

Our Lady's RC Primary School

Address: Boycott Road, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR2 7RN

Unique reference number (URN): 116883

Inspection report: 2 June 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 

Leaders are clear on the importance of school attendance. Leaders have worked hard to improve attendance rates for different groups of pupils. As a result, attendance is now above national averages, and persistent absence is below national averages. Leaders routinely analyse absence information to identify patterns and trends. They support families at an early stage when absence is a concern. Leaders recognise that a few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are missing too much school. Leaders are working hard in collaboration with parents and pupils to address this issue. Their work is beginning to pay off.

Most pupils behave well and are attentive in lessons. The school is a calm and welcoming place to be. Leaders have recently reviewed the behaviour policy. Pupils understand the positive ways that behaviour is managed in school. Staff are well trained and have a clear understanding of the school's approach. Leaders have established effective pastoral support to help pupils. Pupils benefit from this care and attention to help control their emotions and learn well. They are mostly cooperative and kind across the school. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that it is always addressed when it occurs.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children receive a nurturing and well-structured start to their school life. Children trust the enthusiastic staff in an inclusive environment. Staff place clear emphasis on communication and language. They model and extend vocabulary through stories, songs and conversation. Most children engage and sustain their interest, which means they can learn well.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is ambitious and carefully sequenced. Phonics sessions follow a clear structure that revisits, teaches, practises and applies knowledge. This means children learn to identify sounds and develop their reading skills. In the provision for two-year-olds, staff support children with English as an additional language thoughtfully. Several staff are multilingual, which enables children to settle quickly and feel they belong.

Children who need extra help receive it promptly and at the right level, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged children and those with other vulnerabilities. Leaders make effective use of monitoring and professional development to maintain quality. Positive relationships with parents and carers effectively support wellbeing and development. Staff provide attentive care and meet personal needs sensitively. Children are prepared for transition to Year 1 through detailed handover processes that support continuity.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that inclusion sits at the heart of all decision-making. They have created a culture where inclusion is visible in daily practice. Staff identify needs early and accurately, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils or those known to social care. Leaders have implemented effective

training programmes to ensure staff understand how to adapt provision effectively. Staff make appropriate adjustments that reduce barriers to learning and wellbeing. They typically apply these well in lessons.

Pupils' support is regularly reviewed and changed, for example for those with education, health and care plans. This support is carefully tracked to make sure it is effective, helping pupils with SEND to progress well from their starting points. Staff ensure the strong pastoral offer is part of this provision. Pupils take short breaks to ensure they can focus on learning. Leaders work closely with families and external professionals to shape support. This partnership raises aspirations for pupils with additional needs.

Leaders engage collaboratively with local support teams, including in health. Leaders use funding for disadvantaged pupils carefully and secure positive outcomes. For example, they plan effective alternative provision thoughtfully, supported by the local authority, to support pupils in accessing appropriate education.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

The passionate new leadership team are working at pace to further develop this school. Leaders have rightly understood the school's strengths and identified areas for development. They have taken appropriate and effective action to improve provision and outcomes, and continue to do so, particularly for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils and pupils known to children's social care. Leaders carefully select alternative provision to support individual pupils. This means pupils are typically well supported. Leaders are aware there is more work to do to continue to improve standards across the school.

Leaders have worked hard to build positive relationships with parents and carers. Parents are generally positive about the school. Leaders are very mindful of the need to continue engaging with parents and carers.

Experienced governors obtain information from a range of relevant sources to ensure they are well informed. They promote improvement. They are effective in providing strategic oversight through consistent challenge and support to help leaders. They are aware of their statutory duties.

Staff wellbeing and workload are considered in leaders' decision-making. Leaders provide professional learning opportunities that strengthen teaching practice and target staff's individual development needs, for example in learning about inclusive practice and the reviewed behaviour policy. Leaders are working with staff to further develop this work.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed a coherent personal development programme that supports all pupils' wider growth, incorporating the school's values and ethos. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their beliefs and respect others' values. This means they consider how to act responsibly and respond positively towards others.

Pastoral support for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is highly effective and contributes positively to pupils' wellbeing, for example through 'snack and chat' opportunities that build positive relationships with trusted adults. Pupils know who to go to if they need help. Pupils who need additional support are aided by trained staff in school, including pupils with SEND. Pupils develop a sense of community. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and viewed as an integral part of the school.

The school contributes positively to the local community and regularly invites visitors in to share their own cultural backgrounds. This means pupils develop a sense of understanding and belonging. Pupils understand the importance of fundamental British values. They demonstrate tolerance and respect when considering people's differences. Pupils develop social skills through a wide range of trips, clubs and activities that promote collaboration and learning about the wider world.

The school offers a range of wider experiences that nurture pupils' talents and interests, such as gardening or sports clubs. Leaders track participation, including for those who are disadvantaged, to ensure that opportunities are open to all.

Pupils learn capably about relationships and sex education and health education in an age-appropriate way. They thoroughly understand the importance of staying safe online. Pupils are taught road and train safety, which helps them develop confidence in transitioning to secondary school. Overall, pupils are well supported to move to the next stage of education confidently.

Needs attention ●

Achievement

Needs attention ●

Over time, pupils have not secured well enough the important foundations that they need in reading and writing. There are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding when writing, particularly in punctuation and spelling. Leaders are aware of these areas for development.

In the early years and key stage 1, most pupils secure the required knowledge in reading and phonics. Pupils generally achieve well in the Year 4 multiplication tables check. Pupils have achieved broadly in line with the national averages in tests taken at the end of key stage 2 over time, but fewer pupils reached the higher standards than their peers nationally in reading and mathematics.

On the whole, pupils achieve well in many other aspects of the curriculum. Pupils who face disadvantage generally achieve as well as their peers. There are many children in the school with English as an additional language. They are generally well supported to achieve along with their peers. Overall, pupils are typically ready for the next stages of their education.

Leaders have outlined a clear vision for the teaching of the curriculum, but the quality of teaching varies across the school. In some areas of the curriculum, teachers do not consistently use checks on learning accurately to help pupils correct their errors. This means that sometimes pupils do not always build secure foundations in writing. Leaders have correctly identified these inconsistencies and have plans to rapidly improve them.

The curriculum is largely well designed and sequenced. Most teachers have the subject expertise that they need. Leaders have developed an improved focus on reading. Leaders have ensured that, since the last inspection, all staff who teach phonics are properly trained. Phonics is taught regularly and systematically. Pupils' books usually match their abilities, and pupils who fall behind are supported to catch up quickly.

Staff have a clear awareness of the specific needs of pupils in their classes. Pupils learn with success where staff make relevant adaptations. These adaptations support pupils to typically make effective progress, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Generally, pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education.

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

A positive and inclusive culture is at the heart of Our Lady's RC Primary. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they are safe and feel welcome. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and caring. Pupils value their friendships. Pupils live out the school values and Catholic ethos. Through regular assemblies and lessons, pupils learn about and reflect on life in modern Britain and further afield. Most pupils behave well across the school. Bullying is rare. When it does occur, staff act quickly to support everyone involved. Pupils feel safe at school. Most pupils attend regularly, and persistent absence has fallen.

Staff provide high-quality pastoral care. This helps pupils feel well cared for. Pupils enjoy a wide range of inclusive practice that helps them to learn. In the main, staff adapt their teaching to meet pupils' individual needs well. This ensures that generally, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils, learn successfully from their starting points.

Pupils want to know more and remember more. Children in the early years typically build secure foundations in their learning and development. However, not all older pupils benefit from high-quality teaching. Sometimes, pupils' common mistakes are not picked up and persist. As a result, some pupils have missed the early reading and writing skills that they need, such as understanding punctuation and spelling rules. At times, teachers do not carefully check learning to ensure pupils have learned what teachers intend. Leaders are aware of these issues and are working hard to overcome them.

A range of extra-curricular activities, such as trips, sports and gardening club, help pupils to discover their talents and interests. These wider opportunities benefit all pupils, including those with SEND or pupils who have other vulnerabilities.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment information consistently and effectively to address misconceptions and help pupils apply prior knowledge to new learning.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils gain the essential knowledge that they need to enable them to achieve well across the curriculum, and particularly in reading.
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About this inspection

The co-chairs of the board of governors in this school are Stuart Fox and Phillip Dixon.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our updated inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Information about this inspection:

Inspectors spoke with school leaders during the inspection. They held meetings with the headteacher, school leaders, teachers and pupils. They looked at pupils' work and books. They also talked to pupils and staff to gather information about school life.

To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.

Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text comments.

The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Headteacher : Aga Przybylska

Lead inspector:

Rob Matthews, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Karen O'Keefe, Ofsted Inspector

Glenn Duggan-Seville, 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 2 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

190

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)

18.95%

Close to 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

2.63%

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

20.53%

Above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well 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.

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	60%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	60%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	61%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	57%	60%	Close to average

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	66%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	67%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	71%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	61%	73%	Below

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	76%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	77%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	77%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	71%	Close to average

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	75%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	77%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	74%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	73%	Close to average

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	38%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	38%	47%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	25%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	50%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	38%	63%	Below
2023/24 (final)	63%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	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	63%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	63%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	58%	Above

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	54%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	63%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	63%	59%	Close to average

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	38%	68%	-30 pp
2024/25 (final)	38%	69%	-32 pp
2023/24 (final)	25%	67%	-42 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	66%	-16 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	50%	80%	-30 pp
2024/25 (final)	38%	81%	-43 pp
2023/24 (final)	63%	80%	-17 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	78%	-28 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	63%	78%	-15 pp
2024/25 (final)	63%	78%	-16 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
2022/23 (final)	75%	77%	-2 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	54%	80%	-26 pp
2024/25 (final)	63%	81%	-18 pp
2023/24 (final)	38%	79%	-42 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	63%	79%	-17 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)	4.5%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.2%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	5.6%	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)	10.1%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	16.2%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	13.4%	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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