

Our Lady's RC High School

URN: 105576 | Inspected: 11 November 2025

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.

Achievement

Strong standard

Pupils achieve very well across the curriculum. Over time, pupils' progress in national examinations has been above average in many areas. This positive picture of pupils' progress is consistently evident across a number of subjects and groups of pupils. It reflects the highest aspirations that leaders and staff have for all pupils. Disadvantaged pupils achieve particularly well. In recent years, their outcomes have been consistently above the national average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well from their starting points. Leaders ensure that these pupils, and other vulnerable pupils, receive the support that they need to achieve their full potential. Pupils recall their learning well and produce work of high quality. They develop detailed knowledge across subjects and are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education. Almost all pupils move on to appropriate education, employment or training that matches their interests and abilities.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard

Leaders have a clear and detailed understanding of the curriculum. They have designed a curriculum that prioritises the development of foundational skills and knowledge across all subjects. Leaders build flexibility into their planning to ensure that staff have the time to revisit important concepts when pupils need this.

Leaders give careful thought to the training that they provide to staff so that all pupils access ambitious learning with success. Leaders have established a thorough programme of quality assurance that ensures that classroom teaching and intervention programmes prepare pupils extremely well for each stage of their education. Teachers use their subject expertise to design activities that help pupils to make sense of difficult concepts. Across the school, teachers use assessment strategies effectively to ensure that pupils gain a deep knowledge of the subjects that they study. Positive relationships and clear routines create an atmosphere in lessons that helps pupils to learn well. Leaders maintain a sharp focus on any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Highly trained staff provide pupils with the teaching that they need to close any gaps that they may have and to secure the language, communication and mathematical foundations that they need to achieve very well.

Our Lady's RC High School

URN: 105576 | Inspected: 11 November 2025

Inclusion

Strong standard

The school identifies pupils' needs swiftly and accurately. Leaders oversee a rigorous system for assessing pupils' needs. Staff receive detailed information about the needs of pupils who may be vulnerable. Leaders provide staff with targeted professional training that ensures that staff have the expertise to meet pupils' diverse needs effectively. Leaders work closely with external agencies, including to support those pupils that may be in care and children in need. Regular reviews ensure support remains appropriate and impactful. Support staff provide highly effective targeted assistance in classrooms, with clear strategies in place to encourage vulnerable pupils to become independent young people. The school's pupil premium strategy is implemented with rigour. Leaders hold high expectations for all pupils. Leaders' focus on securing pupils' foundational skills and knowledge reflects their strong moral purpose. Staff monitor and assess the impact of support very well, and they use this information to inform their decisions that are routinely in the best interests of pupils. Leaders make appropriate use of alternative provision. Systems and structures for tracking these pupils ensure they continue to make progress and remain safe.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard

Leaders use their detailed and insightful analysis of the school's performance to evaluate the effectiveness of their provision. They accurately identify, monitor and act on priorities for improvement. This has led to consistently high standards across most areas of the school's work. Those responsible for governance carry out their statutory duties effectively. They have a clear understanding of the school's performance and provide appropriate support and challenge to leaders. Governors hold leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive and for the impact of resources, including the use of pupil premium funding.

Leaders ensure that decisions are routinely made in the best interests of pupils. They pay particular attention to the needs of disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those known or previously known to children's social care, and those who face other barriers to their learning. Leaders have established a high-quality professional learning programme that builds staff expertise effectively. The programme is evidence-informed, sustained and coherent. Teachers at all stages of their careers are supported very well, and many are retained by the school, progressing to take on middle leadership roles. Staff feel valued and involved in the strategic direction of the school. Leaders provide meaningful opportunities for staff to share their perspectives and to contribute to decision-making. Staff appreciate the care that leaders take to manage their workload and wellbeing. Leaders have built flexibility into their systems, including adjustments to the timing of professional development sessions, which staff report has made a positive difference to their work-life balance. Personal development and well-being Strong standard Leaders have designed a personal development programme that is carefully tailored to the school's context. Pupils develop secure and detailed knowledge across the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, relationships and sex education (RSE) programme and citizenship curriculums. Teachers identify and address gaps in pupils' PSHE and RSE knowledge

Our Lady's RC High School

URN: 105576 | Inspected: 11 November 2025

effectively. The enrichment programme is extensive and thoughtfully designed. A Year 7 residential trip helps all pupils to develop independence, confidence and resilience soon after joining the school. Leaders maintain a sensitive approach to identifying barriers to participation and ensure that these are reduced or removed. As a result, pupils benefit from the school's wide offer. Pupils benefit from meaningful leadership opportunities. The student council works collaboratively with school leaders to shape the school environment. Pupils develop a strong sense of community spirit through activities such as organising tournaments for younger year groups. The school celebrates diversity through language and culture days, where pupils share information about their own cultural heritage. Pupils develop a deep understanding of fundamental British values and show respect for protected characteristics. Pupils behave with integrity and cooperate consistently well with others. Leaders and staff understand their pupils deeply and provide highly effective pastoral support. They anticipate and identify which individuals or groups might need additional help and ensure that this is put in place so that pupils succeed. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to learn about their options for education, employment and training. The school engages well with employers in the local area, and former pupils return to share their experiences through a legacies programme. This helps current pupils to visualise themselves in these roles and raises their aspirations. Pupils are very well prepared for life beyond school.

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

Pupils are happy and proud to be part of this school. They know that leaders have high expectations of them, and they rise to meet these. Pupils feel a strong sense of belonging, which is evident in the positive relationships they have with staff and with each other. Many pupils who previously experienced difficulties in education, now thrive at this school because they feel welcome and free to be themselves. Pupils achieve very well. They enjoy their learning and engage positively in lessons. Teachers help pupils to understand difficult concepts, and pupils produce work of high quality. Typically, over time, outcomes in national examinations have been above average. Disadvantaged pupils achieve particularly well, and almost all pupils progress to appropriate education, employment or training. Pupils benefit from a rich and extensive personal development programme. They take on meaningful leadership roles and contribute to their community through activities such as organising tournaments for younger pupils. The broad range of experiences that the school offers helps pupils to develop independence, confidence and resilience. Pupils celebrate diversity and develop a deep understanding of fundamental British values. The school is a calm and orderly environment where pupils show respect and self-discipline. Pupils' attendance is high, and they are punctual to lessons. They learn how to manage their own emotions and how to resolve conflict with others. Pupils feel safe and know that staff will deal with any concerns swiftly and effectively. Vulnerable pupils receive highly effective support. Staff have a deep understanding of pupils' needs and identify barriers to their learning, which are then reduced or removed. Pupils benefit significantly from being at a school where leaders make decisions that are routinely in their best interests.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should sustain the effectiveness of their work in all areas. They should seek continued improvement, overcoming barriers and challenges, in order to drive a transformational impact for all pupils. This includes disadvantaged pupils, who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing.

Our Lady's RC High School

URN: 105576 | Inspected: 11 November 2025

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Leaders promote the importance of high attendance consistently well. They have established systems of support that enable them to help pupils and families when attendance needs to improve. The attendance team works closely with the designated safeguarding leads to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive the support they need. Leaders' analysis of attendance data is forensic, and they respond swiftly to pupils' changing circumstances. As a result, attendance rates are high and persistent absence is low. Leaders have established a culture where pupils flourish. Clear routines and high expectations are understood and embedded. Staff model positive behaviour consistently, and pupils respond with respect and self-discipline. Pupils learn how to manage their own emotions and how to resolve conflict with others. As a result, bullying is rare. Pupils show dedication to their learning and rarely need reminders about their behaviour. Leaders provide proactive support for pupils who need help to improve their behaviour. External interventions, including boxing and meditation, are effective. Pupils who have accessed short-term off-site direction return successfully to school with appropriate support in place. Leaders maintain a clear focus on analysing patterns in behaviour data to inform their actions, which are routinely in pupils' best interests.

For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/our-ladys-rc-high-school-manchester>