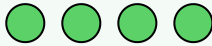


Rushwick CofE Primary School

Address: Upper Wick Lane, Rushwick, Rushwick CE Primary School, Upper Wick Lane, Worcester, Worcester, Worcestershire, WR2 5SU

Unique reference number (URN): 149476

Inspection report: 13 January 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.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Attendance, including persistent absence, is similar to national figures. Last academic year, overall attendance dipped compared with previous years when it was above national averages. Staff have analysed the reasons for this decline and acted swiftly. Pupils' attendance is checked closely, and concerns are addressed without delay. Leaders make expectations clear to parents and carers. They use strategies including rewards and support for families to secure improvements. Pupils' attendance has improved and persistent absence reduced.

The school's values of respect, kindness, trust, compassion, gratitude and courage underpin its approach to behaviour. Pupils understand these values and generally show them in their interactions. Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently. They use appropriate resources, such as emotional toolkits, to sensitively support pupils who need help with managing their emotions. The start of the day is calm, with clear routines that help pupils settle quickly. In lessons, pupils usually show positive attitudes and are keen to contribute, though a few lose focus at times. Around school, behaviour is orderly. Pupils report that most classmates behave well, any issues are resolved quickly, and bullying is rare. School records confirm that behaviour incidents are infrequent and dealt with appropriately.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have created an inclusive culture in which staff work hard to remove barriers to learning. They have acted quickly to strengthen systems for identifying and assessing the learning and developmental needs of pupils. All pupils can access the school curriculum and enrichment opportunities.

Leaders and staff understand what pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those known to social care need to achieve well. To ensure no stone is left unturned, the school actively seeks the views of parents and carers prior to planning and implementing any support. Pupils benefit from extra help with their learning. They also receive pastoral guidance, and where necessary, input from external professionals. Leaders check the impact of the support carefully. This ensures weaknesses are identified early and prompt action taken.

Training helps teachers and additional adults to continuously develop their practice. Staff use a range of practical resources to help pupils complete work independently. Occasionally, the support for pupils during lessons does not provide them with the precise advice and guidance that they need. Leaders know this and are taking steps to help staff sharpen adaptations to pupils' work.

Pupil premium funding is used well. Academic and pastoral support helps disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes in leadership at school and trust level and also changes in staffing. The school's new leadership team knows what needs to be done and has acted quickly to stabilise the school. Leaders' work has quickly improved inclusion, the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and attendance. Some actions, such as those that relate to improving pupils' writing, have not been in place long enough to have had the full intended impact.

Leaders, the trust, governors and the diocese have a crystal-clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They work diligently and make decisions in the best interests of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have SEND and are known to social care.

Partnership working between the diocese, the trust, governors and trustees is constructive. Roles and responsibilities are clear, and fulfilled effectively. 'Rapid improvement board' meetings enable key partners to come together to evaluate rigorously the school's provision and agree next steps. Governance provides effective challenge and support, ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils.

While appropriate training is in place, staff would benefit from even broader professional learning opportunities. This is in relation to the further development of expertise to deliver the curriculum as intended and to raise pupils' achievement swiftly. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One member of staff, representing the views of many, commented, 'It is an honour to work with these leaders. I feel so lucky.' Staff appreciate the strategies in place to help manage their workload and their wellbeing.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils behave with integrity, cooperate well and demonstrate strong social skills. They understand that respect is mutual, saying, 'If you respect other people, they will respect you.'

The school provides a coherent and well-sequenced programme of personal development that makes a clear difference to pupils' confidence as well as their moral and cultural growth. Pupils learn to reflect on their beliefs and experiences and show understanding for others' values and beliefs. They talk confidently about the importance of rules and fairness and fundamental British values.

Pupils know how to keep safe in a range of situations. They know what to do and who to speak to if they have any concerns. This is because pupils are taught about healthy relationships and how to stay safe, including online.

Pastoral support is responsive and effective. Leaders ensure that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are known to social care or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, access support from staff, and if required, qualified professionals.

Pupils enjoy a suitable range of opportunities to develop their talents. For instance, they learn to play instruments and perform to their parents and carers. Clubs such as crafting and

gardening broaden their experiences. Pupils make a positive difference in the community. For example, they sing in a local nursing home and take part in litter picking.

Leaders' analysis of pupils' participation in clubs and enrichment activities is at an early stage. They have started to take steps to increase pupil engagement so that even more benefit from the opportunities on offer.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Some pupils in the school do not develop their knowledge as well as they should. This is especially the case with pupils' writing. Some pupils in key stage 1 have gaps in their phonics knowledge. Previous instability in staffing, which has now been addressed, has contributed to this. Although leaders have taken appropriate action, it is too early for the impact of these changes to be realised.

In many cases, pupils achieve well through the curriculum. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment, including for disadvantaged pupils, is above the national average for reading. It is in line with the national average in writing and mathematics, and Year 4 pupils achieve well in the multiplication tables check. The proportion of pupils who reach the higher standards is in line with national averages. Historically, pupils in Year 1 have attained well in the phonics check. Last academic year, phonics outcomes were below average. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development in Reception is the same as children nationally.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

There are inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is taught. Until recently, strategies to help pupils develop their writing, including handwriting and spelling, were not consistently effective. Leaders have identified this. Through a programme of training and coaching, they help staff to develop their practice. Current strategies have not been in place long enough to have a consistent impact.

Although teachers understand pupils' starting points, the activities they plan are not consistently well matched to pupils' learning needs. This slows pupils' pace of learning through the curriculum. However, there are times when teachers use adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities which help them to learn the curriculum, including assistive technology and visual aids. Teachers generally demonstrate secure subject knowledge. They often explain information and tasks clearly, particularly in mathematics, for example through the use of step-by-step instructions.

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum. The curriculum identifies the knowledge and skills pupils need to acquire from year to year. Pupils' vocabulary develops well because it is promoted effectively in lessons. Typically, teachers help pupils to develop essential knowledge in mathematics and reading. Older pupils solve mathematical problems with

confidence and read fluently. Pupils who have gaps in their phonics knowledge, or need extra help, receive personalised support. This helps them to catch up at a steady pace.

Early years

Needs attention 

The quality of teaching in the early years is inconsistent. There are occasions when the activities that staff provide lack purpose and are not linked closely enough to the ambitious aims of the curriculum. Sometimes, writing activities are overly complex. Children are not able to consistently apply their phonics knowledge when writing. This prevents children from making the progress they should.

However, by the time children start Year 1, many achieve well. Children's needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are identified quickly and targeted support is put in place. This helps the identified children to build on what they know and can do over time. The curriculum identifies what children need to learn each term.

Early reading and the enjoyment of books is prioritised as soon as children join the school. Children develop phonics knowledge steadily and improve the accuracy of their reading. Children enjoy stories and retell them confidently, for example when recounting a tale about catching a star. To support learning at home, staff share relevant information with parents and carers.

Positive relationships between staff and children create a calm atmosphere. Children are happy and they feel safe and secure. Adults typically model speaking in sentences well. This modelling helps children to learn, understand and use new words. Creative activities, such as exploring the 'space station', promote children's language development successfully.

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

Pupils are happy at Rushwick Church of England Primary School. The inclusive culture of the school means everyone is made to feel welcome from the moment they enter the building. Leaders and staff make sure that pupils are ready to learn. They provide pupils with the right practical learning resources and targeted support, including pastoral support for those who need it.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those known to social care, enjoy learning and generally achieve well. Year 6 pupils leave the school with the knowledge and skills they need for secondary school. In the rest of the school, including in the early years, pupils build secure foundations in reading and mathematics. In contrast, there are inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' writing. Some pupils make errors in spelling and handwriting. At times, curriculum activities are not aligned closely enough to pupils' different learning needs. In the early years, some activities are not sufficiently focused on what pupils are expected to learn.

Relationships are warm. This helps pupils feel safe and feel that they belong. The school's values shape pupils' conduct. Most pupils demonstrate positive behaviour in lessons and

during social times. Bullying is rare and any incidents are dealt with swiftly. Pupils attend school regularly.

Pupils are responsible citizens. The school's therapy dog, for example, inspired pupils to raise money for a dog's charity. Pupils demonstrate respect and tolerance of others. Clubs such as netball and yoga promote mindfulness and healthy lifestyles.

Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced significant leadership and staffing changes. The new leadership team, alongside the trust and diocese, has steadied the school with determination. They acknowledge that staff would benefit from training that would refine practice and raise pupils' achievement further.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue their work to raise pupils' achievement in writing by strengthening the teaching of writing, spelling and handwriting so that it is delivered consistently across all year groups, including in the early years.
 - Leaders should ensure that curriculum activities are well matched to pupils' different learning needs and build purposefully on what pupils already know and can do so that all pupils make the gains they should across the curriculum.
 - Leaders should ensure that all activities in the early years have a clear learning intention and are designed to deepen children's learning and development.
 - Leaders, supported by the trust, should sharpen the professional learning offer so that it builds staff expertise in priority areas and enables them to address gaps in pupils' learning more quickly.
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About this inspection

This school is part of the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Vicki Shelley, and overseen by a board of directors, chaired by Christopher Stephens.

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.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with representatives from the local academy boards. She also met with the chief executive officer, the director of education, and trustees. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the Diocese of Worcester.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced significant change. Three years ago, it became part of the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust. Since this time, leadership has changed significantly, with the departure of one head of school, the appointment of a second, and the later introduction of an executive headteacher.

In September 2025, the executive headteacher was appointed as the headteacher. A deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2025, followed by the appointment of the special educational needs coordinator in November 2025. None of the current class teachers were in post at the time of the previous inspection in 2022. Most of them joined the school in September 2025.

The school does not use alternative provision.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. The last section 48 inspection took place in July 2019.

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Whetham

Lead inspector:

Usha Devi, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Karen O'Keefe, Ofsted Inspector

Diane Pye, Ofsted 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 13 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

156

Below 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: 272

School capacity

210

Below 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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

14.74%

Below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.3%

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

3.85%

Close to 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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

14.10%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to 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)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		61%	
2024/25 (revised)	68%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	71%	61%	Above
2022/23		60%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		74%	
2024/25 (revised)	92%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	76%	74%	Close to average
2022/23		73%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		72%	
2024/25 (revised)	76%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	71%	72%	Close to average
2022/23		71%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		73%	
2024/25 (revised)	80%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	76%	73%	Close to average
2022/23		73%	

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 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	33%	46%	Close to average
2022/23		44%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		62%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	50%	62%	Below
2022/23		60%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		59%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	33%	58%	Below
2022/23		58%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		60%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	33%	59%	Below
2022/23		59%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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 reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		68%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	33%	67%	-34 pp
2022/23		66%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	50%	80%	-30 pp
2022/23		78%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		78%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	33%	78%	-44 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		77%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	33%	79%	-46 pp
2022/23		79%	

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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)	4.7%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.7%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.1%	5.9%	Below

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)	10.2%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	12.9%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	14.6%	16.2%	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.

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