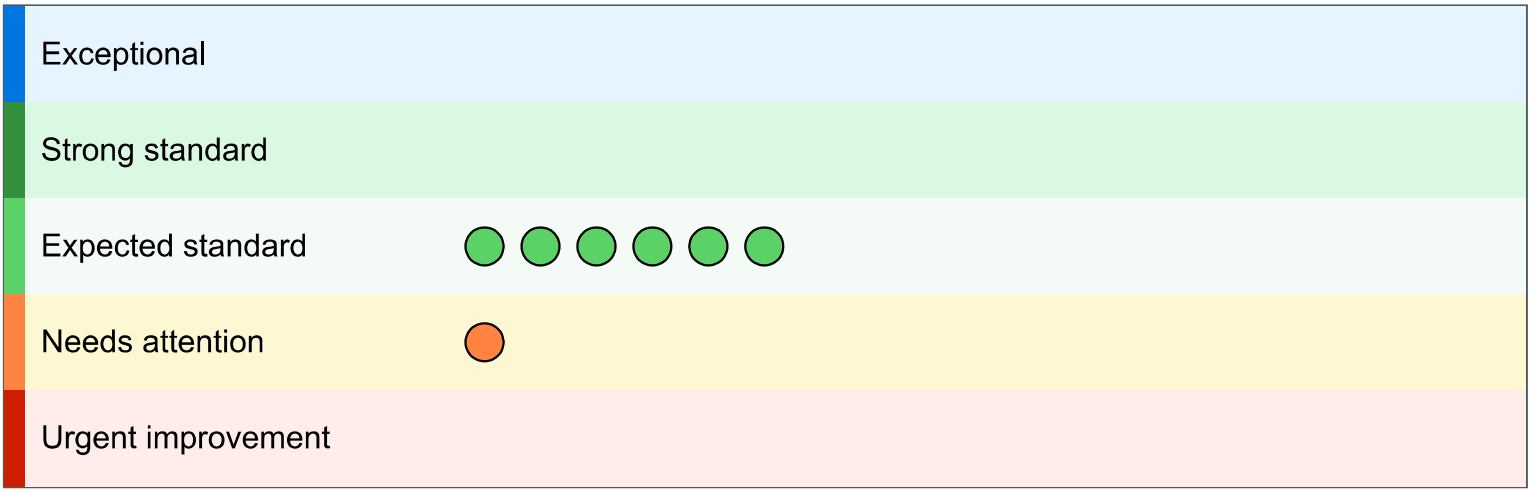
Rossmore School

Address: Red Lion Lane, Little Sutton, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH66 1HF

Unique reference number (URN): 111112

Inspection report: 22 September 2026



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

Leaders show commitment to improving attendance. They carefully monitor pupils' absence and punctuality. Leaders take precise action to support pupils and their families when patterns change. They set targets that are closely monitored. Where required, leaders focus on personalised strategies to bring about improvement. For example, some pupils, who have barriers to attendance, benefit from a ‘soft start’ with pastoral staff or time in the dedicated class ‘snug’ to get ready for learning. In most cases, leaders secure improvements to individual pupils' attendance. Leaders are determined to continue this work to secure increased attendance for all pupils and to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged.

On the whole, pupils behave well. They show respect for each other and the staff in school. They enjoy coming to school and look forward to learning. Staff reinforce high expectations and routines consistently. The school's ‘ready, safe and respectful’ values are embedded. Pupils listen attentively in lessons, and as a result the learning environment is calm and purposeful. Leaders do not tolerate discriminatory or unkind language. Bullying is rare. Pupils know what to do if it did occur. They are confident that staff would intervene and deal with this decisively. When pupils struggle with their emotions, well-trained staff provide sensitive and effective support.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school’s priorities. They have taken decisive action to improve the quality of the school’s curriculum and teaching. As a result, pupils experience a broad, ambitious curriculum. Lessons follow a familiar structure across the school. This means that most pupils know what is expected of them and can positively engage in learning. Leaders provide staff with the training that they need to teach the curriculum.

On the whole, teaching is effective. Typically, teachers use assessment effectively to address any misconceptions in learning and support pupils to close gaps. They are increasingly confident in tailoring and adapting learning for pupils, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Teachers focus on ensuring that pupils secure the basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics that they need to access and navigate the curriculum successfully. They are consistent in their high expectations for pencil grip, letter and number formation and fluency in handwriting. However, some older pupils require additional support to ensure that their basic skills are secure. While improvements are evident, leaders recognise that this support is not fully embedded across all year groups.

Early years

Expected standard

Children in the early years benefit from a well-thought-out curriculum that supports their development across all areas of learning. Books, stories and rhymes feature from the start. Staff's effective teaching of phonics means that children get off to a flying start in their learning journey. Children develop secure early reading skills and a genuine enthusiasm for books. Alongside this, staff develop children's mathematics, writing and communication through carefully crafted learning experiences. Staff adapt activities so that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, learn the curriculum successfully.

Staff forge warm, caring relationships with children. They develop children's language through questioning, modelling and through engaging in discussion. Staff model expected behaviours. As a result, children learn to take turns, share and listen to the views and ideas of others.

The learning environment, indoors and outdoors, is exciting and accessible. It is organised to encourage children's curiosity, independence and exploration. Sheltered by trees, resilient children eagerly don their 'puddle suits' and wellies and carry on learning, whatever the weather.

Children in the Nursery learn well from their Reception role models. Established routines support all children to feel secure and confident. Staff know children and their families well. They work together to respond quickly to any emerging needs. As a result, children feel safe, included and ready for the next stage of their education.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders are quick to identify the barriers that some pupils face to their learning or wellbeing. They act swiftly to reduce them. Leaders carefully track pupils' progress from their starting points. They capture how pupils are feeling and whether their learning is improving as intended. Where strategies and support are not successful, leaders adapt pupils' learning plans to address this.

Leaders ensure that staff have the necessary information, resources and training to adapt the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. When necessary, they call upon the expertise of external agencies to provide staff with the precise guidance they need to meet pupils' needs effectively. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported to learn the curriculum successfully, alongside their peers. Pupils generally make good progress against their targets. Those who are known (or previously known) to social care are well understood, cared for and benefit from the school's nurturing atmosphere and dedicated pastoral care.

Leaders and governors have developed a well-considered pupil premium strategy that is specific and precisely tailored. Pupils who are disadvantaged benefit from effective support. Their most recent outcomes, at the end of key stage 2, compare favourably with national averages.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders and governors have a detailed understanding of their pupils, the school community and the local context. This enables them to prioritise their work and improvement strategies effectively. Pupils' best interests lie at the heart of everything they do.

Governors are closely involved in all aspects of Rossmore life. They have a clear understanding of leaders' priorities. Governors scrutinise leadership actions in detail with an appropriate level of challenge and support. For example, they check on pupils' persistent absence data with a focus on how this impacts on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. They work with leaders to address barriers. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively, including those relating to safeguarding. They ensure that additional funding for pupils who are disadvantaged is spent wisely and has its intended impact.

Leaders are excellent role models. They care deeply about staff wellbeing. They promote open communication and actively listen to staff views. They consider workload carefully when making decisions. Leaders ensure that staff training aligns with school improvement priorities. This improves staff confidence when they implement new initiatives. Staff survey responses reflect the high levels of confidence in leadership.

Leaders work in partnership with parents, carers and other external agencies. This helps to ensure that pupils, including those with SEND, quickly receive any additional support they may need. On the whole, parents are positive about the school. They appreciate the care and support that their children receive. Leaders are committed to engaging positively with families. They regularly invite parents into school for events. As a result, parents feel part of the school community.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Pupils learn a personal, social, health and economic curriculum that is well sequenced and thoughtfully adapted to meet their needs. Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development and wellbeing. Carefully planned nurture provision provides emotional regulation and social support for those pupils who need it.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the community. For example, they learn about cyber bullying and the importance of not sharing personal information online. Pupils learn about water safety, road safety and the dangers of the nearby railway line. They are aware of how to stay physically and mentally healthy and can explain the importance of equality.

Pupils are respectful and articulate. They have a thirst for knowledge and talk with maturity about different faiths and cultures. Pupils celebrate difference. They know that everyone should be treated with equal respect. Pupils can link this to their understanding of fundamental British values and their own personal values. Pupils are proud of their school and benefit from a caring, empowering ethos. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

Pupils grow within their school community. For example, they have access to Rossmore's 'Lion's Pride Award' which celebrates how they adopt healthy lifestyles, take on 'adventure', know their role in the community and, crucially, how they can make a positive difference. Staff encourage pupils to be creative, independent and to go out of their comfort zone to earn recognition. These experiences contribute to pupils' resilience, sense of community and social responsibility. Other leadership opportunities, such as being a member of the school's parliament, allow pupils to support, guide and represent their peers.

Classroom learning is enhanced by trips to places such as a boat museum and Lady Lever Art Gallery. Pupils play sports and have access to clubs. They have opportunities to sing in the choir and to play in musical ensembles. Leaders carefully check pupils' participation in wider activities. They identify and remove barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking part.

Needs attention

Achievement **Needs attention**

Over time, pupils' end of key stage 2 attainment has been consistently below the national average, with too few pupils reaching the higher standard. This is because pupils have gaps in their basic knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. Such gaps hinder pupils' ability to learn well across the curriculum and to achieve as well as they should. The impact of leaders' actions on older pupils' achievement is not yet evidenced. This means that some pupils are not well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Leaders have taken decisive action to secure the effective teaching of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. This has led to improvements in the achievement of younger pupils. Outcomes in the phonics and the multiplication tables check sit close to the national average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities generally attain well from their starting points. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development by the end of early years is above national average.

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

Pupils are proud of their school. They have a clear sense of belonging. Pupils know that they are valued and recognised as members of a close-knit community. The school's much used 'Take Pride, Aim High' motto provides pupils with a clear model for behaviour and relationships. This echoes around the school. Pupils do not worry about bullying. They know that staff will help them if they have any worries. Pupils are safe and well supported. Staff prioritise pupils' wellbeing so they feel secure and ready to learn.

Most pupils attend regularly, behave well and work hard. They follow instructions and show respect for others. Pupils use breaktimes to catch up with friends, invent games and play sports. They play together safely and use equipment responsibly. Staff model kindness and join in with activities, which strengthens relationships further.

Pupils enjoy learning because they find the curriculum interesting and relevant. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive the support that they need to learn alongside their peers. Despite this, some pupils, especially older pupils, are not ready for the next steps in their education. This is because they have not benefited fully from leaders' changes to the curriculum. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge, which hold them back from achieving as well as they should.

Pupils speak enthusiastically about the broad range of experiences that extend learning beyond the classroom. Visitors, school trips and residential opportunities provide pupils with opportunities to develop curiosity, resilience and confidence. Leadership opportunities, such as the 'Pupil Parliament', allow pupils to contribute meaningfully to school life. Everyone gets the chance to take part. Pupils are tolerant and respectful. They celebrate the differences that make each person unique. On the whole, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the gaps in pupils' foundational knowledge, especially older pupils, are reduced so that pupils attain well and are ready for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders should further embed their work to ensure all pupils attend school regularly and that the persistent absence of some groups of pupils is further reduced.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Tony Williams.

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, representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors, a local authority representative, staff and pupils.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school uses no alternative provision.

The school provides before- and after-school care.

The school has undergone leadership changes since the previous inspection. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2026.

Headteacher: Bethany Bouckley

Lead inspector:
Nichola Tomkow, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:
Liz Davidson, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from different sources. More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 22 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

192
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: 268

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)

23.73%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.5%

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

5.21%
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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

15.63%
Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below 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	43%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	53%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	30%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	43%	60%	Below

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	62%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	67%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	48%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	70%	73%	Close to average

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	70%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	80%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	67%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	63%	71%	Below

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	61%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	70%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	48%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	63%	73%	Below

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	32%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	50%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	11%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33%	44%	Close to average

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	52%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	60%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	33%	62%	Below
2022/23 (final)	67%	60%	Close to average

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	64%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	80%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	44%	58%	Below
2022/23 (final)	67%	58%	Close to average

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	40%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	60%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	22%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33%	59%	Below

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	32%	68%	-36 pp
2024/25 (final)	50%	69%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	11%	67%	-56 pp
2022/23 (final)	33%	66%	-33 pp

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	52%	80%	-28 pp
2024/25 (final)	60%	81%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	33%	80%	-46 pp
2022/23 (final)	67%	78%	-12 pp

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	64%	78%	-14 pp
2024/25 (final)	80%	78%	2 pp
2023/24 (final)	44%	78%	-33 pp
2022/23 (final)	67%	77%	-11 pp

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	40%	80%	-40 pp
2024/25 (final)	60%	81%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	22%	79%	-57 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	33%	79%	-46 pp

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 (3 term)	5.3%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.3%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	5.7%	5.9%	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 (3 term)	11.0%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	17.6%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	19.9%	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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