options available to them when they reach the end of key stage 4. Leaders should ensure that all pupils receive a detailed range of information about potential next steps so that pupils can confidently prepare for future success in employment, training or education.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils in key stage 4 learn a robust personal development curriculum that prepares them for life in modern Britain. This means that pupils are not sufficiently well prepared for life outside of school. Leaders should ensure that all pupils in key stage 4 benefit from a high quality PSHE curriculum that gives them the detailed knowledge and skills they need for life beyond the school gates.

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](#)' 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	136595
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10242470
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	887
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	294
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Reaney
Headteacher	Mark Grady
Website	http://www.rugbyhighschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Rugby High School converted to an academy in April 2011.
- The school is a grammar school for girls aged 11 to 18 with a coeducational sixth form. The school admits pupils into Year 7 who have passed the Warwickshire 11 plus examination.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has undergone significant changes in leadership and governance.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- Leaders do not use any alternative providers.
- Members of the governing body are also members of the board of trustees.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and those responsible for careers education.
- Inspectors held discussions with members of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in history, mathematics, psychology and sociology, science and modern foreign languages. For each of these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders, carried out visits to lessons, spoke to pupils and looked at some of their work.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's extra-curricular activities with leaders. Inspectors also visited these during the school day.
- Inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils formally and informally at various points in the inspection. Inspectors took account of responses to the staff and pupil surveys and to Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at records and spoke to staff in relation to behaviour, bullying, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking the school's approach to staff recruitment, scrutinising policy documents and meeting with the designated safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

Ian Tustian, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Graeme Rudland	Ofsted Inspector
Gail Peyton	Ofsted Inspector
Elaine Haskins	Ofsted Inspector

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