

Cobden Primary School

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

Unique reference number (URN): 107963

Monitoring inspection report:

25 February 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
- Safeguarding
- Inclusion
- Attendance and behaviour

Leadership and governance

Interim leaders have a clear understanding of the school's development priorities. They successfully prioritise the right actions for improvement, in the right order. A revised school development plan clearly outlines what needs to happen and when. To support its implementation, leaders are proactive in seeking external support and advice. Collaboration has expanded through the school's engagement with the multi-academy trust that it intends to join. This is helping to build capacity. Governors are making improvements to their own systems to ensure they have clear oversight of the school and can effectively hold leaders to account. While new processes are now in place, implementation of these is at an early stage.

Leaders have raised expectations for both pupils and staff. Staff roles and responsibilities have been made clear. Under interim leadership arrangements, most staff feel valued and respected. The school has introduced a new behaviour system for pupils. Leaders provide the support that staff need to implement this effectively. The positive impact of this work is clear. The school is typically calm. Pupils participate and are engaged in learning in lessons.

Leaders acknowledge where there is further work to do. They have recently established effective systems to monitor attendance. However, this work is at a very early stage. Leaders recognise the need to address concerns around pupil attendance with more urgency.

Safeguarding

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

The school has reviewed its safeguarding procedures and policies since the last graded inspection. Staff have a clear understanding of these. They receive regular training and updates to ensure that safeguarding practice remains consistent and effective. Necessary changes to routines have been made to ensure that pupils are safe at the school.

Inclusion

Leaders have improved how well pupils with SEND are supported in school. Systems to identify pupils with SEND are well established. Leaders have a thorough knowledge and oversight of pupils' needs.

The school has ensured that all staff have received the necessary training to strengthen their understanding of pupils' needs. Leaders with responsibility for SEND provide ongoing support for staff. They have also been working closely with the incoming multi-academy trust. In most classes, there are improvements in how learning is adapted for pupils with SEND. Where this is the case, these pupils are showing positive signs of working independently, confidently using the resources in place to support them. However, in some classes, pupils with SEND do not benefit from the precise support they need to help them to achieve well.

For pupils with the most complex needs, leaders are working with external agencies to seek advice and support. Bespoke interventions are identified for those pupils who need them the most. However, ongoing inconsistencies in staffing have hampered this work. Not all pupils who need specific, regular interventions are receiving them. Leaders are aware of this and are taking action.

Attendance and behaviour

There have been some slight improvements in overall attendance and persistent absence. However, leaders acknowledge that significant work to improve this area of the school's work is still required. Leaders have recently reviewed systems for the checking and following up of attendance concerns. These processes are not fully established or embedded. It is too early to see the impact of leaders' work.

Where the school has put in place new incentives to encourage pupils to attend school on time, improvements have been seen in punctuality across the school. Pupils and families are beginning to understand important messages that highlight the learning and wider opportunities that coming to school every day and on time will bring.

Leaders are beginning to see positive impact from the actions they have prioritised regarding pupils' behaviour. Most pupils are engaged and ready to learn. Positive relationships between staff and pupils are evident. In several classes, staff demonstrate the high expectations that have been set. They consistently employ the new behaviour policy.

A behaviour curriculum has been developed for pupils so that staff revisit expectations and key messages regularly. Behaviour incidents are reducing. Despite these steps, suspensions remain high for a small number of pupils.

Additional next steps

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

About this inspection

The inspector carried out this monitoring inspection under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005, and it was the first 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 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. From October 2025 the deputy headteacher became the acting headteacher. Other interim senior leaders were appointed from within the school. Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust is providing external support. The governing body, including the chair of governors, remains the same since the last graded inspection.

During this inspection, meetings were held with the acting headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, the leader of SEND, as well as the chair of governors and a representative from 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

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