

Inspection of Ribblesdale High School

Queens Road, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 1EJ

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Ribblesdale High School is a happy and harmonious place to learn. Pupils behave very well. They are considerate of each other and get along with their teachers.

Pupils feel safe and are exceptionally well cared for. They told us that bullying is very rare and that teachers are good at dealing with it.

Pupils benefit from an exemplary range of opportunities to enhance their personal development. All pupils take part in compulsory enrichment activities every Wednesday afternoon. Pupils opt to take part in a range of activities from making jewellery to different outdoor pursuits.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' academic learning and their wider development. Staff have put a great deal of thought and effort into developing the curriculum. This has led to rapid improvements in pupils' learning.

Pupils develop an appreciation of what the world has to offer. They understand that we are all special and unique. Pupils gain a strong sense of right and wrong while at the school. They become independent and responsible and undertake roles such as student leaders and digital ambassadors.

Most parents and carers greatly appreciate the school's work. They particularly value the way that the pastoral team supports their children.

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

Over the last two years, leaders have focused on developing the quality of education in key stage 3. Teachers have thought carefully about what pupils should learn and the order in which they should learn it. Staff have planned the curriculum particularly well for pupils in Years 7 and 8. Almost all subjects provide a curriculum that is as broad and ambitious as the national curriculum.

Teachers develop pupils' knowledge and understanding systematically. For example, teachers skilfully grow pupils' vocabulary alongside their knowledge of grammar in French and Spanish. Teachers assess what pupils have learned well, often making good use of technology to do so. This enables them to adapt the curriculum to meet pupils' needs.

The curriculum builds pupils' cultural capital well. For example, pupils read a range of great works of literature in English. In art, pupils learn about important artists and artistic movements, such as cubism. Despite this, the music curriculum is not as ambitious. It does not teach pupils enough about great composers and the evolution of different genres.

Pupils' learning has improved significantly. Pupils who left Year 11 last year performed well in GCSE examinations in almost all subjects. Their progress was like that of all pupils nationally. However, their attainment was above the national average in many subjects, including English and history. The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils has improved. This is because staff have higher expectations of what these pupils should achieve.

Despite this, leaders have not always taken decisions that align with the ambition that they have for all pupils' learning. The proportion of pupils entered for the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) has been below the national average. They have entered pupils for examinations in religious education (RE) and English literature in Year 10.

Pupils behave well and attend regularly. They show commitment to their studies and are keen to do their best. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities typically have their needs met well. As a result, the behaviour, attendance and progress of this group have improved.

Leaders are passionate about pupils' personal development. They aim for pupils to become confident and principled adults who can thrive within a rapidly changing world. Pupils take part in an extensive range of activities to enhance their wider development. They are taught how to look after their own health and that of the planet.

Leaders have created a culture in which staff are valued. Staff feel that leaders are considerate of their well-being. Leaders assess the likely impact of their actions on staff workload. Where possible, they make use of technology to ensure that staff enjoy a positive work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders complete all necessary checks on new staff. They provide staff with a range of opportunities to learn about different risks. Staff are vigilant to signs that a pupil may be at risk from harm. They understand the dangers that are more prevalent in the local area.

Pupils develop knowledge of different risks, such as those related to knife crime and the internet. Leaders work well with a range of external agencies to keep pupils safe. They have effective systems in place to ensure the safety of pupils in alternative provision.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils learn well across the curriculum. Pupils who left the school in 2019 attained better than the national average in many subjects. Pupils made particularly impressive progress in modern foreign languages. Despite this, the proportion of

pupils entered for the EBacc has been below the national average in recent years. This is because a low proportion of pupils have studied for a GCSE in a modern foreign language. Leaders should therefore ensure that the proportion of pupils entered for the Ebacc increases to reflect the ambition that leaders have of pupils' learning.

- Leaders have taken several pragmatic decisions to improve outcomes. For example, they have entered all pupils for GCSE examinations in RE and English literature in Year 10. Pupils' attainment in these subjects has been similar to previous cohorts who have sat these examinations at the end of Year 11. Leaders should re-evaluate these decisions now that pupils are benefiting from a more ambitious and well-planned curriculum in key stage 3.
- Leaders have nearly completed their re-design of the key stage 3 curriculum. The curriculum is now ambitious and carefully planned in almost all subjects for pupils in Years 7 and 8. Most subjects offer pupils a curriculum that is as broad as the national curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum for pupils in Year 9 is planned as thoughtfully as it is for younger pupils. They should also ensure that the music curriculum in key stage 3 is the equal of the national curriculum in terms of breadth and ambition.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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	119716
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10122002
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jenny Woodward
Headteacher	Stephen Cox
Website	www.ribblesdale.org
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2019

Information about this school

- The school uses the following alternative providers for the full-time education of a small number of pupils: The Heights Free School, Oswaldtwistle School and Coal Clough Academy.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- During the inspection, we spoke formally with pupils about their work and school life. We also spoke to pupils during lessons and around the school site. Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, governors and teachers, including those who are new to the profession. We also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- We reviewed documentation, which included leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- We considered the views expressed by parents in the 537 responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, as well as the 103 comments received via the text-facility. We also considered a number of letters sent by parents. We considered the 108

responses to the questionnaire for pupils and the 70 responses to the staff questionnaire.

- The inspection focused deeply on mathematics, English, modern foreign languages, history, music and performing arts. In these subjects, we met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, met with teaching staff and looked at pupils' work. We looked at other subjects, such as geography, art, technology and science, in less depth.
- We reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.

Inspection team

Will Smith, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Anne Murphy	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Buckland	Ofsted Inspector
Colin Bell	Ofsted Inspector
Philip Wood	Ofsted Inspector

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