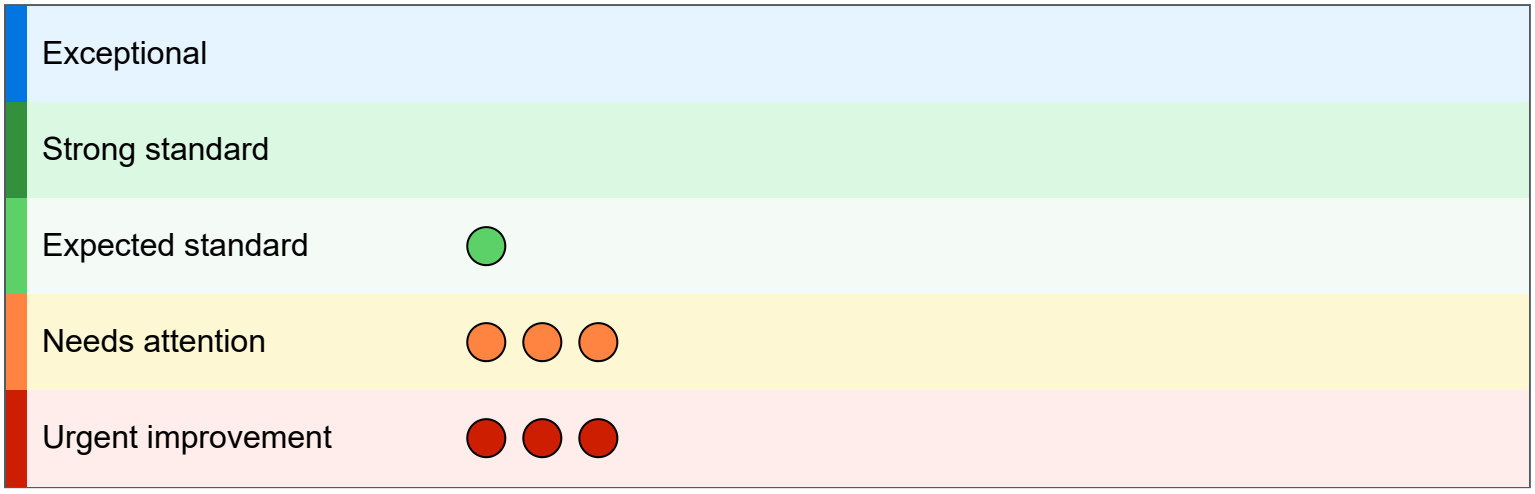
Rainford Brook Lodge Community Primary School

Address: Rufford Road, Rainford, St Helens, Merseyside, WA11 8JX

Unique reference number (URN): 149929

Inspection report: 14 July 2026



⊗ Safeguarding standards not met

Leaders have not ensured that there is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that adequately protects children from harm. They do not have a clear understanding of safeguarding practices to make sure that they are effective. This has led to some significant weaknesses in how well pupils are kept safe. Leaders do not have a suitable oversight of their systems. They do not demonstrate the capacity to make improvements to their safeguarding procedures, including how they manage accidents and injuries in school.

Staff know pupils well and can identify the signs of potential harm. They report their concerns following the school's procedures. However, leaders do not consistently take action to address concerns in line with the school's policy. Leaders do not review logs of safeguarding concerns consistently, so they do not have a precise understanding of the frequency or severity of child-on-child violence. On occasion, leaders' follow-up actions to safeguarding concerns do not make sure that pupils' voices are heard and further occurrences are prevented. Leaders do not maintain accurate and detailed safeguarding records. Some pupils do not get the help that they need and continue to be at risk of harm.

Those responsible for governance do not fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. They do not have a precise oversight of how effectively the school safeguards its pupils. At the time of inspection, not all the required checks on staff and those responsible for governance had been completed. While leaders acted to resolve these concerns during the onsite inspection, leaders and those responsible for governance do not recognise that any such failings do not reflect an open and positive safeguarding culture. Leaders have not created a culture in which pupils and families feel confident that concerns will be acted on quickly.

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.

Expected standard

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Pupils benefit from a well-considered personal development offer that draws together assemblies, curriculum subjects and wider experiences beyond the classroom. This programme has been adapted to reflect the local community and to widen pupils' experience of the world beyond it. Pupils reflect on their own beliefs and experiences. Through their lessons, they consider questions about themselves and others. Pupils demonstrate respect and tolerance, as well as a secure understanding of right and wrong.

Pupils learn about fundamental British values and how to treat everyone fairly, regardless of differences, through the curriculum. For example, they study content that explores different cultures and periods, such as the study of Baghdad and the transatlantic slave trade. Pupils learn how to stay healthy and safe, for example through cycle safety training and education about staying safe near open water. They recognise risks such as when using the internet and learn how to build healthy habits for future living.

Pupils take part in a range of activities that help them develop new talents and interests. For example, pupils take on leadership roles within an environmental group, work with staff to run a gardening club linked to the science curriculum, and take part in a joint sustainability project with the local secondary school. This helps pupils build their sense of worth, resilience and the ability to work well with others. They develop a clear sense of belonging to their school and wider community.

Pastoral support is well established. Pupils know who to speak to if they are worried and can use worry boxes to raise a concern privately. Staff refer pupils for extra support when needed, including for bereavement or anxiety. These opportunities help pupils to develop the confidence they need for life in modern Britain.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not achieve as well as they could. Although this group represents small numbers, they do not generally make suitable progress across the curriculum. Pupils do not remember their learning well enough for these gaps to close quickly. This is linked to weaknesses in how their needs are identified. For example, some pupils' difficulties are not recognised until they are already significantly behind their peers, making it a challenge to catch up.

In contrast, by the end of key stage 2, pupils’ attainment is above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics combined. This is also the case for the phonics screening check, where the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard is above the national average. Pupils are generally well prepared for their next stage in education, but for those

who struggle with learning, such as pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, this is not the case.

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention

Staff do not apply agreed rules and sanctions fairly and consistently. Leaders do not make sure that incidents of bullying, discrimination and physical violence are dealt with quickly and effectively. They do not make sure that ongoing concerns are reported and recorded accurately. For example, staff do not always record and act on rough play that leads to repeated injuries. This means that leaders do not pick up on patterns of concerning behaviours as a wider trend that requires urgent responses. In contrast, pupils behave well in lessons and learn without distraction. They follow routines and respond with politeness and respect to staff.

Leaders understand the reasons why some pupils do not attend school regularly. They complete analysis to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance. They intervene early to support these pupils and their families to reduce absences. As a result, pupils' attendance rates are above the national average, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is also below the national average.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

Teachers do not consistently adapt teaching to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This limits how well some of these pupils build and remember knowledge across subjects. Staff consider different ways to deliver lessons, but they are not well matched to what each individual actually needs. At times, this hinders how well pupils with SEND access the same learning as their peers.

Leaders responsible for individual subjects have taken decisive steps to make improvements to the curriculum and how it is taught. They have a sharp focus on how pupils in their early stages of learning develop the skills for speaking, reading, writing and using number. Teachers receive training and support to deliver English and mathematics with confidence. They make regular checks on learning to make sure that pupils secure the essential knowledge to support future learning.

Teachers are clear on how learning builds over time. They typically deliver new learning clearly with an understanding of how pupils remember what has been taught previously. Through checking pupils' understanding within lessons, teachers can identify any pupils who need help to catch up. This is used well in reading and mathematics so that staff can address gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly.

Urgent improvement

Early years

Urgent improvement

Leaders have not established a curriculum that identifies the key knowledge that children need to learn during their time in early years. They have not precisely considered what children will learn progressively across the Nursery class and the Reception class. Leaders have not made sure that staff have access to appropriate training. This means that staff do not demonstrate a secure understanding of how young children learn well. They do not provide learning opportunities that are well matched to children's developmental needs. This means that children do not always encounter the right learning at the right time.

In contrast, reading is prioritised from the start. The teaching of phonics and early mathematics is more positive. Children learn the sounds that they need to read and write words accurately in the Reception year. They build their understanding and use of number patterns to set them up well for future learning in mathematics. Staff make checks to find out what children know and can do. However, they do not consistently use this information, or their knowledge of children's needs, to close gaps quickly. This means some children fall further behind rather than catching up.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is generally supported through the warm and trusting relationships with staff. Children feel secure and happy in school. However, some children struggle to manage their emotions, and adults do not identify or address the reasons for this. Children are not as well prepared for Year 1 as they need to be, particularly disadvantaged children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Inclusion

Urgent improvement

Leaders do not assess and identify needs with the precision or the swiftness needed. They do not recognise the importance of early identification to reduce barriers to learning and/or wellbeing from the start. Referrals to external agencies are often delayed. This means that pupils do not receive the support that they need from the time that they need it.

Staff are not clear on how best to help pupils with additional needs to access learning. The training that they have recently received has given them confidence to address pupils' sensory needs. However, staff do not have a depth of understanding across other areas of need. Consequently, support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities does not lead to them experiencing success in school.

Leaders do not check the impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils or adjust support when it is not working. They do not play an active role in local partnership working or seek professional advice on how best to support pupils who are struggling in school. Pupils known to children's social care are not well supported. Their personal education plans show low ambition beyond taking part in wider opportunities.

Leadership and governance **Urgent improvement**

Leaders and those responsible for governance have overseen a decline in the quality of education and care for pupils in this school. They understand the school's context and have taken action to address some curriculum development, but they have not identified or addressed the most serious weaknesses. Leaders have not chosen the right priorities, which has led to areas of the school's work failing. Weaknesses in safeguarding, early years and inclusion are systemic.

Those responsible for governance know the school well, but they do not maintain clear strategic oversight. At times, they do not make adequate checks to understand how well the school is doing. The support and challenge they provide to leaders does not address the weaknesses or prioritise the areas for improvement with the urgency needed. Governors and trustees are aware of their statutory duties but do not fulfil them, particularly in relation to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and safeguarding. They do not consistently ask searching questions to hold leaders to account or show that they are open to challenge. Capacity within the trust is still developing. Trustees do not have systems in place to check the work of school leaders and the local governing body. This means that they have not provided the structured challenge needed to identify and address weaknesses.

Staff are generally proud to work in this school. They appreciate the regular support that they receive and how leaders consider their wellbeing and workload when planning changes.

Most parents and carers are positive about the school and would recommend it to others. However, a small number of parents do not feel confident that leaders and those responsible for governance take their concerns seriously.

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

Pupils in this school are not kept safe. Those responsible for leading the school do not take preventive action to reduce potential risk of harm to pupils. They do not take incidents of child-on-child violence seriously. At times, this means that pupils continue to be hurt by some other pupils during the school day.

Pupils who need extra support do not have their needs identified quickly or accurately. This means that they do not get the help that they need to learn well and thrive in school. Children in the early years do not receive the standard of education they deserve. They do not access a curriculum that is ambitious for them and fully prepares them for their next stage in learning. Despite this, from Year 1, pupils typically progress well through the curriculum. Pupils without any barriers to learning generally achieve well and leave school well prepared for secondary education.

Many pupils are happy in school and attend regularly. They settle well with staff who genuinely care for them. Behaviour in classrooms is calm and positive. Pupils demonstrate a genuine interest in learning and show respect. Many pupils value their friendships and are

polite and kind to one another. They understand that certain behaviours both in school and online are not acceptable and report their concerns with maturity. Pupils know what bullying is and they say incidents of serious behaviour are rare. However, pupils are not confident that staff prevent unsafe behaviours of some other pupils from happening consistently.

Pupils are proud to attend Rainford Brook Lodge. They relish the opportunities that they have, such as attending a wide range of clubs, such as STEM, coding, rounders and choir. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have full access to all enrichment experiences. Almost all pupils get to represent their school in sporting tournaments. They respect cultural diversity through visits to places of worship, including the local church and a mosque. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders must ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities in relation to child-on-child violence, so that patterns are identified and pupils are protected from harm.
- Leaders must ensure that they consistently fulfil their responsibilities in relation to safer recruitment, reporting concerns, making referrals and record-keeping.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance must build a culture that is open to challenge and learns from safeguarding incidents, so that pupils are kept safe.
- Trustees must strengthen their oversight of the school’s statutory core functions so that they can hold leaders to account effectively on behalf of pupils.
- Leaders must put in place a well-sequenced early years curriculum that builds progressively across the Nursery and Reception classes so that children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders must develop staff's knowledge of how young children learn, so that children in the early years learn well across the 7 areas of learning.
- Leaders must ensure that pupils' needs and barriers to learning are identified swiftly and precisely, so that pupils get the right support from the start.
- Leaders must ensure that adaptations to teaching are precisely matched to pupils' needs, so that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn well.

About this inspection

This school is part of Everyone Matters Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Ian Young, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jayne Lloyd.

This inspection took place on 14 and 15 July 2026.

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 inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff.

The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) 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 inspections we carry out.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

The school also, under the same registration, runs a nursery class for 3- and 4-year-old children.

Headteacher: Phil Reece

Lead inspector:
Emily Morris, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Sheena Clark, His Majesty's Inspector
Jackie Stillings, 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 14 July 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

226
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: 272

School capacity

233
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: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

8.72%
Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.3%

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

1.77%
Below 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

7.96%

Well below 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		61%	
2024/25 (final)	74%	62%	Above
2023/24		61%	

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
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 (final)	77%	75%	Close to average
2023/24		74%	
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 (final)	84%	72%	Above
2023/24		72%	
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 (final)	87%	74%	Above
2023/24		73%	
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 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24		46%	
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%	

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24		62%	
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 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24		58%	
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 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24		59%	
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 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24		67%	
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 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24		80%	
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 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24		78%	
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 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24		79%	
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 (3 term)	3.5%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.0%	5.5%	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 (3 term)	2.2%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.1%	14.6%	Below

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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