

# St Richard Reynolds Catholic High School

Clifden Road, Twickenham, London, TW1 4LT

**Inspection dates** 25–26 February 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- The school got off to a flying start and has gathered momentum during its second year.
- The school prepares students exceptionally well for their futures. In many lessons, work is linked to real life and major issues in the news, which contributes to students' preparation for life in modern Britain.
- Believing that students learn best when they are happy, staff successfully make sure that they feel safe and secure, and build up their confidence.
- Students make outstanding progress in practically all subjects and attain high standards.
- Teaching is consistently good, and often outstanding. Teachers plan lessons carefully so that all students can learn and make excellent progress.
- Teachers prepare stimulating resources and use the interactive whiteboards creatively to strengthen students' understanding. They give students constructive feedback about how to improve their work.
- Teachers encourage the most able students to explore work in depth and to master skills at a high level.
- Disadvantaged students make the same progress as others and receive well-considered support to help them to succeed.
- Students' behaviour around the school and in lessons is exemplary. Students are polite and welcoming and enjoy talking about all the things they do and enjoy.
- Outstanding leadership, management and advanced planning by the principal, senior leaders, managers and governors underpinned the school's successful opening. This has ensured improvement and high standards in teaching and achievement.
- One major focus of leaders', managers' and governors' work has been, and continues to be, the appointment of dedicated teachers. They support them in their practice and have high expectations of pupils' achievement. They have succeeded.
- Governors have committed much time to the establishment of the school. They continue to be fully involved and dedicated to its future evolution.
- The quality of care for students is outstanding, thoughtful and kind. Students with special educational needs blossom in this environment.
- The provision for students' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. In many subjects, these elements are blended into the work studied.
- Students read and write very well and develop secure understanding of mathematics. Students who arrive with gaps in these skills receive intensive support to catch up.
- Leaders and governors plan the development of the school's facilities with health and safety as the top priority. Students learn about the health and safety risks they may face in their future lives.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 22 part lessons, two of which were jointly observed with the principal. Inspectors also observed form times and an assembly.
- Inspectors spoke to many students informally, as well as meeting representatives from Years 7 and 8 and the school council, and some students with special educational needs.
- An inspector heard some Year 7 students reading.
- Inspectors held meetings with the principal and other senior leaders, and staff with responsibility for subjects and other aspects of the school's work.
- The lead inspector met with the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, all of whom chair committees.
- The lead inspector held meetings with a representative of the local authority and an educational consultant, both of whom visit the school regularly.
- Inspectors discussed their observations with teaching staff and examined a range of documents including the school's combined evaluation of its performance and development plan, monitoring records and external reviews. They also scrutinised information about progress, standards, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors looked at a range of students' work in lessons and outside of lessons.
- Inspectors took into account 33 questionnaires completed by members of staff and 175 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Clare Gillies, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lionel Cooper	Additional Inspector
David Gutmann	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2013 with Year 7 students. It now has students in Years 7 and 8. There are more boys than girls in both years. At present it is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school; but, by September 2017, it is likely to have grown to well over 700 students.
- Despite being formally registered as separate, the school is federated with St Richard Reynolds Catholic Primary School. The principal and senior leadership team lead both schools.
- Most of the students attending the school are White British with very small percentages of several ethnic minority groups. A well below average proportion of students speak English as an additional language, of whom only a few are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of students who receive support through the pupil premium is less than half that seen nationally. This is additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- A small number of students is eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding. This is for students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for students' education.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To raise achievement further:
  - check that students respond and act on the feedback teachers give them about how they can improve their work
  - intensify the focus on literacy by discussing the meaning and use of words in depth.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- In less than five terms, the principal has established a successful school where students feel safe, are very happy and enjoy learning. The principal is extremely well supported by the governing body, members of the senior leadership team and all staff.
- Staff morale is very high because all of them know their work is appreciated and valued. The school fosters respectful relationships at all levels. Its ethos underpins the outstanding quality of teaching and students' excellent behaviour.
- The number of staff increases each year as the school grows. The principal is experienced at appointing teachers and support staff who share the school's vision. He involves current staff and students in selecting the right people.
- Senior and middle leaders write honest evaluations ('Where are we now?') and thoughtful plans for the future. They know exactly what needs to be done to support the school's expansion and sustain high standards.
- Leadership of teaching is strong and effective. Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning accurately and use external advisers to verify their observations. They identify particular features of outstanding practice and encourage staff to share them. The tiny number of teachers who need help to develop some element of their teaching receive sensitive and supportive help.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic about their roles, whether working alone or with another teacher. Some have been at the school since it started, and the full complement is now in place. All have worked tirelessly to ensure that schemes of work and resources are ready and that classrooms have vibrant and stimulating displays.
- Teachers are keen to reflect on their practice and to work together to discuss ideas about teaching and learning. Small groups of middle leaders have taken on research topics such as 'What is an independent learner?' or 'What does outstanding learning look like?' Staff know that the progress their students make will have an impact on their salary reviews, but equally appreciate that the extra hours they put in are valued by leaders.
- Support for disabled students and those who have special educational needs is outstanding. The special educational needs coordinator is skilful at identifying and addressing their needs. Several students came off the register last year. Learning support assistants are highly qualified and some have specialist knowledge of particular students' needs.
- Senior leaders and governors value the local authority and external education consultants' support and advice. Both consultants are enthusiastic about this new school but do not shy away from highlighting issues that need consideration.
- The small funds for disadvantaged students are spent wisely. A member of staff has been appointed to oversee their progress and to extend the range of support they receive. This year, for example, students will visit a bookshop with funds to purchase a book and visit Oxford University to raise their aspirations.
- The curriculum is outstanding because it is much more than just the National Curriculum subjects, plus Latin and drama. One afternoon a week, students choose ExcelR8 (accelerate) courses. In Year 7 these include 'What's in the News?', magic or sewing, and, in Year 8, business, economics or genetics. Visits to theatres and concerts, field trips and plans for future trips overseas enrich students' learning and knowledge of the world.
- There is an equally wide range of extra-curricular activities, with numerous sports for girls and boys, many music groups, and clubs in several subjects. 'Mathletes' and a mathematics clinic cater for students' different abilities. In the school's recent on-line survey, a parent observed how confidence in sport had fed into the child's academic achievement.
- In mathematics, students have learned about computer coding linked to mobile apps., a successful way of tackling the fact that the facilities do not yet cater for information technology lessons.
- Many lessons, assemblies, form times and planned sessions on students' personal development contribute to the outstanding provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These four elements are blended well, for example the morality of social decisions or the cultural elements of spirituality.
- Teachers encourage students to reflect and explain their views on a wide range of issues. When studying oriental art, students examine modern Chinese posters linked to propaganda during the First World War. They listen to Shostakovich's music and learn about Stalinist Russia. In English, students discuss whether the killing of Tommo in Michael Morpurgo's *Private Peaceful* was morally justified.
- The school's vision includes the statement that it 'promotes equality and diversity and will prepare pupils

for a multicultural, multi-faith society'. These words are evident in all its work. In assemblies, form times and retreats, for example, students discuss the value of human life and healthy friendships.

- In religious education lessons, students learn to understand and respect faiths which are different from their own. This work underpins the school's strong anti-discrimination stance and promotion of equal opportunity for all. It also helps to prepare students well for life in modern Britain through discussing what British values mean for students' lives.
- Students regularly discuss items in the news in form time. Personal, social and health education sessions include topics on democracy in Year 7 and business organisation and finance in Year 8. There are plans for students to learn about young people and the law when they reach Year 9.
- Careers education starts in Year 7 with consideration of styles of employment and voluntary work. In Year 8, students start to reflect on their own skills, interests and thoughts for their future education and careers. When the time comes, students should be well prepared to make informed choices about their post-16 options, which will include the school's own sixth form.
- The school welcomes parents' involvement in their child's education. On the website, parents can see what students are learning each half term. Their feedback on what the school is doing is taken on board by senior leaders. Parents of students with special educational needs can drop in after school if they want to discuss anything.
- Last term the principal wrote to parents that their contribution to the development of the college was 'priceless'. The Friends of St Richard Reynolds flourishes and also raises funds for its development. It is not surprising that practically all parents would recommend the school to another parent.
- Senior leaders ensure all staff receive regular training on safeguarding and child protection. Governors and several members of staff have attended safe recruitment training. The school's procedures and arrangements are meticulous, extremely effective and meet all statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governance of the school is extremely effective. Most members of the governing body were involved in the establishment of the school. The preparation for its opening was thorough and contributed significantly to its successful first year and the well-managed addition of its second Year 7 cohort.
  - Governors bring a wealth of relevant expertise to their work, in the law, banking, education and children's safety, for example. They are knowledgeable and describe the setting up of a new school as 'exciting'. They are mindful of the costs of the school's future growth and check that every penny, for example pupil premium funds, is spent effectively.
  - They fully understand the information they receive about students' progress and the quality of teaching. They analyse it thoroughly to identify whether any students are underachieving. They support the school's high expectations and realise that many students are attaining higher standards than seen nationally.
  - An independent consultant supports governors' deliberations about the principal's and other staff's pay reviews. The governors ensure that dedicated and effective teachers are rewarded and know that support is in place to help the very few teachers who do not meet the school's high expectations.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Their conduct around the school is exemplary and they show great respect and consideration for others.
- Students are punctual and their attendance is above average. With considerable success, the very few students whose attendance falls below 85% are encouraged, along with their families, to attend regularly. Exclusions are almost non-existent because students know they must behave well, and they do.
- Students are articulate, enthusiastic to learn and attentive in lessons. They work very sensibly when given tasks to do together. They discuss and debate issues in a mature way. Practically all of them take pride in the presentation of their work, but just a few do not understand how important this is.
- There are many ways for students to acquire leadership skills and many of them relish the challenge. The school council, elected democratically, is effective in bringing about changes, for example to the timing of the school day in the next academic year.
- Students raise funds generously for charities, visit people in the community and support some Year 1 children in the primary school with their reading.

## Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. House leaders and form tutors do a great deal to encourage positive relationships and consideration of others. Students are confident that bullying is rare, also confirmed by the parents' questionnaire responses. Year 8 students know what the word homophobic means and that it can be a factor in bullying.
- Students are fully aware of the dangers of cyber bullying and the importance of e-safety, learning about them in personal, social and health sessions, and contributing to assembly presentations on them. During a religious education lesson, when students had to decide which of the seven deadly sins was the worst, the teacher pointed out how envy often leads to e-bullying.
- All students are confident that there is a member of staff they would talk to if they have any personal or learning worries. Year 7 students mentioned having 'deep' chats with teachers when they can 'open up'.
- Students learn about road safety in Year 7 and first aid and emotional well-being in Year 8. The development of their understanding of risks and how to cope with them has a high profile.

## The quality of teaching

## is outstanding

- Much teaching is outstanding and it is never less than good. Interactive whiteboards are used imaginatively to stimulate students' interest. Sometimes students use tablet computers for research, exploring the Brandt line in geography or filming each other to comment on their sporting skills.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and their enthusiasm for their subjects rubs off on students. A few subject leaders use social media to record sporting events, or to encourage students to keep thinking up questions about work.
- Teachers focus on developing students' reading and writing, urging the students to use link words such as 'consequently' or 'therefore' so that their statements flow into explanation and reasons. Students write some excellent, long essays in English and history.
- Teachers extend students' vocabulary by encouraging students to use unfamiliar words such as 'juxtaposition' and subject-specific vocabulary. Occasionally, teachers do not explore the meaning of words in depth in order to deepen students' knowledge of the English language, such as how words may have several different meanings or have Latin stems.
- In addition to intensive support for weak readers, many actions develop students' enjoyment of reading. These include group work with learning support assistants outside of lessons, all staff and students reading at the same time once a week or dressing up as book characters in house competitions.
- The application of students' mathematical skills is seen in subjects such as science, geography and design technology. For example, in science, students draw accurate graphs and they analyse information in charts very well in geography.
- Learning support assistants are skilful at knowing when to help students or when to stand back and let their confidence grow. They liaise closely with teachers to ensure that all students in a class make the same progress.
- The style of assessment tasks varies each term at the same time as the challenge increases. Teachers mark these tasks accurately and they, and senior leaders, use them to monitor progress by different groups. Between Years 7 and 8, students tackle an extended project to work on by themselves.
- Teachers make sure that students know what their targets are to raise achievement. Work is marked extremely well in most subjects, with clear guidance about how it could be improved. Many teachers make sure that students are diligent about absorbing and responding to the written, and verbal, comments which they give them, but others are not so rigorous. Consequently, students' learning does not move forward as rapidly.
- Teachers use subtle ways to support students who find it hard to get going, for example giving them help sheets or sentence starters in English. The most-able students are given challenging work, such as complex information about Pythagoras' theorem. On occasions, students can choose what level to work at, with 'Push yourself' as one option in mathematics.
- Aware that the most-able students may prefer to carry on working if they are hooked on something, teachers do not insist that they listen when a point is being reinforced or understanding checked. These students have time to delve into topics or extend their practical skills, in design technology for example.
- In English, Year 8 students analyse and discuss poems about refugees and extract key messages from them skilfully. In geography, students thoughtfully discuss the issue of Somali pirates and 'Blood diamonds', linked to their study of African issues. The link between school work and the outside world is a strong feature of many lessons that nurtures students' enquiring minds.

**The achievement of pupils****is outstanding**

- Students make outstanding progress in practically all subjects, especially in English and mathematics. Many of them are already reaching standards achieved by older students nationally. The principal has high aspirations for students' attainment in GCSE examinations in three years' time and has laid firm foundations to achieve these.
- Students' progress is particularly strong in their growing awareness of the major issues they will face in their future lives, such as the suffering experienced in many countries or the plight of refugees. In Year 8 lessons seen during the inspection, students considered religious persecution in today's world and explored microbes linked to the Ebola outbreak. They also debated whether the developed world should write off African countries' debts.
- In a recent school online survey, many parents added written comments. One encapsulates the school's approach to learning. 'My daughter has been challenged in most subjects and this has created a desire to challenge herself.' Students are expected to make more progress each year than that expected nationally, which underpins the depth of work they tackle in lessons.
- Last year, disadvantaged students made more progress than other students in mathematics and almost the same progress as others in English. In both subjects, in terms of exceeding the school's ambitious targets for standards, disadvantaged students did not do quite as well as others but the gaps have narrowed this year, particularly in Year 7.
- No national data exist for students' performance at the end of Year 8. Nevertheless, the work covered since the school opened and that seen during the inspection show that disadvantaged students are certainly on track to make at least similar progress and to reach at least the same standards as other students nationally and students in the school.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make as much progress from their starting points as others, as do the very few students from ethnic minority backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language. The education provided by the school meets all these students' needs.
- The most-able students make rapid progress and the way they are taught helps them to probe topics in greater depth or to master skills at a high level. They are encouraged to choose ExcelR8 options, such as genetics and other courses covering advanced work and thinking skills.
- By the end of the first term in Year 7, practically all students read well. Students who speak English as an additional language, but lack fluency in reading, and others with low reading ages, follow an intensive six-week course which is very successful for almost all of them.
- Students' numeracy skills are equally strong. In addition to mathematics and other lessons, students tackle problems in form times, or play chess and other games which also develop their memory and strategy skills.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students who join in extra-curricular activities is at least as high as others. Many of them learn musical instruments. The progress students make in physical education is seen in their recent success in competitions and increasing levels of skill.
- As the school only has Year 7 and 8 students, there are no plans for early entry in GCSE examinations.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139121
<b>Local authority</b>	Richmond upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	449835
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18 (11-13 at present)
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	279
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Cole
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Burke
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8325 4630
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8641 8611
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