

The Skills Hub

Address: Falling Lane, Yiewsley, West Drayton, West Drayton, Middlesex, UB7 8AB

Unique reference number (URN): 149033

Inspection report: 9 December 2025

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards not met

Leaders have not ensured that there is an open and positive culture around safeguarding. This puts pupils at risk of significant harm.

The mechanisms to assure leaders that staff are carrying out their safeguarding duties effectively are not robust. When matters arise, staff do not consistently raise concerns about the conduct of others quickly enough. Consequently, there have been serious safeguarding failures that have led to pupils being unsafe.

There are too many pupils who do not attend school regularly. Many of these pupils have additional vulnerabilities. The school is not always assured of why these pupils are not attending or where they are when they are not in school.

The school does not teach pupils how to stay safe sufficiently well. Pupils do not routinely learn about important topics such as healthy relationships or personal safety. While there are staff within the pastoral team who are able to support some pupils' wellbeing needs, this resource is limited and not available to all who need it.

Leaders are now aware of the frailties in safeguarding practices at this school. They are now taking appropriate action to address these concerns. However, time is needed to ensure that an open and positive safeguarding culture is embedded.

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.

This school requires special measures

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **special measures** because it is failing to provide an acceptable standard of education, and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

The school routinely checks pupils' starting points when they join the school. They use this information to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills in reading, writing, and

mathematics. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils were provided with a range of support strategies to help them catch up. As a result, pupils were generally progressing well through the curriculum from their starting points. However, in more recent times, pupils' progress and achievement has slowed. This is because the school lacks the resources to intervene effectively, and pupils are not attending school regularly. As a result, many pupils have gaps in their learning which are not closing swiftly enough.

When pupils leave the school, most have some of the qualifications they need for their next steps in education, employment or training. This includes qualifications in English and mathematics. Most pupils go on to continue their education and largely they sustain those placements.

Urgent improvement ●

Attendance and behaviour

Urgent improvement ●

Too many pupils have infrequent attendance or are persistently absent. The school's procedures to monitor pupils' attendance at school are not rigorous enough. Many of the most vulnerable pupils are not sufficiently supported to improve their attendance. Leaders do not have the capacity to proficiently challenge the reasons why pupils are not attending. They do not routinely identify and resource strategies and plans to bring about positive change. As a result, for many pupils, their attendance rates worsen from their starting points, which is negatively impacting on their achievement and experiences.

Pupils' behaviour is not managed well. Although leaders have high expectations for behaviour, staff do not have the capacity to implement these expectations effectively. As a result, there are behaviours which go unaddressed, such as the use of inappropriate and derogatory language. Pupils' engagement and attitudes towards learning and lessons are variable. Pupils' behaviour is often disruptive and impacts the learning for those pupils who do behave well.

Bullying is not tolerated and pupils trust adults to deal with such incidents quickly and effectively.

Curriculum and teaching

Urgent improvement ●

Since the previous inspection, the school has endured a turbulent time. This includes challenges with recruitment. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning has diminished. Leaders are aware that curriculum and teaching requires urgent improvement. Although they have identified the weaknesses, the necessary actions to address these issues have not yet started.

There are many teachers who are delivering lessons outside of their subject specialism. They do not have the subject specific knowledge to implement the curriculum with impact. Consequently, there is too much focus on activities that do not ensure pupils are developing and deepening their knowledge and skills. Teaching and activities are not adapted well enough. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or

disabilities, are not learning important knowledge in a logical sequence. Pupils are not well prepared for their next steps in learning across the school's curriculum.

The school checks where pupils have gaps in their reading skills. However, interventions to help pupils close these gaps are not routinely prioritised or delivered. Therefore, pupils with significant weaknesses in their reading are not receiving the support they need to catch up and keep up.

Inclusion

Urgent improvement ●

There are structures in place to identify pupils' needs when they begin at the school. These include understanding where pupils may have gaps in their foundational knowledge and skills. Staff also develop an understanding of pupils' other barriers and relevant information, such as any involvement with social care and/or wellbeing matters. The staff team receives training on how to adapt learning and resources to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils. The school works with parents, carers, and experts such as educational psychologists to identify the support required for different pupils.

However, leaders do not monitor the effectiveness and impact of this work closely. As a result, staff do not consistently amend, adjust, or refine provision as needed. This means that strategies intended to reduce pupils' barriers are often unclear, ineffective, or not applied in practice. Consequently, pupils' learning and wellbeing needs are not consistently met, and they do not receive purposeful help that is most appropriate for them.

Interventions for pupils are infrequent and not systematically applied. As a result, not all pupils receive the additional help they need to reduce personal barriers.

Leadership and governance

Urgent improvement ●

Leaders, including governors and trustees, fully understand the school's challenges and current context. They acknowledge that there has been a lack of oversight and, because of this, pupils have not been safeguarded effectively. They recognise a decline in standards since the time of the school's previous inspection. They have begun to identify actions to address all areas of the school's work that require urgent improvement. They have utilised external expertise to help determine where policies, practices, and provision need to improve. However, the school's strategic implementation plan for change is not yet in place.

Leaders have recently prioritised improving safeguarding arrangements. They are taking action to strengthen systems that will provide assurance that pupils are consistently kept safe. For example, they are ensuring that staff recruited have the necessary skills and aptitude to work with vulnerable pupils, as well as taking steps to embed a safeguarding culture in which pupils and staff feel confident to raise concerns. These actions are at the earliest stages of implementation, and it is too early to see the impact of this work.

Despite the challenges facing the school, most staff are happy and proud to work here. They say that leaders consider their wellbeing. However, due to staffing challenges, their workload is considered to be unmanageable. This is preventing them from doing their job as well as they would like. They recognise the negative impact this is having on pupils' behaviour, emotional security, and learning, and they want the school to improve.

Staff have received professional learning from across the school, the trust, and external providers. For example, staff have been trained to understand the specific circumstances and challenges pupils may have when they start at the school, including how to manage pupils' emotional needs and behaviour. However, staff have not had the capacity to apply this training effectively.

Personal development and wellbeing

Urgent improvement 

Pupils who require pastoral support are identified when they start at the school. 'Skills Coaches' are assigned to individual pupils, and they set and review personal targets based on pupils' personal barriers. Pupils told inspectors that they value these coaches, saying they can talk to them and trust they will help them if they are worried or concerned. The school works with external providers to support pupils' mental health and wellbeing. This includes a school counsellor, specific provision around substance misuse, and support from the school's community police officer.

The taught personal development programme lacks rigour. There is an over-reliance on teaching pupils through opportunity rather than systematically. For example, some pupils have received workshops on misogyny and domestic violence, while many others have not. The school is not teaching relationships education in line with statutory guidance. Some pupils may work on particular themes of relationships education through their mentoring sessions with their coaches. However, this is not delivered through a prescribed curriculum and, in many instances, occurs as a result of behaviours displayed or pupils' experiences. This means that teaching and learning does not effectively anticipate what pupils need to know in order to keep themselves safe.

The school provides some opportunities to broaden pupils' interests as well as develop their understanding of fundamental British values and modern Britain. For example, pupils learn about different religions and citizenship. They take part in enrichment activities at school, such as cultural cooking, music production, and boxing. All pupils have access to this offer, regardless of circumstance or background.

The school's careers programme has been impacted by staffing turbulence. As a result, the programme is currently limited. Pupils have variable experiences and engagement with careers. Some pupils have had careers advice and guidance, and some have also had the opportunity to take part in work experience. Careers education is built into some aspects of the taught curriculum when links are made to careers through units of work. This variability means that pupils are not consistently well supported to make important decisions about their futures.

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

Leaders have not ensured that the safeguarding arrangements in the school are robust. Furthermore, pupils have not routinely been taught important information about how to keep themselves safe. As such, pupils have been vulnerable to risk and may not have been safe. Leaders, including those from the trust, are taking action to address this; however, time is needed to resolve all concerns.

There have been multiple changes to staffing at the school and, at the time of this inspection, a number of vacancies still need to be filled. Leaders have not established an effective plan to address this. As a result, the teaching of some lessons is not effective. Too often, pupils do not engage well or meaningfully with learning activities. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as other disadvantaged groups, do not routinely receive the support they need to thrive. Pupils are not achieving academically or personally as well as they should.

Pupils are mostly happy to attend this school. They like that the school provides breakfast and that there are adults they can talk to if they have any problems. This helps them to feel valued. However, they also recognise that there have been many recent changes to staff. Pupils do not have positive working relationships with all adults. As a result, they do not always speak to staff or to one another respectfully. Pupils do not typically respond positively to adults when being supported to manage their own behaviour.

The school does not ensure that pupils attend regularly enough. Too many pupils are late to lessons or absent from them, and are therefore not keeping up with their education.

Next steps

- Leaders must ensure that they secure a strong open culture of safeguarding. Leaders and those responsible for governance must ensure that they maintain an accurate oversight of safeguarding processes and policies.
 - Leaders should ensure they understand the specific barriers pupils have to regular attendance. They must use this information to develop strategies to support pupils, particularly vulnerable pupils, attend school regularly, and monitor the impact of interventions.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils and staff understand how to meet their high expectations in relation to behaviour and conduct. Leaders must ensure that staff have the knowledge and expertise to consistently implement the school's policies to manage behaviour.
 - Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that leaders at all levels have the capacity to identify, tackle and monitor the weaknesses in the school, so that these are addressed with consistency and pace.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers have the subject-specific knowledge and expertise needed to teach the curriculum as expected. Leaders must ensure that teachers have the knowledge to adapt teaching so all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, can learn the intended content.
 - Leaders should ensure that relationships and sex education is taught in line with statutory guidance through a well-planned and coherent curriculum that all pupils can access.
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About this inspection

The school is part of Orchard Hill College 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, John Prior, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ray Leclercq.

The inspection began on 9 December 2025 as a focused monitoring inspection. The inspection was deemed a full inspection. As a full inspection requires more time to complete than a focused monitoring inspection, inspectors returned on 10 December to complete the full inspection. The focused monitoring inspection was carried out following a number of complaints made to Ofsted that raised serious concerns. His Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole school issues that were raised. Inspectors sought to establish whether the school's safeguarding practices effectively keep pupils safe.

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 executive headteacher, senior leaders, governors, trustees, executive leaders from the trust, teaching and non-teaching staff during the inspection.

The school does not meet 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.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

HMCI strongly recommends that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers. The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any monitoring inspection we carry out.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the allegations were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' evaluations.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

Pupils who attend this school have either been excluded from other schools or are at risk of exclusion.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

The school is registered for pupils from 5 to 19. At the time of this inspection, there were no primary-school aged pupils on roll.

The interim executive headteacher took up their post in November 2025.

Executive headteacher: Reece Nicholls

Lead inspector:

Kieran Bird, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Sarah Saunders, His Majesty's Inspector

Simon Conway, 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 9 December 2025

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

50

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.

School capacity

120

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.

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

46.3%

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

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

4.00%

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.

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

32.00%

What does this mean?

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

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.

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
2024/25 (1 term)	39.8%
2023/24 (3 term)	32.8%
2022/23 (3 term)	S

Persistent absence

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

Year	This school
2024/25 (1 term)	85.4%
2023/24 (3 term)	66.0%
2022/23 (3 term)	S

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

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