

# Inspection of The Cowbit St Mary's (Endowed) CofE Primary

Barrier Bank, Cowbit, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE12 6AE

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Inspection dates:	4 and 5 February 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a warm and inclusive school where pupils feel valued and well supported. The school's ethos of care and respect helps pupils thrive, both academically and personally. New leaders have driven significant improvements across the school. Staff, parents and governors share a clear and ambitious vision for school improvement.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and show positive attitudes to learning. They respond well to the high expectations set by staff and show enthusiasm for their lessons. The school's ambitious and well-structured curriculum enables all pupils to make progress. This is shown in the improved results that they have achieved in national curriculum tests.

Pupils behave well. They demonstrate respect towards others, and low-level disruption is rare. Relationships between pupils and staff are strong, and pupils feel safe and well cared for.

Parents are very supportive of the school. They appreciate the improvements made by leaders in recent years. One parent commented, reflecting the views of many, 'The school has come on in leaps and bounds. Communication is excellent, and staff really care about the children.'

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school's curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils, including those in mixed-age classes, build knowledge and skills. In some subjects, the curriculum is deliberately focused upon the school's local context. This is so pupils can make connections in their learning. For example, pupils study the history of the Spalding Flower Parade.

Teachers deliver the curriculum well, using questioning and modelling to deepen understanding. They carry out regular checks to help pupils remember what they have learned. Practical activities, such as science investigations, engage pupils well. Teachers closely check whether pupils have gaps in learning and consequently adapt their teaching. Occasionally, activities do not take account of pupils' different starting points. This reduces the impact of teaching. Leaders recognise this and are providing training to ensure greater consistency.

Reading is a key strength of the school. Staff deliver the phonics programme with consistency and rigour. Well-trained staff give extra help to any pupils who may be at risk of falling behind. As a result, most pupils learn to read quickly. Older pupils read with fluency and comprehension.

Mathematics teaching is adapted to suit the mixed-age structure of the school. Teachers place strong emphasis on fluency, reasoning and problem-solving. This helps to develop pupils' independence. Times tables practice helps pupils remember key facts, and effective interventions ensure pupils who need extra help catch up quickly.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and take part in the full curriculum. Detailed support plans are in place, and skilled teaching assistants help pupils achieve well. The school checks provision carefully to ensure it meets pupils' needs.

Children in the early years benefit from a well-planned and engaging curriculum that supports their early development. Children learn key skills in reading, writing and mathematics. The provision for continuous play-based learning is less well developed. Some activities lack clear purpose and do not always extend children's learning.

Pupils show positive attitudes towards learning and are enthusiastic in lessons. They are polite, considerate and respectful towards others. The school's behaviour policy ensures consistency and fairness. Pupils understand expectations and are keen to live up to them. As a result of the school's actions, attendance has improved and is now in line with national averages. Leaders track attendance carefully and provide targeted support where needed.

The school provides a broad range of enrichment activities, including drama, creative writing and archery clubs. All pupils are encouraged to participate. Personal development lessons are well planned and help pupils prepare for life beyond school. Pupils develop a strong understanding of fundamental British Values. They learn how to develop healthy relationships and demonstrate respect and tolerance. Older pupils take on leadership roles and act as positive role models for younger children. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, including when online.

Staff feel valued and well supported by leaders. They are given opportunities for professional development. Governors play an active role in supporting the school and holding leaders to account. The school has benefited from effective support from the local authority and a local trust. This has helped the school to make rapid improvements.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some classes, teachers do not always take account of pupils' starting points when planning activities. This means that some teaching is not fully effective in helping pupils make progress. The school should ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge to meet different pupils' needs so that teaching is consistently effective.
- Teachers do not always consider the intended purpose of activities in continuous play-based learning for younger children. As a result, some of the activities are less effective in building children's understanding. The school should ensure that teachers choose activities that have a clear purpose and support children's development effectively.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120611
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10347440
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	86
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Chris Elliott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Leonard
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.cowbit.lincs.sch.uk">www.cowbit.lincs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19 October 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in May 2022. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's educational provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have

taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The lead inspector met with governors, and representatives of the local authority and the trust that has provided support for the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders of the school and considered a range of documents.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened as pupils read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered evidence about some other curriculum subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils and staff and spoke to parents at the school gate. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, as well as Ofsted's survey for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Paul Heery, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Paul Halcro

His Majesty's Inspector

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