

Rugby Free Secondary School

Address: Anderson Avenue, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV22 5PE

Unique reference number (URN): 142881

Inspection report: 14 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	●
Expected standard	● ● ● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✓ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The school has developed a highly effective programme for pupils' personal development. Furthermore, leaders have precisely identified the key knowledge they want pupils to learn to prepare them well for life in modern Britain. Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained to teach this programme. Consequently, staff deliver it highly effectively. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported to access this learning fully. As a result, all pupils, including students in the sixth form, develop detailed and secure knowledge across all elements of the personal development programme.

Pupils have an impressive understanding of issues relating to equality and diversity. For instance, pupils acquire detailed knowledge about different religions and cultures. They discuss this with maturity. This helps them to be respectful of one another and of others who may be different from them. Pupils have meaningful opportunities to debate current affairs. This helps them to consider many issues from a range of perspectives. Pupils understand how to stay safe online and in the community. They learn about healthy relationships and consent. Pupils have a secure understanding of fundamental British values. Furthermore, the programme supports pupils in developing their confidence and independence.

The school provides effective pastoral support for pupils. They feel well cared for. Pupils and sixth-form students receive high-quality careers advice and guidance. They have many and varied opportunities to learn about different careers and higher education courses. This prepares them well for their next steps.

The school provides many high-quality, meaningful opportunities for pupils to contribute to the school and learn how to be active citizens. Pupils are proud to be form representatives and to take part in the school council. Some pupils are cultural ambassadors, teaching and learning ambassadors and house captains. Students in the sixth form also enjoy supporting younger pupils with their reading. Pupils are very well prepared for life beyond school.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make secure progress through the curriculum. Most produce work that demonstrates a solid understanding of what they have learned. Similarly, sixth-form students' work shows that they have a secure understanding of what they have learned. Pupils, including those with SEND and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, develop and secure the important knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics.

Published outcomes in national tests show that pupils' achievement is in line with national averages. Disadvantaged pupils also achieve well in external examinations. Sixth-form students achieve as expected in public examinations. Pupils with SEND who attend the schools' specially resourced provision typically achieve well from their starting points.

Pupils and sixth-form students are well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils' attendance at school is improving, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders use a range of effective strategies to support positive attendance for all pupils. Leaders carefully analyse attendance data and take effective action to support pupils who are persistently absent from school. As a result, the number of persistently absent pupils is reducing. While the school is taking effective action to improve attendance, leaders are aware that further work is needed to ensure that their actions are embedded so that these improvements are sustained and notable.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' conduct. Pupils understand these expectations. There are harmonious relationships between staff and pupils. As a result, lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils and students in the sixth form have positive attitudes to learning, and most show dedication to their learning. Bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that if it does happen, staff will deal with it quickly and effectively. Pupils know that any form of discrimination is unacceptable. Pupils show high levels of respect to one another. At unstructured times, pupils socialise very well together. Pupils who at times struggle to meet the school's expectations receive support that is well thought out and that helps them to improve their behaviour.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and its delivery. The curriculum is well planned and sequenced so that pupils build on what they have previously learned. The sixth-form curriculum is equally well designed and meets students' needs.

Leaders have set out clearly how teachers should implement the curriculum. Typically, teachers do this well. They have secure subject knowledge and present new learning clearly. Most teachers check pupils' understanding effectively so that they can address gaps in learning or misconceptions. Most teachers also provide pupils with clear feedback that helps them to improve their work. However, the curriculum is not delivered to a consistently high quality in some subjects.

The school has developed a clear system to ensure that pupils develop the strong foundations in reading, writing and mathematics that they need to be successful. Teachers ensure that pupils develop their vocabulary and communication skills. Furthermore, some pupils receive effective additional support that helps them to improve their reading and writing.

Generally, teachers support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities well in lessons. They regularly check how these pupils are progressing and provide support where needed.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

The school has established robust systems for identifying and assessing the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders monitor the academic performance and wellbeing of these pupils effectively to ensure that they get the support they need. Timely and tailored interventions are implemented that reduce the barriers to learning for these pupils and meet their individual needs.

Staff get detailed information about how to address barriers to learning that pupils may have. They also receive regular training in how to support these pupils. Teachers typically use this information and training well so that these pupils can access the curriculum. Pupils in the school's specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND are supported well. As a result, they can access the curriculum and learn alongside their peers.

The school uses additional funding well to support disadvantaged pupils. For example, some of these pupils receive targeted interventions, additional tutoring and mentoring. This is helping to improve these pupils' academic performance.

Leaders have effective oversight of the alternative provision the school uses for a small number of pupils. They ensure it is always used in the best interests of the pupils and that it meets their needs.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and senior leaders have been appointed. Furthermore, pupil numbers have significantly increased. Leaders have managed this increase very well. They have provided stability, effective leadership and a clear direction for the school. They have created a positive, inclusive culture in the school. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the areas that still need to improve. Their priorities for improving the school clearly show they put the best interests of pupils at the centre of everything they do. The school is well led and managed. Staff have great confidence in school leaders and understand their part in improving the school. Staff are very well supported with their workload and wellbeing. They work as a harmonious staff team.

Those responsible for governance know the school well. They provide an appropriate level of challenge and support. They carry out their statutory duties effectively. Furthermore, the trust has provided effective support, particularly in helping new leaders to perform their roles more effectively.

Leaders have put in place a well-designed professional development programme. It is of high quality and supports the staff to build their expertise. For example, staff receive regular training on how to teach the curriculum effectively, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school engages well with parents and carers. It provides regular community workshops that help parents better understand how they can support their children's education.

The sixth form opened in September 2021. Leaders are ambitious for all students and ensure that the curriculum meets students' needs. The curriculum is designed to prepare students for their next steps in education, employment or training. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the school's sixth-form provision. They have a clear insight into its strengths and where it can improve further.

Students typically achieve well in external examinations. Outcomes for GCSE resits in mathematics and English exceed national averages. Students also achieve very well in level 2 courses. The work that students produce, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), shows they are progressing securely through the curriculum.

Teachers in the sixth form typically deliver the curriculum well. They have the subject expertise they need. Generally, they check students' understanding effectively and explain new learning clearly. However, on occasion, in some subjects, this is not done consistently well. Teachers ensure that students with SEND get the support they need to access the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that students get effective career advice and guidance so they can make well-informed choices about their next steps. Students also take part in wider opportunities, work placements and enrichment activities that prepare them well for their next steps.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils enjoy learning at this welcoming and inclusive school. Teachers know pupils' needs and what support they can give them to reduce barriers to learning. They have high expectations of pupils. As a result, most pupils and students in the sixth form, including those who are disadvantaged or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), progress securely through the curriculum. They achieve well in external examinations. Pupils who attend the school's specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND achieve well from their starting points.

There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are respectful to each other. As one pupil commented, reflecting the views of many, 'We all get along.' Students in the sixth form appreciate the school's sense of community. Pupils are safe in school. They know they can talk to many staff members if they have any worries or concerns. The school is calm and orderly as leaders have established clear routines that pupils understand and follow. Bullying is rare, and pupils know that if it does happen, staff will deal with any issues quickly and effectively. Most pupils attend school well.

Pupils enjoy the annual cultural day, where the school's diverse cultures are celebrated through various activities. This helps all pupils to feel a sense of belonging to the school. The school provides many enrichment opportunities to develop pupils' talents and interests. Leaders have structured these activities so that all pupils can access them. As a result, many pupils participate in them. Pupils enjoy taking part in the school production, the choir and the rock band. They also enjoy taking part in netball, football, basketball and board

games clubs, as well as The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Pupils also enjoy the annual reward trip to a theme park.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is consistently taught well so that highly effective teaching is embedded in all subjects and key stages.
 - Leaders should ensure that their actions to improve attendance are embedded so that attendance for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, continues to improve.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Triumph Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sarah Malam, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Dean Harrison.

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

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, trustees and governors and the interim CEO during the inspection.

The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Currently 18 pupils attend this provision. All of these pupils have an education, health and care plan.

The school makes use of 10 unregistered alternative provisions.

The school has undergone significant change since the last inspection. A new headteacher has been appointed, and the school has joined Triumph Learning Trust.

Iain Green: Headteacher

Lead inspector:

Paul Halcro, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Gillian Martin, Ofsted Inspector

Lois Kelly, Ofsted Inspector

Dan Robinson, Ofsted Inspector

Dan Owen, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 14 April 2026

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

1,111

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

1,150

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

29.10%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

5.22%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

21.42%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder, SEMH - Social, Emotional and Mental Health

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	39.2%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38.4%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	37.8%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	43.7	46.0	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	43.8	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	42.8	46.3	Close to average

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0.13	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.22	-0.03	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	21.7%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	31.6%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	28.3%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	35.4	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	39.8	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	37.4	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.08	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	-0.56	-0.57	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	21.7%	53.1%	-31.5 pp
2023/24 (final)	31.6%	53.1%	-21.5 pp
2022/23 (final)	28.3%	52.4%	-24.1 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	35.4	50.4	-15.0
2023/24 (final)	39.8	50.0	-10.2

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	37.4	50.3	-12.9

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.08	0.16	-0.24
2022/23 (final)	-0.56	0.17	-0.73

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	91%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	94%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	91%	94%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	31.98	34.99	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	31.62	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	27.57	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students’ progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	0.1	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	0.1	0.0	Close to average

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	10.2%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	10.2%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	10.0%	9.0%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	27.6%	21.9%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	28.0%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	28.6%	26.5%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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