

Inspection of Rufford Primary School

Bredon Avenue, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY9 7NR

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected as academy converter
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The headteacher of this school is Erica Tilley. This school is part of Invictus Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Edward Vitalis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jess Shulman.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Rufford Primary School are polite and well-mannered. They settle well to their learning in lessons and work hard. Pupils are warmly greeted each day by staff and 'Luci' the school dog. There is a strong culture of safeguarding and well-being across the school. Pupils are safe and say they are happy in school. Parents and carers agree. They are very supportive of the school and its ethos.

At social times, pupils enjoy playing together and chatting with friends. Pupil well-being champions are on hand to help out and support any pupil who needs it. The school's 'RISE' values 'resilience, integrity, self-awareness, excellence' help pupils to understand right and wrong. Staff consistently apply the school's 'traffic light' system to managing pupils' behaviour. Adults deal effectively with rare incidents of poor behaviour.

Pupils appreciate the range of clubs to nurture and develop their talents. These include choir, crochet, cricket, frisbee, Italian reading and football clubs. Opportunities such as a museum visit, local factory workshop, pantomime and opera trip help pupils to deepen their learning. Pupils talk excitedly about their overnight school camping experience and residential visits which help them to develop confidence and teamwork skills.

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

There have been many changes to the school in recent years. Significant changes to staffing over time have impacted this school's rapid progress. The school now has a better understanding of what it needs to improve and how to do so. The trust holds the school to account effectively for pupils' progress. Staff are positive about the substantial improvements in the school. They say that their well-being is prioritised and workload is carefully considered by the school.

The school has transformed its approach to teaching reading, particularly early reading. Reading champions, 'National Storytelling Week,' book swaps, author visits, library trips and book club all help instil a passion for reading. Phonics is taught effectively by highly skilled staff. Pupils practise their phonics learning when reading books that match the sounds they learn. Rigorous checks mean that any child who falls behind is quickly 'picked up.' Highly effective support is provided so that these pupils catch up quickly, which they do. As a result, pupils now read with the confidence and accuracy expected for their age.

The school has adopted an ambitious well-sequenced curriculum for all pupils. It sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn for future success. Teachers know what to teach and how. However, at times some teachers are unclear about how to teach writing composition and handwriting. Teachers introduce new learning well. They use recall to build on pupils' prior knowledge. Misconceptions are identified and addressed. However, checks on how well pupils learn the curriculum over time are inconsistent. In some subjects, the curriculum is not being delivered

the way the school intends and there remain gaps in pupils' learning that have not been addressed.

Skilled staff carefully plan for the learning and development needs of the youngest children in early years. Staff capture children's interests and consider what children know and can do. The learning environment is well planned and purposeful. Exciting and interesting activities help children to build on their learning. Adults encourage turn-taking, sharing and being kind, which children replicate. Staff are highly skilled in extending thinking and vocabulary at every opportunity. However, there is less focus on developing children's early writing skills.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to be successful in school. Their needs are swiftly identified and met. Additional adult support, resources and adaptations to work help pupils to learn well. Support from external professionals, such as speech and language therapists, enriches the provision for pupils with SEND. As a result, pupils with SEND now achieve well in school.

Recent work is having a positive impact on improving pupils' attendance rates. This means that more pupils now attend school every day. There is further work to do to make sure a few pupils who do not attend school regularly, do.

The school prioritises personal development well. Pupils know the importance of healthy eating. They learn about looking after their physical and mental well-being. By voting for well-being champions and engaging in debates, pupils learn about democracy. Pupils learn about different festivals and celebrations and what these mean to different cultures. Visits to various places of worship, including a gurdwara and mosque, help pupils to respect differences between people. Pupils take on responsibilities, such as reading ambassadors and house captains. This helps pupils prepare well for life in modern Britain.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not attend school regularly. This means they miss out on important learning. The school should continue to work with parents and external agencies, to instil the importance of regular school attendance and overcome any barriers to attending.

- The school has not yet set out clearly how writing composition should be taught. In addition, there is an inconsistent approach to the teaching of handwriting. This results in variability in expectations and inconsistency in pupils' writing. The school should set out clearly how writing is taught so that teachers can improve pupils' writing skills.
- The school's monitoring has not been sufficiently rigorous in some subjects. As a result, there are inconsistencies in some subjects in how the curriculum is taught and whether gaps in learning are closed. The school should ensure that leaders systematically check how well the curriculum is being taught and learned, and that inconsistencies in teaching or gaps in learning are addressed.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148685
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10322923
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jess Shulman
Headteacher	Erica Tilley
Website	www.rufford.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as academy converter

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school joined Invictus Academy Trust in September 2021.
- The headteacher started working in this school in September 2022. She has since appointed two assistant headteachers.
- The school recently opened a SEND resource base.
- The school opened a new two-year-old provision in September 2023.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of sessions, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work and held discussions with leaders about the design technology, geography and French curriculum.
- The inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult and reviewed reading resources.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation on the school's website.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors observed pupils in lessons and at other times during the day.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding leader, curriculum leaders, members of the trust, including the chief executive officer.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Carli Mccallin

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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