



Kindness, Respect, Collaboration, Resilience, Curiosity, Endeavour

Rugby Free Secondary School

SEF 2025 - 2026

'Leaders have created an encouraging and inclusive environment. Pupils benefit from a school community that includes pupils from a wide range of different backgrounds and cultures.'

'Pupils feel confident 'to be themselves' at Rugby Free Secondary School.'

'Pupils embody the school values of kindness and respect in their daily interactions with staff and each other. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong.'





	2022	2023	2024
School number on roll	Below average 875	Close to average 976	Close to average 1098
Sixth form number on roll	Well below average 62	Below average 140	Close to average 193
School % FSM6	Above average 33	Above average 33	Above average 31
School % SEN support	Well above average 18	Above average 17	Well above average 20
Sixth form % SEN support	Well above average 18	Well above average 16	Well above average 16
School % EHC plan	Close to average 2.1	Close to average 2.5	Above average 3.3
Sixth form % EHC plan	Well below average 0	Well above average 2.1	Above average 1.6
School % EAL	Above average 22	Above average 24	Above average 24
Sixth form % EAL	Close to average 15	Close to average 16	Above average 26
School % stability	Well below average 87	Well below average 86	Well below average 85
Pupil base deprivation	Below average	Below average	Below average
School location deprivation	Above average	Above average	Above average

Areas for Development Identified in Ofsted Inspection (July 2021)

"In some subjects, teachers do not check pupils' understanding within lessons well enough. This means that teachers do not know which pupils need extra help, pupils do not get timely support. Leaders should ensure that teachers know how to check learning systematically in their subjects, so that teachers are able to give pupils the help they need quickly."

Our Trust:

Rugby Free Secondary School is part of a five-school Academy Trust (Triumph Learning Trust), alongside Rugby Free Primary School, Courthouse Green Primary School, Alderman's Green Primary School, and Cawston Primary School. RFSS is the only Secondary school in the MAT.

Background:

Rugby Free Secondary School opened in 2016 in a derelict Primary School building a few metres down the road from its current building. Initially, the school opened with a STEMM ideology, with the original Headteacher placing high value in Music and the Arts, and advertising the school as a viable alternative to the two Grammar schools in the area, without the need to pass the 11+ examination. In 2019, the school received an 'Inadequate' judgement in all four Inspection areas. This Ofsted Inspection precipitated a change in Headteacher and Senior Leadership, and the school moved into its new and current building in 2020, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Following successful monitoring visits and an excellent Remote Education Inspection, the school was graded 'Good' in all areas in June 2021, being one of the few schools in the country to make the double-jump from 'Inadequate' to 'Good'. This Ofsted report stated the following:

- There is an ambition and complexity to the curriculum which allows students to achieve well.
- The curriculum is well-planned, well-sequenced, and largely well-implemented.
- HPA and MPA students know more, remember more, and can do more. Teaching is effective in helping to support these groups.
- The curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of individual students. A consistently good quality of questioning was a key facet of this.
- There were clear examples of students working in greater depth, so that students arrive at the same end-point, but in different ways.

Following this Ofsted inspection, the school opened its Sixth Form in September 2021.

In February 2023, the current Headteacher took charge, and a new Senior Leadership Team was formed, following the departure of the previous Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher.

Reputation:

The school's reputation continues to go from strength-to-strength in the local community, with over 890 applications from Year 6 students (295 first choices, 43 appeals) and 378 applications to Sixth Form for the 2025-26 academic year. This has led to an intake of over 180 for Year 12, which is unprecedented. These are the highest numbers on record since the school's inception. In October 2024, the school received a visit from the Department for Education and MP Stephen Morgan, who chose to visit the school due to its rapid and sustained improvement and progress, and because of the successful and research-driven approaches the school has implemented in recent times relating to attendance and behaviour and attitudes. School leaders have also presented at the national ResearchEd Conference regarding its approaches to Pupil Premium students and ensuring they are 'set for life' both personally and academically, whilst Olympian, Kimberley Woods, and England men's football manager, Lee Carsley, have also visited the school. In April 2024, we were selected as one of the BBC's 'Star Schools' and featured on television and the radio.

In February 2025, our verified A Level results saw us become the leading Sixth Form provider in Rugby in terms of progress, whilst also being within the top five providers in all of Warwickshire.

Demographic:

In recent times, the school's demographic has changed somewhat, with some of this due to geographical factors. As the school has increased in popularity, the school takes in more students from Rugby, and less from Daventry and the surrounding villages such as Wolston, Weedon and Flore. This has changed the profile of student intake, with nearly 60% of the school's students experiencing at least one form of deprivation, whilst 37% of students live within areas that have higher-than-average levels of crime. The school also has a higher-than-average number of students with SEND needs, EAL needs and students who are eligible for Free School Meals. As a direct consequence of the school's excellent reputation for SEND provision, an SRP (Specialist Resource Provision - Communication & Interaction) was opened in September 2023 in conjunction with the Local Authority. This provision was further extended in September 2024, and now hosts 20 students, whilst a smaller SEMH SRP was opened in September 2025, hosting up to eight students.

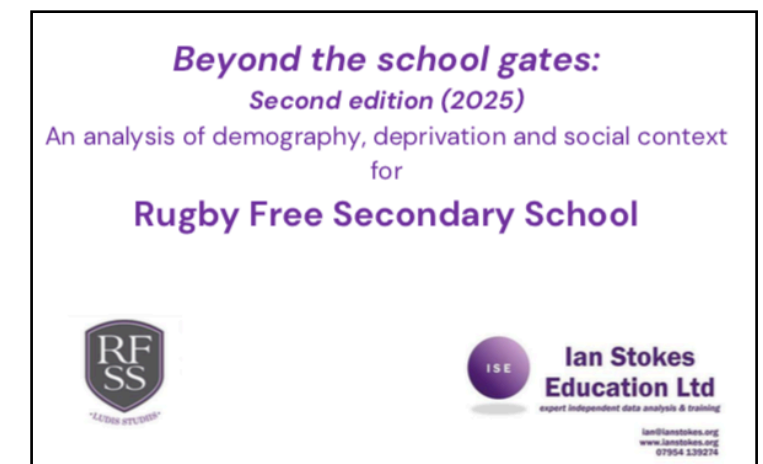
At present, RFSS is the number one parental choice for students with SEND in both Rugby, and Warwickshire.

As an area, Rugby has a reputation for being salubrious, but this is a misconception. Although house prices are higher than the national average, and most jobs are classified in the 'professional' category, Rugby suffers from high levels of alcoholism and drug abuse, whilst there is a gang culture within the town. Due to its proximity with the M6 and the M1, County Lines is a prominent and ever-present concern.

For more details regarding the school's demographic, please see our full 'Beyond the School Gates' report.

In short:

- The student population mostly derives from the south of Rugby and from central Rugby, whilst Ashlawn Gardens is now a growing feeder area. Students deriving from the Daventry area are regressing in number. Therefore, the average distance travelled to school by students is 3.2km, with 51% of students living within 2km of the gates.
- Students entitled to the Pupil Premium (31%) are higher than the national average (28%) and well above the Warwickshire average (23%).
- A third of students live in areas which have above average levels of deprivation.
- Our main profile of students and parents have limited educational experiences, live in areas with higher-than-average crime rates, and many have high housing costs but poor living experiences. However, some are at the exact opposite end of this spectrum.
- One in four RFSS households suffer from at least one dimension of deprivation.
- The proportion of BAME students (36%) is largely in line with national averages, but well above the Warwickshire average (28%).
- The proportion of students with SEND (28%*) is significantly higher than the national average (15%) and the Warwickshire average (16%).
- Over 40 home languages are spoken across our school community, with Polish, Romanian & Portuguese being the top 3.





RFSS GCSE Results Statement 2024-2025 Academic Year:

School Progress Measure	Explanation of Measure	2024-2025 Result	Additional Comments
Progress 8	<p>Progress 8 aims to capture the progress a student makes from the end of Primary School (Year 6) to the end of secondary school (Year 11). It is a type of value added measure, which means that students' results are compared to the actual achievements of other students with similar prior attainment across the country.</p> <p>Progress 8 scores will be centred around 0, with most schools within the range of -1 to +1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A score of 0 means students in this school on average do about as well at KS4 as those with similar prior attainment nationally.• A positive score means students in this school on average do better at KS4 as those with similar prior attainment nationally.• A negative score means students in this school on average do worse at KS4 as those with similar prior attainment nationally.	<p>This measure is not in place for the 2024-25 academic year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>	
Attainment 8	<p>Attainment 8 measures the achievement of a student across 8 qualifications including Maths (double weighted) and English (double weighted), 3 further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) measure and 3 further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the DfE approved list.</p> <p>Each individual grade a student achieves is assigned a point score, which is then used to calculate a student's Attainment 8 score</p>	<p>43.68</p>	<p>Key Headline measure for 2024-25 data sets.</p>



RFSS A Level Results 2024-2025 Academic Year:

Sixth Form Progress Measure	Explanation of Measure	2024-2025 Result	Additional Comments
Average Grade	Measures the mean average performance grade across all qualifications completed within Sixth Form in 2023-24.	Academic: C+ Vocational: Distinction-	
Value Added / Progress	This measures the improvement that students have made since joining our Sixth Form from the start of Year 12, based on their previous GCSE attainment.	Academic: Grade 5 Vocational: Grade 3 Overall: Grade 4	
Average Points Score	The equivalent points attributed to each Grade.	A Level: 31.69 Academic: 31.82 Vocational: 31.58	
Destinations	Measures the number of students who applied for further education, training or apprenticeships, and achieved their next step. This figure represents the percentage who achieved their chosen next step.	TBC	
GCSE Level 2 English & Maths Re-Sit	Measures the pass rate of students at Grade 4 or above who passed the GCSE English Language and Maths qualification, as a resit candidate.	71% - English 75% - Maths	

Curriculum Offer & Rationale:

The curriculum at RFSS allows teachers to deliver their subject content in depth allowing for the acquisition of knowledge and skills across all subjects offered at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. We operate a two-and-three-quarter year Key Stage 3, with the final term of Year 9 given over to students beginning GCSE studies, in order to take into account the EEF's research into the Covid-19 pandemic, which outlined that the West Midlands region is classified as being a 'highly affected' area. Whilst we recognise that this research may now be a little outdated, the levels of stakeholder satisfaction, and the impact this has had on outcomes, means we have continued to implement this methodology. In Key Stage 5, there are different pathways available for students who have differing levels of attainment upon entry.

We are pleased and proud to say that our curriculum is broad-and-balanced, including the offer of Vocational qualifications, and Level 2 resits in English Language and Maths in Sixth Form.

All students follow the National Curriculum at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, with 13 qualifications across Key Stage 3, and 27 qualifications across Key Stage 4. Recently, we have widened our curriculum offer to include both French (from Year 7), Hospitality and Catering (Year 9 Option), RE Short Course (Year 9 Option) and Psychology (Year 9 Option), following feedback from students, parents and carers. At Key Stage 4, Business Studies, Statistics and Computer Science have also been introduced in recent years, due to changes in context and stakeholder voice. At Key Stage 5, students can choose from 28 qualifications (inclusive of English and Maths Level 2 Resits), with 66% of this offer being within an academic pathway, and 33% being in a vocational pathway. We also offer EPQ for all students.

Curriculum Aims:

We intend to provide a broad, inclusive and ambitious curriculum that empowers our students to make both academic and personal progress. As a school with a diverse demographic, our aim is to ensure that all students achieve an excellent standard of education that not only prepares them for GCSE and A Level examinations, but ensures they are 'Set for Life' beyond the gates of Rugby Free Secondary School. As a consequence, all of our work is underpinned by our core values of: Kindness, Respect, Curiosity, Resilience, Collaboration and Endeavour. We continually to develop students' knowledge, skills and understanding to apply what students know, remember, and can do with increasing fluency and levels of mastery.

Due to an increasing number of EAL students and the continuation of a rise in students with higher SEND needs (including students placed within our SRP), bespoke pathways are utilised to ensure that students select option subjects that best fit their needs and skillset for adulthood, in order to ensure that our curriculum offer is both ambitious and gives all students the knowledge and cultural capital that they need to be 'Set for Life', regardless of their individualised starting point. As a consequence, Literacy provision is important to us and our students.

Review Points:

The curriculum is reviewed termly (three times per year), with Directors of Learning making amendments based on the key learning that students can know, remember and do, and the key learning that they need to revisit. Other amendments take place in response to information released by the Department for Education, Ofqual, and/or examination boards.



Rugby Free Secondary School Curriculum Hours 2025-26

Year 7	Hours Per Fortnight	Number of Classes
English	8	8
Maths	8	7
Sciences	8	6
ADT	3	8
PE	4	6
Spanish	4	4
French	4	2
Computing	2	6
Geography	3	6
History	2	6
RE	2	6
Drama	2	6
Music	2	6
PSHE	2	6

Year 8	Hours Per Fortnight	Number of Classes
English	8	8
Maths	8	7
Sciences	8	6
ADT	3	8
PE	4	6
Spanish	4	4
French	4	2
Computing	2	6
Geography	3	6
History	2	6
RE	2	6
Drama	2	6
Music	2	6
PSHE	2	6

Year 9	Hours Per Fortnight	Number of Classes
English	8	8
Maths	8	8
Sciences	9	7
ADT	3	8
PE	4	8
Spanish	4	5
French	4	2
Computing	2	7
Geography	2	7
History	2	7
RE	2	7
Drama	2	7
Music	2	7
PSHE	2	7

Year 10 & Year 11	Hours Per Fortnight	Number of Classes
English	8	7*
Maths	8	7*
Sciences	9	6
PE	3	6
PSHE	2	6

Year 10 & Year 11	21 Subjects offered, five hours per class	
Art	Geography x 3	Textiles
Business Studies x 2	Health and Social	Sociology x 2
Computer Science	History x 4	Spanish x 3
Drama	Hospitality	Study Support
Food Technology	Media	French (NEW)
GCSE PE x 2	Music	RE SC (NEW)
Sport Studies x 2	Psychology	
	Resistant Materials	

Rugby Free Secondary School

Curriculum 2025-26

Summary of Strengths:

- We offer a broad-and-balanced curriculum in which students can study a range of academic and vocational subjects.
- Curriculum pathways mean that students can maximise their potential, irrespective of their starting point.
- The curriculum is reviewed three times a year by Curriculum leaders.
- Subject knowledge across the school is strong, and the vast majority of staff are subject experts and specialists.
- The summative assessment model appropriately challenges and supports a range of abilities, so that all students make at least good progress from their relative starting points.
- End-points are mapped appropriately.
- There is a consistent approach to curriculum planning and curriculum documentation.
- Outcomes for both GCSE and A Level are positive, which reflects the quality of the curriculum.
- Pupil Premium progress is positive, and we have presented at national conferences about our work on this, as well as having other schools visit.
- The curriculum model and the teaching model is based on research and best practice.
- Directors of Learning and Subject Leads are supported in planning their curriculum and assessment models by Senior Leaders and via CPD sessions.
- Directors of Learning utilise Ofsted Subject Reports in their planning.
- Quality assurance processes are in place at all levels, and there is a weekly quality assurance process for SEND teaching and learning typicality.
- The SRP curriculum is as equally as ambitious and is based on the mainstream curriculum, but adapted to meet the needs and relative starting points of these students.
- Literacy is a feature of lessons, with talk being a key facet of this.

Areas for Development:

- Ensure that the curriculum and assessment model in the SRP meets the full needs of Year 9 students who are about to select Options.
- Ensure that the quality of work in exercise books is consistently good, especially in Key Stage 3.



Rugby Free Secondary School

Developing Teaching 2025-26

Summary of Strengths:

- There is a strong model of CPD in place for mainstream teachers, which has been highly commended by external reviewers.
- We have weekly teaching and learning CPD that links to quality assurance findings, as we seek to develop best practice based on research and approaches.
- Teachers have the option to develop their own practice through their own self-analysis and CPD next steps.
- Senior Leaders and Middle Leaders both have an accurate and nuanced understanding of the quality of teaching and learning across subjects, year groups and key stages.
- The vast majority of teachers are experts, and therefore can translate their subject knowledge into meaningful explanations and learning activities.
- Checking for Understanding (Formative Assessment) has developed significantly, with teachers adapting their teaching to meet students' needs. In total, there have been seventeen separate CPD activities linked to this over the duration of the past twelve months.
- Teachers revisit content at the beginning of their lessons, as per the teaching and learning model.
- Key Stage 3 targeted interventions are in place to support those students who are the most vulnerable, and for those where education has not been as successful in Key Stage 2.
- There is a clear set of principles in place for SEND teaching and learning which are based on research.
- Staff draw on the advice of SEND specialists, and have access to regular SEND CPD opportunities.

Areas for Development:

- Ensure consistency of teaching across all new to education practitioners, through CPD, including a bespoke plan for ECTs to impact practice.
- Ensure that a bespoke CPD package is in place for Learning Support Assistants, non-specialists and those staff who teach within the SRP.



Approach & Rationale:

Our approach to Behaviour and Attitudes derives from the 'Characterising Effective Teaching & Learning Report' - University of Bristol (Rob Burgess, 2022), in which the following key line encapsulates our thought-process: *'By far the most significant factor in education is the relationship between students and their teachers.'* Relationships are at the heart of everything we do at RFSS, which is underpinned by our tagline of 'Relationships Start With You' and the restorative and trauma-informed approaches (TIAAS) we have adopted in recent years. These approaches have led to both local and national recognition, with our Senior Leaders presenting to other schools in numerous forums about the ways in which we work.

With large numbers of SEND, EHCP and Pupil Premium students, our approach is graduated, and our approaches have seen us present at local area Behaviour Panel meetings to show other schools our methodology.

Praise and rewards are a key part of our school, enabling the majority of students to be committed to their learning, and their attitudes to learning are largely positive. Where attitudes are not as positive, much of this is down to 'students starting Secondary school whilst behind mostly in Maths and Reading' (EEF), and targeted support is put in place through both academic and pastoral lenses.

Attendance and Punctuality:

Our approach to attendance is underpinned by our work with the 'Inclusive Attendance' company, who have worked with us for the past eighteen months in order to ensure that a supportive approach to attendance is in place, and that graduated steps are implemented for those families who may require additional challenge and support. The vast majority of students are on time for school and on time to lessons, though some of our students do face challenges with the local transport network.

Punctuality to school is monitored by the attendance officer who signs in students who are late. With regards to punctuality to lessons, we have adopted a system entitled 'Four and Door', which stipulates a maximum movement time of four minutes from lesson-to-lesson. Instances of internal truancy are extremely low.

Headline Figures:

We have the lowest number of fixed-term suspensions within the Rugby area.

Instances of bullying are rare, and the vast majority of students, parents and carers have not experienced bullying.

Our Permanent Exclusion rate is below the national average, with a total of 3 PEX in 2024-25 all deriving from one-off incidents.

Rewards:

As a school, we have a culture of rewards that permeates the school, in order to extrinsically motivate students. This is in response to student and parental feedback that students required more rewards, and that fairness is important. We hold a termly Awards Celebration Assembly, in which we celebrate the success of students. We also have a Rewards Shop in which students can use their Classcharts points to purchase items that are in the shop, which have derived from their Student Voice views. We also host an end of year Awards Ceremony. On a daily basis, students are awarded 5 points a day - this is the minimum expectation of students.

National Suspension Figures:

- There were 954,952 suspensions, last year. This is up from 786,961 in the previous year.
- There were 829,900 suspensions in Secondary Schools, last year. This is up from 685,900 in the previous year. This equates to a 21% rise.
- The suspension rate is 11.31. This is per 100 students. This is up from 9.33 last year.
- The most common reason recorded for suspension was persistent disruptive behaviour with 569,900 instances where this reason for suspension was recorded, 51% of all reasons given. This was followed by verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against an adult, with 174,000 suspensions including this reason (16%) and physical assault against a pupil with 141,800 suspensions including this reason (13%). Most reasons given are fairly consistent over time, although the proportion of persistent disruptive behaviour has increased.
- The suspension rate in the West Midlands was 9.74 per 100 students. This was one of the lowest in terms of region in the country. However, this is still up from 8.59 in the previous year.

Rugby Free Secondary School Suspension Figures:

- In total, there were 87 separate suspensions at RFSS in the previous academic year. The vast majority of these were for 0.5 days. In total, the suspensions accounted for 53 school days. This is significantly below the national average.

National Permanent Exclusion Figures:

- There were 9300 permanent exclusions in Secondary Schools, last year. This is up from 8100 in the previous year. . This equates to a 15% rise.
- The permanent exclusion rate is 0.13. This is per 100 students. This is up from 0.11 last year.
- The most common reason recorded for permanent exclusion was persistent disruptive behaviour with 5,800 instances where this reason for permanent exclusion was recorded, 39% of all reasons given. This was followed by physical assault against a pupil, with 2,300 permanent exclusions including this reason (16%) and physical assault against an adult with 1,900 permanent exclusions including this reason (12%).

Rugby Free Secondary School Permanent Exclusion Figures:

- In total, there were 3 PEX at RFSS in the previous academic year (2 for weapons in school, & 1 for an assault on another student). This figure is below the Rugby average.

Rugby Free Secondary School

Behaviour & Attitudes 2025-26

Summary of Strengths:

- Suspensions are lower than the Warwickshire average and the national average.
- Permanent Exclusions are lower than the Rugby average.
- There is a culture of positive behaviour in place, which is recognised by staff and students. External providers such as the Virtual School are also complimentary of the respect shown between students and teachers.
- Behaviour is reviewed daily by the Pastoral Team, and evaluations are made during their daily morning meeting.
- Behaviour patterns and trends are reviewed weekly at SLT, and intervention for students and staff is then implemented accordingly.
- Instances of bullying are rare, and many students report not being aware of bullying in school. In addition to this, where bullying occurs, this is dealt with quickly by leaders. This has led to a significant reduction in repeat offenders.
- Responses to behavioural incidences in the day are timely and quick, with several layers of support in place for students and teachers.
- Our Vulnerable Matrix and Risk Register highlight the considerable knowledge that we hold about our students.
- The school has positive relationships with the vast majority of parents and carers.
- We have strong relationships with professionals who we collaborate with in regards to Wave 2 and Wave 3 interventions.
- The vast majority of students are positive about their learning and demonstrate this in lessons on a consistent basis.
- We explicitly teach the skills of resilience due to our SEND and PP profile.
- There are consistent routines in lessons that enable students to be aware of what is expected of them, both in terms of learning and expectations.
- Our TAP process means that reasonable adjustments are made consistently.

Areas for Development:

- The attendance to school of Pupil Premium students and ECHP students.
- Ensure that routines and expectations are consistent throughout Key Stage 3, especially for SEND and LPA students.



Approach & Rationale:

The Personal Development offer at RFSS centres around our ideology of ensuring that students are 'Set for Life', meaning the whole-child is holistically developed and prepared for life beyond RFSS. This programme incorporates four key areas: 'Health and Wellbeing, Community, Independent Living and Employability', in order to prepare students for life beyond the walls of school and Sixth Form. Within our 'Set for Life' curriculum, we also teach our students skills for life, encompassing the principles of: leadership, organisation, resilience, initiative, communication. Sessions in our tutor time programme focus on introducing students to these skills, encouraging reflection and deepening students' understanding of them. Our RFSS 'Set for Life' Roadmap outlines what students will receive at each stage of their life at RFSS, linked to both the Bell Foundation Learner Profiles and internal contextual information and data. This is also linked to the PSHE curriculum, which is taught by Form Tutors and is responsive to both local and national issues.

There has been an increase in the number of BAME and EAL students attending our school in recent years, which provides a fantastic opportunity to further celebrate our cultural and religious beliefs - this is supported by our Cultural Lead. We have a group of 'Cultural Ambassadors' in school who successfully lead our annual cultural celebration day at the end of each academic year. The school provides students with meaningful opportunities to understand how to be reasonable, respectful, active citizens, who contribute positively to society. In PSHE and through 'Set For Life', students are learning how to become active citizens in the wider community, whilst also being prepared for 'life in modern Britain'. Healthy eating has also been a prominent part of our work in recent times.

The House System, Enrichment & Student Leadership:

At RFSS, there are four Houses that foreground the Personal Development and Well-being offer. These are: Ali House, Turing House, Pankhurst House and Attenborough House. House leaders plan events open to all students, including Spelling Bees, Debates and inter-house sporting fixtures. The House Events calendar culminates in Sports Day and the RFSS Talent Show. House Events are tracked and carefully linked to the ways in which they are designed to develop character, motivation and self-efficacy. The Student Leadership Team, including Head Students, are more prominent around the school. They are becoming increasingly involved in school life, supporting with the implementation and running of the Rewards Shop. The Student Leadership Team meet on a half-termly basis and their student voice is integral in shaping the future direction of the school.

The provision for after-school enrichment clubs has developed significantly, with clubs in sports, music, arts, chess, board games and robotics all popular. As a consequence, 90% of parents and carers are satisfied that their child has an available club that they can attend, and that the offer is wide-ranging. Attendance is tracked through Absolute Education.

Celebrating Success & Each Other:

We actively showcase the talents of students outside of school, as well as within school. The 'RFSS celebrates' email account has been pivotal in helping us to celebrate the achievements of our students; there has been an increase in parents and carers informing us of significant achievements. The wider school community is made aware of these successes through our social media channels. Students have been made aware of other students who have been successful, with most recent showcases around footballers, synchronised swimming and basketball achievements. Other students' successes are regularly showcased in assemblies and through Tutor Huddle, which take place on a weekly basis.

Rugby Free Secondary School

Personal Development & Well-being 2025-26

Summary of Strengths:

- 'Set for Life' permeates every aspect of what we do at RFSS, and this ideology underpins all of our work.
- Staff care for students and want the best for them. As a consequence, students feel they belong within our school community.
- There is clear correlation between local contextual challenges, national contextual challenges, and the intent and implementation of the PSHE curriculum and the Tutor Time framework. This evolves on a termly basis.
- Students have access to a range of Careers provision, with SEND students able to access a larger quantity of opportunities than their non-SEND counterparts. This provision meets the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Students are comfortable with accessing pastoral care, and staff support students through relational approaches to Behaviour and Attitudes, and Personal Development and Well-being.
- The school celebrates all cultures and religions, and students are extremely accepting and tolerant of each other's beliefs.
- There are a wide range of enrichment opportunities in place, which students can access and select following promotional Enrichment Fairs. The clubs offered are widely praised by both students and parents / carers alike.
- There are multiple opportunities for students to represent the school, in numerous formats. These include: sporting, musical, drama, the arts, debating. We are currently the national champions of the ARTiculation competition.
- We were selected as one of the BBC's 'Star Schools' due to our reputation for academic and personal excellence.
- Careers provision is of a high-quality, and meets the needs of students and their aspirations. Students have access to a range of providers through Careers Fairs and other mechanisms such as guest speakers and national careers challenges.
- All statutory guidance for RSHE provision is in place.
- Student Leadership is in place and this group has an active voice in school.

Areas for Development:

- Ensure targeted enrichment provision includes all students, but with a specific focus on SEND and Pupil Premium students.
- Ensure the implementation of the Department for Education's new Work Experience guidance.



Approach & Rationale:

School and Trust Leaders set ambitious goals for staff and students in all areas including aspirational targets for: behaviour, attendance and standards, expectations, and achievement. Leaders at all levels are unequivocally clear that their desire is for a 'high-quality and inclusive education' for all, and this has been the case for some time, now. Governance takes place through Local Accountability Boards (LAB), in which there are three separate sub-committees: Full LAB, Performance and Standards LAB, and Personal Development and Well-being LAB. In these meetings, school leaders are held to account by Trustees, whilst visits across the academic year also take place to triangulate discussions.

As part of the Trust's Quality Assurance programme, leaders and post-holders from each of the respective schools work together to undertake reviews in designated areas (for example, safeguarding leads leading safeguarding reviews), in order to quality assure effectiveness, and to learn from each other. In addition to this, the school has a School Improvement Adviser who undertakes reviews in pre-agreed areas.

Professional Development:

Staff are key components of effective schools, and turnover at RFSS is comparatively low, meaning that ideas are often embedded by a group of staff who have been together for a lengthy period of time. In recent times, we have developed a more personalised approach to professional development using the Great Teaching Toolkit as a self-assessment tool, and the Walkthrus collection to underpin classroom practice. We have developed a waded approach to Professional Development to ensure we meet the needs of staff at all levels, including within SEND & Inclusion and the SRP team. This has been further supported by our stance to 'focus on improving subject and pedagogical knowledge' by giving more dedicated time to subject CPD, as opposed to whole-school CPD. In line with this, the Trust's Professional Growth process is robust, and objectives are linked to individuals' areas of need and whole school areas for development, and correlates directly to professional development.

Workload and Well-being:

Significant attention has been given to ensuring that staff workload and well-being is considered at all phases of the academic year. The Headteacher operates a weekly 'Open Door' session, whilst there are Staff Wellbeing meetings and Open Forums scheduled throughout the academic year. As a consequence, there is a You Said, We Did' approach, with actions circulated amongst all staff. A staff well-being group, which leads a weekly 'Lunch-time Mingle' is also well-received amongst staff. Whole-school Summative Assessment Calendars are written with the support of staff who are able to offer advice and ideas, and when marking loads are within 'pinch-points', 'marking parties in the Study Zone' are implemented so that staff can mark together with snacks and drinks, should they wish to. Celebration of national events such as 'National Thank a Teacher Day' are also commonplace.

Each year, the Headteacher measures staff voice against the 'Working Lives of Teachers and Leaders' question-set, whilst the Trust implements its own survey through the Edurio platform. Key results can be seen below:

- Senior Leaders and/or Line Managers attempt to manage my workload: 63% (Up 7% from previous year)
- I feel supported by Senior Leaders / Line Managers to be flexible around working arrangements, childcare and events etc: 81% (Up 16% from previous year)
- There are forums and processes in place for me to raise or feed back my views: 73% (Up 17% from previous year)
- I feel valued by the school: 74% (Up 31% from previous year)

Rugby Free Secondary School

Leadership & Governance 2025-26

Summary of Strengths:

- There is stability in the Senior Leadership team, and Middle Leadership group.
- Governance has improved significantly over the past twelve months and Trustees hold Senior Leaders to account in several ways.
- Senior Leaders have an accurate understanding of what the school's strengths and areas for improvement are.
- Middle Leaders have an accurate understanding of the position of their own Department.
- The school's popularity has never been higher, both in terms of Main School and Sixth Form.
- We have been recognised by the Department for Education as being a school with effective approaches.
- Over 87% of staff are proud to work at RFSS, and would recommend the school to other people. The same percentage would also recommend the school to prospective students.
- Behaviour and Attitudes is strong, and this is recognised by staff and students.
- Personal Development and Well-being runs throughout the school - 'Set for Life' permeates what RFSS is about.
- The Sixth Form is strong and results were within the top 5 in Warwickshire in 2023-24.
- The Quality of Education students receive in the Main School is effective, which was reflected in 2023-24 GCSE results.
- Academic and Pastoral support and interventions are in place for those students who need these the most.
- The CPD model has been hailed as 'world class' by external reviewers.
- There is a culture of safeguarding across the school.
- The school is truly inclusive in every facet of the term, and this is recognised

Areas for Development:

- Leaders at all levels are both supported and held to account for the difference they are making.
- Utilise the voice of all staff members to proactively further promote wellbeing and reduce workload.



Approach & Rationale:

The Sixth Form is now in its fourth year of existence, with xxxx students in Year 13, and xxxx students in Year 12 currently on roll. Our aim is to continue to be considered as the leading comprehensive Sixth Form in the local area in all key measures (attainment, progress, destinations, retention & Maths & English retake progress). Much work has been done to ensure that the curriculum suits the needs of the learners, reflecting the cohort of students and the context of the school. We offer an extremely broad range of subjects for a Sixth Form of our size, including academic, vocational and mixed pathways, as well as a Level 2 programme, providing students who do not initially achieve Level 3 entry requirements to progress to A Level study, on a 3-year pathway. We are now looking to ensure that our course and curriculum offer is stable year on year, allowing us to deliver the highest quality provision for our students consistently. 88% of current students said that they are happy in the Sixth Form in the end of year Student Voice, with 86% stating in the same survey that they believe the Sixth Form prepares them well for their next steps in life.

Recent Sixth Form reviews demonstrated that *“The curriculum is inclusive and ambitious for all students. As student numbers have increased over time, the sixth form curriculum has developed so that it can accurately respond to the particular needs, interests and abilities of all students. The vast majority of students are learning the different subjects across the curriculum very well.”*

We allocate very generously with curriculum time, with 10 hours per subject, per fortnight, in the majority of subjects (six per fortnight for English Language resits and eight per fortnight for Maths resits). This has had a contribution to positive student outcomes, as well as many departments running effective intervention sessions, either after school or in free periods. The Sixth Form team run a ‘Boundary Leapers’ programme, aimed at the lowest achieving students in the Sixth Form in terms of progress, and this is focused on core skills, rather than subject content, such as study skills, organisation, revision techniques etc.

In terms of teaching and learning, practice is in line with the whole school model, and teachers are encouraged to use the same teaching and learning strategies as lower school, to give consistency and aid the transition process for students. The standard of teaching at post 16 is quality assured during the curriculum deep dive process and through other quality assurance episodes. The quality of teaching across subjects in the Sixth Form is predominantly very effective. The team of experienced KS5 teachers have strong pedagogical subject knowledge and a deep understanding of examination specifications. They plan the sequencing of learning in individual lessons and across groups of lessons logically, incrementally helping students to deepen knowledge and practice skills. This is reflected in the most recent student voice survey, with 97% of our students indicating that they believe that staff are experts in their subjects, 92% of students feeling their overall wellbeing is Good or better, 91% of students feel comfortable with talking to staff about personal issues, and 91% of students claimed that Sixth Form lessons are well planned and delivered.

We offer a successful enrichment programme, with eighteen different activities on offer to students. This offer is greatly appreciated by our students and prepares them well for their next steps, as well as providing them valuable skills and experience that can be written into their personal statements. The rich range of enrichment activities are very popular and students value them as key learning opportunities which support them in developing life skills.

Our pastoral curriculum is constantly evolving. This programme is delivered in tutor time, assemblies, mentoring and drop-down days. This curriculum has been developed to include all statutory information from the RSE guidance around topics such as mental health, sexual health, online safety etc. The curriculum is amended several times each academic year to respond to incidents and requests from students, via the student voice forum, as well as to stay in keeping with the local and national context.

Relationships between students and their teachers are highly positive and mutually supportive. Staff know their students well and students are clear that staff are also available to provide academic and personal support, when required.

Rugby Free Secondary School

Sixth Form 2025-26

Summary of Strengths:

- Our Curriculum is accessible to all, yet is relentlessly ambitious, as identified through external reviews.
- There is a wide enrichment offer, including academic enrichments such as Further Maths and EPQ.
- Over a quarter of the cohort enter the EPQ qualification.
- Leaders have an accurate undertone
- The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in the Sixth Form is strong. Leaders have an accurate picture of where teaching and learning is not as strong, and support is put in place.
- Academic achievement at both Level 2 and Level 3 are strong, with outcomes at least in line with national average for both academic and vocational qualifications.
- Destination data is 100%.
- The reputation and popularity of the Sixth Form has led to a significant increase in application numbers, with record numbers of applications for 2025-26.
- Students have positive attitudes to learning, and embrace their level of independence. As a consequence, Sixth Form students are role models for Main School students.
- The Leadership of Sixth Form is especially strong, and leaders have an accurate idea of strengths and areas for development.
- Students are prepared for adult life via the PSHE and Mentoring programmes. Good quality personal development opportunities are evident.
- The Careers provision meets provider access legislation and the needs of our students.

Areas for Development:

- Ensure all students complete relevant work experience and maximise their work experience opportunities.
- Ensure adaptations for SEND Sixth Form students enable them to achieve in line with their non-SEND peers.



Approach & Rationale:

As a School and a Trust, our approach to Safeguarding is based on the EEF's research that focuses on creating a culture where staff feel confident in identifying and responding to concerns. This includes developing comprehensive policies, procedures, and training for all staff.

The key aspects to this approach can be seen below:

1. Building a Culture of Safeguarding:
Leadership commitment: Strong leadership is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding, demonstrating a commitment to safeguarding as a top priority.
Staff awareness and training: All staff, including volunteers, need to be aware of their responsibilities and have access to regular safeguarding training.
Open communication: Encourage a culture where staff feel comfortable raising concerns about child safety.
Collaboration: Work with other agencies (e.g., local authorities, police) to ensure a coordinated approach to safeguarding.
2. Developing Policies and Procedures:
Comprehensive policies: Have clear policies on safeguarding, child protection, and behaviour management.
Specific procedures: Outline specific procedures for reporting concerns, managing disclosures, and working with external agencies.
Regular review: Ensure policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect best practice.
3. Supporting Pupils and Families:
Holistic understanding: Get to know your pupils, their families, and their specific challenges to identify potential needs.
Effective communication: Develop strong communication strategies with families to build trust and share information.
Early intervention: Provide support and interventions to address any concerns or issues identified.
4. Monitoring and Evaluation:
Impact assessment: Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding practices and make adjustments as needed.
Data collection: Collect data on attendance, exclusions, and other relevant indicators to track progress and identify trends.
Learning from incidents: Learn from any safeguarding incidents that occur and use them to improve practices.
5. Key Principles for Effective Safeguarding:
Consistency: Ensure that safeguarding procedures are applied consistently across the school.
Proportionality: Respond to concerns in a way that is appropriate and proportionate to the risk involved.
Focus on prevention: Implement strategies to prevent child abuse and neglect from happening in the first place.
Child-centred approach: Always put the child's best interests at the heart of decision-making.

We have a wide-ranging Safeguarding team across both the Main School and Sixth Form, with the quality and effectiveness of our Safeguarding provision and staffing highlighted as being excellent in recent external reviews undertaken by the Local Authority.

Rugby Free Secondary School

Safeguarding 2025-26

Summary of Strengths:

- Leaders and teachers have created a culture of safeguarding and are aware of the personalised and contextual challenges of our students and locality. This is reflected each week in our Student Spotlight session, where additional information is shared.
- Staff are vigilant
- Safeguarding is highly effective, staff are well skilled through robust systems and practices to keep children safe in school. Children want to be in school because the curriculum is exciting and they feel safe and know that they can get support when needed.
- Our Vulnerable Matrix and Risk Register highlight the considerable knowledge that we hold about our students.
- Our work with the Virtual School, along with our excellent reputation, means that we have seen an increase in students with LAC and CiC status.
- We have delivered at two separate Conferences about our culture of safeguarding within school.
- The Student Voice platform is used effectively, and students feel confident to share their experiences through this method.
- All staff are Prevent trained.
- Staff consistently follow the school's safeguarding systems confidently and consistently.
- All staff are trained in the new KCSIE legislation, and all have signed to say this is understood.
- Our External Safeguarding Review highlighted the excellent practice in place at RFSS.
- There is a strong correlation between safeguarding and PSHE and the Assembly and Tutor Time programme, to ensure we are educating students on national and local issues and challenges.
- We have developed our own harmful sexual behaviours process.



SEND in Numbers:

- We are the most popular school in Warwickshire for parents and carers who have children with SEND needs. This has been confirmed and ratified by SENDAR.
- 26% of our students are on the SEND Register.
- 39% of our students are 'K Coded' in Year 7 and Year 8. We have seen an increasingly challenging level of need over the duration of the past two years.
- We have one 20 place Specialist Resource Provision for students with Communication and Interaction needs. This SRP is in partnership with the Local Authority.
- We have one 8 place Specialist Resource Provision for students Social Emotional, and Mental Health needs. This SRP is in partnership with the Local Authority.
- We have 59 EHCPs in total, which equates to 6% of the overall school student population.
- There are currently 11 EHCNA in mediation or awaiting approval from SENDAR.
- Our greatest SEND needs are in the following categories: 1) ASD 2) SEMH 3) Communication and Interaction 4) Cognition and Learning.

SEND Approach & Rationale:

Students with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) have the greatest need for excellent teaching and are entitled to provision that supports achievement at, and enjoyment of, school. The attainment gap between pupils with SEND and their peers is twice as big as the gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers. Our focus is on improving the quality of teaching and learning in mainstream classrooms and ensuring pupils are full members of the school community who have a rich and positive experience.

In short, we adopt the EEF recommendations of five key pillars for effective SEND provision in mainstream schools:

- 1. Create a positive and supportive environment for all pupils, without exception**
- 2. Build an ongoing, holistic understanding of your pupils and their needs**
- 3. Ensure all pupils have access to high quality teaching**
- 4. Complement high quality teaching with carefully selected small-group and one-to-one interventions**
- 5. Work effectively with teaching assistants - (Point 5 is broken down further in the EEF's 'Deployment of Teaching Assistants' Summary, 2025)**

Pupil Premium in Numbers:

- We have xxxx students who are classified as being a Pupil Premium student.
- We have xxxx students who are in receipt of Free School Meals.

Pupil Premium Approach & Rationale:

We have a deep understanding of our families and community, and are aware that we have an additional number of students who also face significant barriers, and are therefore considered to be eligible for the same interventions as their official Pupil Premium colleagues at RFSS, despite not being recognised nationally as such. The percentage of students eligible for the Pupil Premium at RFSS is higher than the average across Warwickshire. In-keeping with the national picture, the predominant ethnicity for Pupil Premium derives from the 'White English / British' group. The significant quantity of Pupil Premium students at RFSS, means that much like the provision for SEND students, strategies have to be interwoven through quality-first provision for all, not just bolt-ons for specific sub-groups.

Rugby Free Secondary School

Inclusion 2025-26

Summary of Strengths:

- We are currently the number one parental choice in Warwickshire for parents and carers who have children with SEND needs.
- Our approaches to teaching and learning, and behaviour and attitudes means that SEND students are catered for effectively, and where mainstream policy does or cannot apply, reasonable adjustments are implemented.
- Our SEND Leadership team hold the relevant qualifications required to lead and manage in this area of the school.
- Our two SRPs bring richness and diversity to our school.
- The school is truly inclusive in every sense of the word, and SRP students mix frequently with mainstream students both inside and outside of lessons.
- There are high expectations of SEND students that are in line with their non-SEND counterparts, but with reasonable adjustments in place where required.
- Interventions are in place for those students who require additional support for academic and SEND specifics.
- There are open door forums in place for parents and carers who have SEND students.
- Our approach to SEND is research-based and evidence-based, and links to EEF studies.
- Our use of Alternative Provision for SEND students is suitable and in line with needs.
- Our Pupil Premium strategy is based on research and best-practice.
- Pupil Premium students are supported with in-lesson materials and resources, and financially supported with trips and visits.
- Staff are aware of who their SEND and Pupil Premium students are.
- Teaching and Learning for SEND and Pupil Premium is largely effective.
- The Pupil Premium strategy is reviewed termly to ensure progress.

Areas for Development:

- Ensure that SEND students are make good progress through adaptations and interventions.
- Through parental co-creation, develop provision and adaptations to further support SEND and Pupil Premium students both personally and academically.

