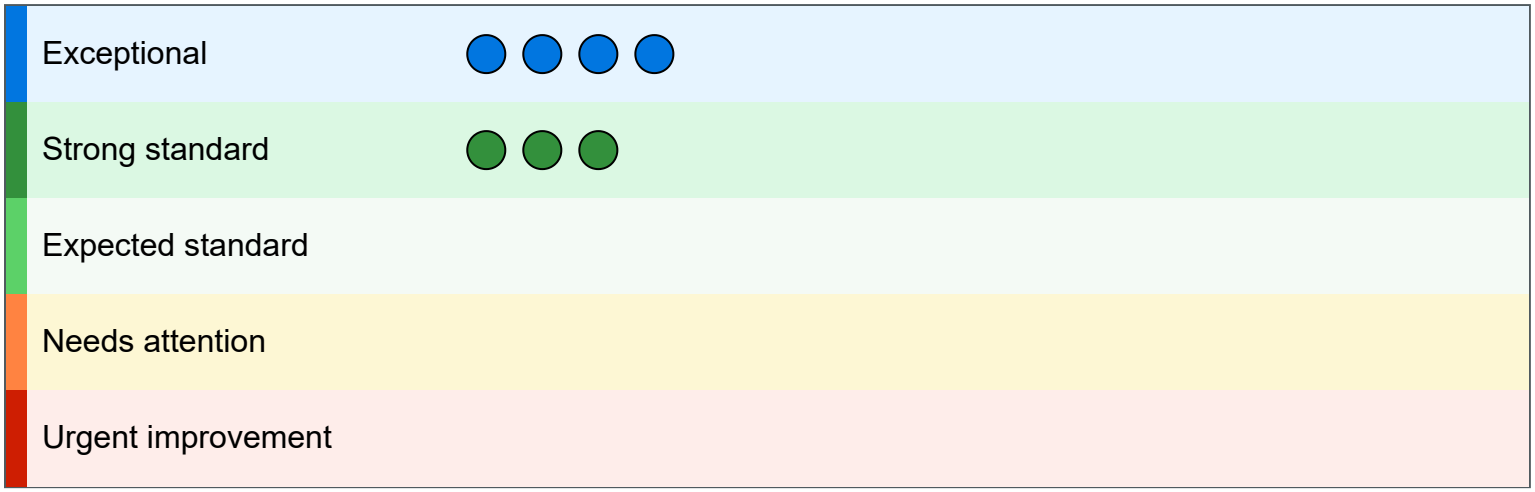
Riverside School

Address: Renwick Road, Barking, Essex, IG11 0FU

Unique reference number (URN): 139791

Inspection report: 22 September 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Exceptional

Attendance and behaviour

Exceptional

Pupils’ behaviour is exemplary. Staff set the highest expectations at all times. They use a warm and direct approach so pupils know exactly what is expected. Pupils build extremely positive relationships with staff and each other. Older pupils set an excellent example. Pupils help shape the rules and take real ownership of them. Staff teach behaviour as a curriculum, focusing on effective routines, politeness and respect. As a result, pupils consistently meet staff's expectations, creating a very calm environment. Pupils manage their own behaviour even when routines are disrupted. Bullying and discrimination are rare. Staff deal with any concerns quickly and effectively.

Pupils’ attendance is consistently high. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is significantly below national averages, including for key groups. Leaders act quickly each day to follow up absence. The analysis of patterns of attendance is meticulous. Data is then used to pinpoint the very best strategies to improve attendance. Leaders work closely with families to remove barriers so pupils receive any specialist support they need. Staff target pupils at risk of low attendance with enrichment activities that motivate them to come to school. Rewards and weekly celebrations encourage pupils and help them feel proud of their attendance. Overall, this persistent and highly strategic approach has a remarkable impact on improving attendance and securing excellent habits for all pupils over time.

Leadership and governance

Exceptional

Leaders are relentless in their pursuit of excellence so that every pupil can thrive and flourish. Highly robust systems and processes give leaders a precise understanding of every aspect of the school’s provision. Leaders act quickly when something does not meet their high expectations. They work tirelessly to secure continuous improvement and know how to sustain the impact of their work.

Leaders are experts in their fields and act as role models of professionalism. They share their expertise with other schools, helping them benefit from the knowledge and skills that drive significant improvement. Leaders' rigorous approach has a transformational impact on pupil’s behaviour, attendance and personal development.

Governors and trustees are highly skilled and knowledgeable. They provide highly effective strategic oversight and robust challenge across all aspects of the school’s work. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities and have built trusting relationships with staff, parents and carers and the local community. Parents praise the school and the care taken by staff and leaders to shape the education of every child.

Professional learning sits at the heart of the school’s work. Staff receive expert training and guidance through a remarkable coaching programme. Weekly coaching sessions provide teachers with regular feedback and carefully considered support so that they continue to excel and can contribute to school strategy. Early career teachers receive bespoke guidance that helps them develop rapidly. Staff feel appreciated and very well supported. Leaders

consider workload and wellbeing carefully and refine systems to reduce unnecessary tasks. Staff are very proud of their school and the role they have in transforming pupils' lives.

Personal development and wellbeing

Exceptional

Leaders have an impressive vision for pupils' personal development. They expect pupils to run meaningful aspects of the school and pupils do so with maturity and confidence. The impact on pupils' behaviour and future aspirations is transformative. Many pupils belong to the student senior leadership team and hold roles across all areas of the school. For example, older pupils act as heads of house, where they learn to analyse behaviour and rewards data alongside leaders. They use their analysis to plan and deliver assemblies that motivate their peers and promote positive choices. Younger pupils take on roles such as anti-bullying ambassadors or student forum representatives. These experiences strengthen pupils' pride, self-discipline and their confidence to be advocates for change.

Leaders apply the same rigour to the personal development programme as they do to academic subjects. Highly effective support ensures that pupils feel valued, supported and confident. Leaders use local information and parent voice to shape a programme that responds directly to pupils' needs. High-quality teaching and regular assessment help pupils build the knowledge they need to make sensible choices and become responsible citizens. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive adapted activities and support so they can access the programme fully. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and offline. They speak maturely and confidently about healthy relationships. They discuss fundamental British Values, particularly tolerance and inclusion, with insight. As a result of the programme, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary.

Enrichment is extensive, purposeful and closely monitored. Pupils take part in a wide range of high-quality clubs and activities. Disadvantaged pupils receive the resources they need to participate fully. Vulnerable pupils benefit from targeted enrichment that improves attendance, motivation and behaviour. Pupils engage in a robust careers programme from the moment they join the school. They receive expert, tailored guidance and support with interviews and applications for their next steps. They develop the skills needed to secure ambitious opportunities for their future and to shape successful lives.

Post-16 provision

Exceptional

Students achieve outcomes in A-level and vocational pathways that are above national expectations. Over time, every student secures an appropriate university or apprenticeship placement, transforming their future pathways. Leaders have a precise understanding of the strengths of the post-16 provision and the areas they want to develop even further. Staff rigorously monitor students' academic and personal development. They know their students extremely well and provide skilful support to those who need it.

Teaching is consistently highly effective. Teachers are subject experts who adapt explanations so that students develop deep understanding. Staff and students know exactly where gaps are and whether progress is secure. Students' written work, notes and subject knowledge are of an impressive quality. They know precisely how new learning builds on what they already know.

Students take part in regular enrichment, including extensive senior leadership roles matched to their interests. Leaders ensure that all pupils experience opportunities that are genuinely transformational. For example, students who take on senior Head of House responsibilities actively lead significant aspects of school provision. Students have expert careers advice and participate in extensive work-experience opportunities. They receive the guidance and develop the skills they need to move on confidently and securely. The school recognises that students with barriers to learning may need additional support with their next steps. For example, students receive resources to attend residentials to practise living away from home so that they can build confidence and independence. Students also learn important life skills, such as cooking away from home, and support with learning to drive so that no student is limited by their circumstances.

Strong standard

Achievement

Strong standard

Over time, pupils consistently achieve above national averages in GCSE examinations across many subjects. Students in the sixth form also perform above national averages in A-level examinations, with notably high outcomes in Applied General courses. As a result, students move on to ambitious education and employment destinations.

Across the curriculum, pupils produce high-quality work. They develop secure and detailed subject knowledge. Pupils speak very confidently in lessons and show a clear understanding of how their previous learning connects to new ideas. Pupils read widely and write with fluency. Staff quickly identify the small group of pupils who are at an early stage of reading and provide effective support so they can close any gaps.

Disadvantaged pupils achieve significantly above their peers nationally and make excellent progress from their starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make secure progress. This sustained achievement means that all pupils are very well prepared for their next steps.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard

Leaders have a precise understanding of the strengths of the curriculum. They know exactly what highly effective teaching looks like and ensure that all teaching meets their high expectations. Leaders make sure teachers develop expert knowledge by engaging in highly effective regular coaching and professional learning.

The curriculum is broad and highly ambitious for every pupil. For example, all pupils study Mandarin and/or Spanish in key stage 3 and 4 and food technology in key stage 3. This prepares pupils well for future language learning and helps them make healthy food choices.

Teaching is consistently high quality across the school. Teachers use well-established teaching and learning routines that help pupils think clearly and stay focused. They introduce new vocabulary carefully and use helpful examples to build pupils' confidence.

Teachers use expert questioning to check pupils' understanding and ensure that every pupil participates. This ensures that any gaps in pupils' knowledge are addressed swiftly.

Teachers support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities by carefully adapting the curriculum without lowering expectations. Staff identify any pupils who need extra help and put the right support in place so that pupils can keep up. Pupils with lower reading ages benefit from effective phonics teaching. As a result, pupils access the curriculum confidently.

Inclusion

Strong standard

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the support they need to belong and thrive. They work closely with external professionals to improve pupils' experiences and outcomes. Their consistently caring approach means pupils known to social care get help quickly. Staff work closely with families so that they understand what extra support is available.

Staff identify pupils' needs accurately when they join the school. They have very high expectations for every pupil and act fast when extra help is needed. Leaders make sure staff have the right SEND information so they can follow recommendations well. Staff receive highly effective training so they can adapt lessons without lowering ambition. As a result, pupils with SEND make secure progress and learn confidently with their classmates.

Leaders acutely monitor pupils who may have barriers to learning. Pupils who need help with their behaviour benefit from clear routines and calm, nurturing support. Leaders use alternative provision carefully and only when it is in a pupils' best interests. Leaders use additional funding highly effectively to improve disadvantaged pupils' academic and emotional outcomes. These actions make a very positive difference to pupils' wellbeing and experiences.

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

Pupils attend school consistently well because they value the high-quality teaching and enrichment opportunities they take part in. They respond positively to staff's high expectations and strive to achieve excellence. Pupils follow learning routines carefully so that they develop secure language skills and feel confident contributing in class. Across the school, including in the sixth form, pupils produce high-quality work and achieve very well.

The school provides the most effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils use carefully adapted curriculum materials that remain ambitious so that they can achieve fully. Pupils who need extra help use this support to secure confident reading and writing skills and to participate successfully in lessons.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They act with the greatest courtesy towards each other, staff and visitors. Pupils follow clear expectations and routines and know how to behave at all times. They rarely need reminders because they manage their own behaviour maturely. Pupil state clearly that bullying and prejudice are unacceptable. Pupils trust staff to manage

unkind behaviour should it occur. This helps them feel happy and safe. Pupil attendance is excellent.

Pupils take part in extensive leadership opportunities and contribute significantly to the running of the school. Roles include heads of house, anti-bullying ambassadors, school journalists and leaders of learning societies such as those focused on science and mathematics. Pupils attend a wide range of clubs and activities after school, where they develop their skills in sports, music and other interests. Less confident pupils value the invite-only friendship club, where they develop secure social skills. Pupils speak with passion about their school and the opportunities they receive. They appreciate how these experiences, including expert careers guidance, shape and transform their lives. Pupils leave the school incredibly well prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should continue to sustain and sharpen all aspects of the school's work so that all pupils continue to flourish and thrive.

About this inspection

This school is part of Partnership Learning trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Roger Leighton, and overseen by a board of directors, chaired by Saadat Mubashar.

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

The inspection took place on 22 and 23 September 2026.

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

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior school leaders, the trust chief executive officer, school governors, staff, parents and pupils during the inspection.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently makes use of one alternative provision.

Headteacher: Andrew Roberts

Lead inspector:
Piers Saunders, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
David Thomas Hatchett, Ofsted Inspector
Tom Neave, Ofsted Inspector
Jerome Rieger, Ofsted Inspector
Lauren Roberts, Ofsted Inspector
Katharine Vincent, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

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

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

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,550
Well above 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: 1,063

School capacity

1,824
Well above 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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

36.38%
Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 30.4%

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

1.16%
Well 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: 3.53%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

4.90%
Well below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 14.0%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

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

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	59.9%	45.4%	Above
2023/24 (final)	56.3%	45.9%	Above
2022/23 (final)	59.9%	45.3%	Above

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	55.5	46.1	Above
2023/24 (final)	54.4	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	55.5	46.3	Above

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0.78	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	1.07	-0.03	Above
2021/22 (final)	0.98	-0.03	Above

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	52.3%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	40.9%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	48.1%	25.2%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	53.4	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	49.5	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	50.7	35.0	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0.45	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.67	-0.57	Above
2021/22 (final)	0.71	-0.55	Above

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	52.3%	53.1%	-0.9 pp
2023/24 (final)	40.9%	53.1%	-12.2 pp
2022/23 (final)	48.1%	52.4%	-4.3 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	53.4	50.4	3.0

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	49.5	50.0	-0.6
2022/23 (final)	50.7	50.3	0.4

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	0.45	0.16	0.29
2022/23 (final)	0.67	0.17	0.50
2021/22 (final)	0.71	0.15	0.55

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	95%	92%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	97%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	96%	94%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	37.96	35.00	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	36.93	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	39.75	34.16	Above

A-level value added

A score showing students' progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	0.1	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	0.2	0.0	Above

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)	4.0%	8.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.3%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.1%	9.0%	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)	7.8%	23.4%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	9.2%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	11.4%	26.5%	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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