

Cobden Primary School

Cobden Road, Farnley, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS12 5LA

Unique reference number (URN): 107963

Monitoring inspection report:

20 May 2026

At the most recent graded inspection in July 2025, the following areas were identified as needing to improve:

- There are some inconsistencies in the way that safeguarding procedures are implemented. The school does not routinely evaluate how well staff follow these. This means it is unsure whether the school's policies are followed in some aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures.
- The school's efforts to improve the school lack clarity, urgency and effectiveness. As a result, improvements are either not sustained over time or happen too slowly to make a meaningful difference. This includes some aspects of safeguarding, such as reviewing procedures in a timely manner. The school should ensure that its plans for improvement are well designed and effective.
- Governors do not have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need improvement. As a result, they are not able to hold school leaders to account effectively. Governors should ensure they use robust and reliable evidence to check that leaders' actions have a positive impact on the quality of education that pupils receive.
- The school has not established an effective approach to the teaching of writing, including in the early years. As a result, some pupils do not develop the foundational skills of writing quickly enough. The school should continue to review its approach to the teaching of writing and ensure that all staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to support pupils in embedding this essential skill effectively and consistently.
- Across different subjects, including in the early years, the activities that teachers design often do not match what pupils already know or align well enough with the goals of the curriculum. This limits how well pupils learn. The school should ensure that curriculum implementation helps pupils learn and remember the knowledge they need to be successful in the next stage of their education.
- Teaching is not adapted successfully to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Consequently, pupils with SEND do not achieve as well

as they should. The school should ensure that staff have the expertise to adapt learning sufficiently well for pupils with SEND.

- Too many pupils, including those with SEND, do not attend school regularly enough. This negatively affects pupils' achievement and their wider personal development. The school should quickly identify and address barriers to high attendance and strengthen support for pupils who need it.

Leaders and governors are taking effective action to improve the school, but continued work is needed to remove the requires significant improvement designation.

During the monitoring inspection, inspectors focused on the following evaluation areas:

- Leadership and governance
- Attendance and behaviour
- Curriculum and teaching
- Early years

Leadership and governance

Leaders have taken appropriate actions to address the areas for improvement identified at the school's most recent graded inspection. They ensure that decisions are well informed and carefully considered. Leaders have established new systems and processes to monitor and improve pupils' levels of attendance. They ensure that pupils are safe in school and that safeguarding requirements are met. Developments made to the teaching of writing are now being implemented in the classroom.

Leaders remain clear in their decision making to prioritise actions in line with the changing needs of the school. They respond quickly to any additional emerging issues that arise. For example, leaders have recognised the need to strengthen the provision for pupils with more complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders work closely with Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust and the local authority. They draw on the expertise of these colleagues to develop staff's practice and to ensure consistency in teaching across the school. The trust provides leaders with helpful opportunities for collaboration and challenge. Governors are building on recent improvements by making focussed monitoring visits to the school. Leaders are determined and ambitious to continue to improve pupils' experiences in school.

Safeguarding

At the previous graded inspection, safeguarding was evaluated as being effective.

Attendance and behaviour

Leaders have strengthened the school's approach to monitoring pupils' attendance. They have clear oversight of individuals and groups of pupils whose attendance is a concern. The systems in place allow leaders to check patterns of attendance more effectively. Leaders and staff have a detailed understanding of pupils' circumstances and the barriers to attendance that they face. However, it is too soon to determine the impact of this work in improving pupils' attendance across the school.

Leaders and staff continue to develop pupils' and families' understanding of the importance of attending school each day and on time. Older pupils recognise that regular attendance will help them to benefit from their education and prepare them for their move on to secondary school.

Leaders know the needs of the pupils well, including those at risk of suspension. They work proactively with the local authority and other external agencies to secure appropriate advice and support for pupils who may need a more personalised approach to manage their behaviour. This work is beginning to have a positive impact. Suspension rates are reducing.

Pupils' behaviour is positive during lessons across the school. Classrooms are generally calm and pupils are ready to learn. Staff reinforce leaders' expectations, but this remains an area to further improve.

Curriculum and teaching

Leaders have prioritised actions to improve writing across the school. They continue to refine their approaches, using research and the training that they are undertaking. Leaders have established a clear structure for the teaching of writing, with an emphasis on helping pupils to secure the grammatical knowledge they need to write accurately. There is a renewed focus on the teaching of handwriting, with clear expectations in place for each year group. However, staff's implementation of this is not fully consistent across the school.

Leaders are intent on securing pupils' knowledge in English and mathematics to build a firm base for future learning. In most cases, learning activities are better aligned to the curriculum intent. Staff have started to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge before they move on to new learning. While this is positive, there are still occasions when greater rigour is needed to address pupils' misconceptions in a timely way.

Adaptations for pupils who need additional support, including those with SEND, are evident. This includes visual resources and structures to support independent writing. These adjustments help some pupils to apply their learning more independently.

Early years

Leaders ensure that staff accurately identify children's starting points when they join the school. Staff identify any gaps in children's knowledge swiftly, in collaboration with the school's speech and language therapist. This information helps to support staff in delivering

focused support to start to address these gaps. An appropriate emphasis is placed on developing children's communication, language and personal, social and emotional skills.

The curriculum meets the requirements of the early years foundation stage, covering all areas of learning. Generally, leaders have outlined the knowledge that children should learn. They have identified books and songs carefully. However, in some areas of learning, knowledge is not as well determined. Further refinement is needed to ensure clear progression of this knowledge from Nursery to the end of the Reception Year.

Staff clearly model expectations and routines. Children are settled and secure. They access learning independently. Even the youngest children know how to select and use resources, such as scissors and glue sticks, appropriately. They listen and follow simple instructions and are developing positive social skills through their interactions with staff and their peers.

Children with SEND access the provision with support that encourages their independence in learning. In most cases, teaching focuses on what children need to succeed. Leaders have rightly identified further work to strengthen aspects of the learning environment to ensure the activities on offer support children to further extend their learning.

Additional next steps

Leaders and governors should continue to address the priorities for improvement identified in the last graded inspection report.

About this inspection

The inspectors carried out this monitoring inspection under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005, and it was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require significant improvement following the graded inspection that took place in July 2025.

The school's previous inspection was carried out under the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) at that time. The renewed EIF took effect from 10 November 2025. The areas for improvement identified at the school's graded inspection and subsequent monitoring inspections have been cross-referenced to the relevant evaluation areas in the inspection toolkit for consideration on this monitoring inspection.

The purpose of this monitoring inspection was not to determine grades for any of the evaluation areas set out in the school inspection toolkit. The purpose was to identify and report on the school's progress in addressing priorities for improvement since the school's previous inspection.

The substantive headteacher was absent at the time of this monitoring inspection visit. Since October 2025, an acting headteacher and interim senior leaders have been appointed from within the school. Owlcoates Multi Academy Trust provides external support. The governing body, including the chair of governors, remains the same.

During this inspection, meetings were held with the acting headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, the deputy chief executive officer of Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection.

Lead inspector

Sarah Gordon

His Majesty's Inspector

About this school

School capacity	210
Number of pupils on roll	177
Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable)	No
Type of specialist provision (if applicable)	N/A

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

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