

Inspection of Richard Challoner School

Manor Drive North, New Malden, Surrey KT3 5PE

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Richard Challoner School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Richard Challoner School to be outstanding before it opened as an academy.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a lively and happy school. Leaders refer to the 'Challoner family' to describe the close school community. Pupils behave very well and treat each other kindly. Leaders want all pupils to experience success and to fulfil their potential, inside and outside the classroom. Across the curriculum, pupils aim high and flourish in their learning.

The school nurtures pupils to look after each other and to do their best. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in the school community. Pupils work hard in lessons and staff are ambitious for what every pupil can achieve. Pupils are safe and bullying is extremely rare. If it does happen, leaders intervene quickly and effectively.

Leaders and staff place strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. The spiritual and social development of pupils is a central part of school life, where assemblies and celebrations bring pupils together. The 'Challoner Challenge' ensures that every pupil is supported to try new activities, including joining clubs, fundraising, public speaking, sports, art and music. The 'House competition' enables pupils to compete for points during lessons and in clubs, as well as in a range of house events, such as drama and swimming. From the start of Year 7, pupils are encouraged to become active and confident participants in school life.

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

Leaders are highly ambitious for pupils' education. The curriculum matches and often exceeds the scope of what is expected nationally. For example, in art, pupils develop detailed knowledge of artists and designers. Their learning is rich, and includes, for example, the study of graphic architecture and Latin American designs. Leaders ensure that the curriculum includes a range of cultural perspectives. In modern foreign languages, for instance, pupils learn about Francophone and Hispanic cultures. Almost all pupils study a foreign language at GCSE.

Curriculum content is carefully sequenced. Leaders have identified key concepts within subjects, and these are revisited regularly. This ensures that pupils develop a secure understanding of each subject over time. Teachers make sure that complex ideas are broken down into simple parts. They use their subject expertise to model demanding tasks and check for understanding. As a result, pupils learn to make connections across the curriculum and apply their understanding to more complex areas of learning.

Teachers regularly check what pupils know and remember. As a result, any misconceptions are swiftly identified and corrected. This supports pupils to develop their understanding of important ideas and tackle more complex learning in a subject over time.

Classrooms are calm and focused. Pupils said that this is because there are clear systems in place that they understand and that help them to learn. They have highly positive attitudes to learning and value their lessons. They ask questions and are not afraid of making mistakes as they learn. Pupils are punctual to lessons and attendance is high.

Staff understand pupils' individual needs, including the specific needs of those with SEND. All pupils are supported to follow a curriculum in which they experience success. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education, employment or training. Pupils who attend the on-site Newman or Xavier centres follow the same curriculum as their peers wherever possible. Pupils and students flourish in these settings. Specialist staff ensure that they develop a range of knowledge and skills for later life, including cooking and gardening. These pupils and students are fully included in the life of the school, for example by participating in house events.

In the sixth form, students enjoy learning from teachers who are experts in their subject. They use study time meaningfully, using the well-resourced library to focus on their independent learning. Students receive advice and guidance to support them with their next steps. Girls who join the sixth form said that they feel warmly welcomed. Students enjoy mentoring other pupils, including supporting students in the Xavier Centre. They also appreciate the wide range of opportunities available to them, such as university visits, charity events and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

Leaders have focused on strengthening the wider curriculum. Through the thriving house system, all pupils participate in a wealth of activities. There is an active student parliament, diversity group and environment ambassadors. Opportunities extend to Saturdays, where sports, music and the library are available to pupils. Residential and visits abroad are organised regularly. Through the personal development programme, pupils learn about important topics such as consent, healthy relationships, and how to stay safe online. Pupils benefit from a comprehensive careers programme and work experiences in Years 8, 10 and 12. This contributes to leaders' high-quality work to nurture pupils' wider skills and character development.

Staff feel very well supported. Leaders think carefully about workload and consult staff regularly. They provide teachers with an exceptional professional development programme. This ensures that teachers continue to develop the knowledge and teaching expertise to support all pupils to learn.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a high priority for all staff. They receive regular training on how to identify pupils who may be at risk, and they know how to report concerns. Leaders ensure that all concerns are managed through robust systems and processes. Leaders carry out thorough pre-employment checks when recruiting new staff. They

work with outside agencies and local partners to support vulnerable pupils and families.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe, including online. They learn how to look after their mental and physical health. Pupils trust the staff in school and know how to report any concerns that they may have.

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	137299
Local authority	Kingston upon Thames
Inspection number	10228451
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1082
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	266
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Draper
Headteacher	Sean Maher
Website	www.richardchalloner.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Richard Challoner School converted to become an academy school in August 2011. When its predecessor school, Richard Challoner School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The current headteacher took up post in 2014.
- The school has a Roman Catholic religious character. The Diocese of Southwark carried out its last section 48 inspection in June 2018.
- Leaders make use of two alternative education providers, one of which is unregistered.
- The school has two specialist resourced provisions. The Newman Centre supports pupils in key stages 3 and 4 with social, emotional, and mental health needs and an education, health and care plan. The Xavier Centre is a post-16 provision for students with moderate learning difficulties.

- The sixth form works in partnership with The Holy Cross Catholic Girls’ School to enable students to choose from a wider range of post-16 courses.
- Careers guidance meets the requirement of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders and groups of staff.
- The lead inspector met with those responsible for governance and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, art and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning, and reviewed samples of their work. Inspectors also looked at the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors held a meeting with leaders responsible for the school’s safeguarding arrangements. They also looked at safeguarding records, including pre-employment checks for staff.
- Inspectors spoke to the staff with specific responsibility for SEND, behaviour, attendance, sixth-form provision and personal development. They also reviewed a range of documentation in these areas.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about their well-being and workload, as well as other aspects of the school’s work.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils from different year groups.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted’s online surveys for parents and carers, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Olly Wimborne, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Bob Hamlyn	His Majesty’s Inspector
Simon Conway	His Majesty’s Inspector
Yvonne Chisholm	Ofsted Inspector

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