

# Inspection of a good school: The Rise Free School

Browells Lane, Feltham, Middlesex TW13 7EF

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Inspection dates:

8 and 9 March 2023

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders make decisions based on what they believe is best for pupils. They have high academic expectations for all pupils. This is at the centre of the school's ethos. Extra support is on hand for pupils who have high levels of need. Most parents and carers are happy with their child's progress.

There are strong relationships between pupils and adults. Most pupils appreciate this and know that they can talk to someone if they have worries. However, some pupils told inspectors that they can feel unsettled at school when others' behaviour is poor.

Staff expect pupils to behave well. Some pupils still struggle to manage their emotions and behaviour. Most pupils say that when bullying happens, adults deal with it well. Some older pupils told inspectors that bullying can extend to online and out of school. They said that teachers are trying to address this, but sometimes do not act as quickly as they should.

Parental satisfaction with the school is mixed. Most parents say that staff are 'uncompromising' and that the school is 'amazing'. A small minority are disappointed. They do not feel that their child's special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are being met.

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

Pupils experience a broad curriculum. Across most subjects, the curriculum is well crafted. For instance, in English, the curriculum sets out the essential knowledge pupils need to learn, and the order in which it should be taught. Nevertheless, in some other subjects, leaders have not provided teachers with clear information about what pupils should learn step by step. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on external assessments, and pupils have termly opportunities from Year 5 onwards to practise examination style questions and papers. Teachers check pupils' progress through the curriculum. This ensures that they identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. At times, however, teachers choose activities that do not match closely to the subject content they intend to teach. This means that some pupils do not remember the curriculum as well as they could.

Staff assess pupils' reading ability as soon as they join the school. Staff ensure that pupils receive support to catch up quickly. Pupils of all ages read books that match the sounds they know. They become keen, confident readers.

Leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour are lower than they should be. Leaders do not provide the support that staff need to manage some pupils' poor behaviour. This is particularly the case for those with more complex SEND. At times, the unacceptable behaviour of a small number of pupils interrupts their own and other pupils' learning. This disruption causes pupils to miss out on parts of the curriculum.

Most parents value the difference the school has made to their child. However, some who are unhappy feel that bullying, racism and homophobia are tolerated.

Pupils' wider development is well considered. For example, they go on lots of outings, including to the theatre, other local schools, and museums. Older pupils undertake the Duke of Edinburgh Award. All pupils are supported to take on additional responsibilities. For example, they are encouraged to become a member of the school council or organise events to raise money for charity.

There is a strong focus on careers and work experience across the school. The sixth-form curriculum is designed to prepare pupils for the world of work and adulthood. Students access a range of work-related qualifications, including in English and mathematics. They are encouraged to think independently and make choices for themselves. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education, employment and training. For some, this means going on to university.

Most teachers feel that workload is manageable, although some feel that they could be better supported by leaders and the trust.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have embedded a strong culture of keeping pupils safe. Pre-employment checks on staff are carried out thoroughly. Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Because they are trained well, they know the signs that pupils might need extra help. Staff pass on concerns to leaders, who deal with these appropriately.

Members of staff understand the risks that pupils face in the community. Pupils who may be at risk of harm are closely monitored. Most pupils feel safe and well supported by staff.

Leaders track the attendance of pupils closely. They work effectively to make sure that pupils are safe when they are not in school.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The curriculum does not consistently identify precisely what pupils need to learn and by when in all subjects. In these subjects, pupils do not consistently get the chance to build on what they have learned before. Leaders should ensure that there is clarity about the really important knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember by the time they leave.
- At times, teachers do not choose activities that closely match what they intend pupils to learn. This is because they do not have a secure knowledge of how best to deliver the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that staff receive useful guidance and support so they deliver the curriculum successfully and pupils can remember more.
- Some pupils do not behave well in school. This is, in part, because leaders have not provided staff with the support and guidance they need to manage poor behaviour successfully. As a result, some pupils' learning is disrupted. Leaders should make sure that staff receive appropriate support. They should make sure that pupils develop positive attitudes to their learning and that behaviour improves.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140360
<b>Local authority</b>	Hounslow
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255524
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	136
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	34
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jackie Saddington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Ralston
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.theriseschool.com">www.theriseschool.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 and 7 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of a multi-academy trust, Ambitious About Autism Schools Trust.
- This is a special school for pupils between the ages of four and 19 years.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school caters for pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The sixth form is based at West Thames College.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 and other leaders, including curriculum and pastoral leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with members of staff individually and in groups, and spoke to pupils at various points during the inspection. Inspectors took account of responses to pupil and staff surveys, as well as Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at records relating 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**

Francis Gonzalez, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Nell Nicholson	Ofsted Inspector

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