

The Cowbit St Mary's (Endowed) CofE Primary

Barrier Bank, Cowbit, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE12 6AE

Inspection dates

8–9 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, do not make good enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics, during their time in key stage 2.
- Too many current pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are not making good progress from the end of key stage 1, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Current disadvantaged pupils throughout the school, are not making enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupil premium funding is not allocated or monitored effectively.
- School improvement plans do not contain sufficient detail in order for the governing body to hold leaders fully to account.
- The new systems for the teaching of mathematics and writing are yet to have a marked impact because they are not fully embedded across the school.
- Teachers do not consistently plan work that challenges the most able and supports the least able pupils. Some pupils complete the same work regardless of their ability, particularly in mathematics.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics are fully developed.
- Teachers do not insist that pupils consistently present work to the standards of which they are capable.

The school has the following strengths

- Children get off to a good start in the early years and make strong progress through to the end of key stage 1.
- Pupils embody the school's values and understand them well. They are knowledgeable regarding faiths and cultures different to their own and are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' conduct is very good throughout the day. Incidents of poor behaviour, bullying and minor classroom disruptions are extremely rare.
- There is a warm and friendly feel to the school. Staff know pupils and their families extremely well. Parents unanimously recommend the school to other parents.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - school improvement plans contain the information that will allow the governing body to hold leaders fully to account
 - new approaches to the teaching of writing and mathematics are implemented fully across the school
 - the pupil premium funding is allocated and monitored effectively.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that outcomes improve for all pupils, especially pupils in key stage 2, by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan work that challenges the most able and supports the least able pupils in all subjects, but particularly in mathematics
 - improve pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics
 - insist on the highest standards of presentation and handwriting in all year groups.

An external review of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and the governing body have been unsuccessful in ensuring that pupils in key stage 2 make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their various key stage 1 starting points.
- The leader responsible for the allocation and monitoring of the pupil premium funding, and the governing body, have not ensured that this extra funding is used effectively. Current disadvantaged pupils and those disadvantaged pupils recently leaving key stage 2 have not made enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The governing body cannot hold leaders fully to account for their actions because school improvement plans do not contain sufficient information.
- Leaders have begun to introduce new approaches to the teaching of writing and mathematics, however, they have yet to have an impact, because they have not been fully introduced and embedded.
- Teachers appreciate the opportunity to develop professionally and to take part in training. Most recently this training has involved changes to the teaching of writing and mathematics. Teachers have opportunities throughout the year to meet with colleagues from other schools to share good practice.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a broad and balanced curriculum. Educational visits supplement this. For example, pupils in Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 recently visited the National Space Centre to deepen their knowledge and understanding of science. Key stage 1 pupils visited a zoo when studying the topic 'animals'.
- Leaders and teachers have created a warm and stimulating learning environment, where pupils state that they feel safe and happy.
- The leader responsible for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is well qualified and knowledgeable. There is a good system in place to identify and ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate and effective support. The majority of pupils with SEND are therefore making good progress.
- The leader responsible for the early years is experienced, knowledgeable and has a good understanding of the strengths and development areas. For example, a recent assessment of children's abilities, identified weaknesses in mathematics. Consequently, extra activities were planned to deepen children's knowledge and understanding of 2-D and 3-D shapes.
- The leader responsible for the allocation and monitoring of the physical education (PE) and sport funding uses it effectively. A sports coach ensures that pupils are active at lunch times, using new equipment to play handball, hockey and basketball. There are after-school sports clubs in areas such as football, archery, tag rugby, kick boxing and tri-golf. The school has recently participated in inter-school sports competitions and are the proud winners of a local school netball tournament.
- The local authority has recently supported the school in implementing new initiatives in writing and mathematics as well as making judgements regarding the quality of teaching. However, the local authority has been unsuccessful in supporting leaders to

ensure that pupils make good progress during their time in key stage 2.

- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are supportive of school leaders and appreciate the opportunity to communicate with the headteacher, daily, at the start of the school day. One parent commented, 'The headteacher is very passionate about driving the children to do the best that they can.'

Governance of the school

- The governing body have been unsuccessful in holding leaders to account for the recent poor progress made by pupils during their time in key stage 2. The governing body are unable to check on the progress of the school improvement plan because it does not contain sufficient information.
- The governing body have not ensured that the pupil premium funding has been allocated and monitored effectively. They are unaware that the current disadvantaged pupils are not making good enough progress.
- The governing body are passionate about the school and have a good mix of skills and experience. They have further developed their skills recently through attending appropriate training, in such areas as safeguarding, and the provision for pupils with SEND.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher ensures that all statutory checks are undertaken on individuals before they are allowed to work or volunteer at the school. This information is checked frequently by the safeguarding governor.
- The designated safeguarding leads ensure that all staff receive training in such areas as spotting the signs of child abuse, neglect, female genital mutilation and domestic violence. Detailed records of staff training are kept, ensuring that any gaps are spotted quickly and rectified. Staff follow the local authority 'five-year pathway', therefore ensuring that their training is kept up to date.
- There is a good system in place for staff to report any welfare concerns they have regarding a pupil or family. 'Notice of concern' forms are completed and, when necessary, outside agencies are contacted swiftly should extra advice or support be needed. There is a strong safeguarding culture within the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers do not always plan work that stretches the most able pupils and supports the least able pupils. On too many occasions, pupils of differing abilities complete the same work. This is particularly the case in mathematics.
- Teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils are developing problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils present work to a standard of which they

are capable. In some pupils' workbooks, standards of handwriting and presentation deteriorate during the year.

- Teaching is most effective when teachers pitch activities at the correct level of challenge and provide pupils with appropriate support. For example, in the Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 class, the teacher was encouraging pupils to write imaginatively, regarding an animal with bright feathers, explaining why it had become extinct. One pupil had accurately written, 'The animal became extinct because humans used its beautiful multi-coloured feathers to write with.'
- Leaders ensure that pupils' work is moderated frequently with colleagues from other schools. This process checks that the judgements teachers make about pupils' attainment and progress are accurate. The local authority has recently confirmed the accuracy of teachers' assessments for children in the early years, for pupils leaving key stage 1 and for pupils leaving key stage 2, in writing.
- Teachers mark pupils' work in line with the school's own policy. Pupils are given appropriate time to improve pieces of writing and correct errors made in mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Pupils are engaged in a variety of activities to help them learn the sounds that letters, and groups of letters make. Pupils in the Reception and Year 1 class were observed successfully finding, and reading words containing the sounds, 'ee', 'ay' and 'oo'.
- Pupils in key stage 1 use phonic skills to decode unfamiliar words. They are heard listen to read often and told the inspector they enjoy the activity. Pupils in key stage 2 say that the school library has a good selection of books for them to choose from, with a favourite author being Jeff Kinney. Some pupils are therefore making stronger progress in reading.
- Teaching assistants are a strength. They help to promote pupils' independence by allowing some activities to be completed by the pupil, without adult support. They are skilled in asking questions that help to deepen pupils' thinking. For example, in the Year 2 and Year 3 class a group of pupils were being effectively supported to order numbers from 1 to 10, using a number line.
- Pupils are given homework in line with the school's policy. For example, pupils in Years 4, Year 5 and Year 6 are given frequent opportunities to improve spelling and mathematical skills.
- End-of-year reports are detailed and inform parents about pupils' attendance and their effort and behaviour in English, mathematics and science. Appropriate targets and development areas are also set as a focus for the following academic year.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are knowledgeable regarding the school's core values of perseverance, trust, responsibility, forgiveness, compassion and respect. Pupils understand the meanings of these values and are rewarded in assemblies for displaying the attributes of a value,

during the week.

- Pupils have an understanding of British values including democracy, respect and the rule of law. Pupils also understand faiths and cultures different to their own. For example, pupils have recently enjoyed learning about Islam, Korean culture and practising some everyday Korean words and phrases.
- Pupils are encouraged to be reflective learners. Displays in classrooms ask pupils to consider each week what has gone well, what could have been better, and what commitments could be made for the next week. For example, in the Year 2 and Year 3 class, pupils had agreed to ensure that they always 'put up our hands to answer a question'.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe when, for example, crossing roads, riding bikes and being online. They are aware of how to keep themselves healthy through the benefits of taking regular exercise and eating a healthy, balanced diet.
- Pupils enjoy the extra responsibility of being 'mini police officers' who help to organise playground games and mediate during rare, minor disagreements at break and lunchtimes. There are also opportunities for the democratically elected school council to organise bake sales and for pupils to develop confidence by reading out relevant bible verses and prayers, during daily assemblies at the local church.
- Pupils' good work and positive attitudes to school are encouraged and rewarded through displays around school, 'star of the week' certificates and a house point system.
- The large majority of pupils at the school attend well. However, because of the exceptional circumstances of a few pupils, overall attendance at the school is below average. The school is working closely with the local authority to improve the attendance of these pupils whose attendance is a concern.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the school day, including at break and lunchtimes when they enjoy using the wide variety of equipment on offer. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors and treat each other with respect. Pupils look smart in the school's uniform.
- The new 'good to be green' behaviour system is working well. Pupils understand the system and adults use it consistently throughout the school. Pupils state that behaviour at the school is good and that incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils are confident that adults sort out any disagreements swiftly and fairly.
- Lessons run smoothly and without interruption because pupils follow adults' instructions quickly.
- Pupils show respect for equipment and resources that belong to the school. Consequently, classrooms and cloakrooms are kept neat and tidy.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Over recent years, too many pupils leaving key stage 2 have not made enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their various key stage 1 starting points.
- In 2017 and 2018, the proportion of pupils leaving key stage 2 who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national averages. In 2018, no pupils leaving key stage 2 achieved the higher standard in any subject.
- Over recent years, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the spelling, punctuation and grammar test has been well below the national average. No pupils achieved the higher standard in the last 3 years.
- Current pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, and disadvantaged pupils throughout the school are not making enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The majority of pupils currently in Year 1, Year 3 and Year 4 are making much stronger progress. This is particularly the case in reading.
- The majority of pupils with SEND are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils leaving key stage 1 recently who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics has been broadly in line with, and sometimes above, the national averages.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils leaving key stage 1 who achieved at a greater depth in reading and mathematics was above the national averages.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been broadly in line with the national averages over recent years.

Early years provision

Good

- The majority of children enter the school with knowledge and skills that are usually typical for their age. However, recently, a number of children have entered the school with poor speech and language and communication skills.
- Over recent years, the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development has been above or in line with the national averages. Children make good progress from their various starting points and are well prepared for the Year 1 curriculum.
- Prior to starting at the school, there are frequent opportunities for children and parents to visit the Reception classroom and become familiar with adults and the routines. The teacher visits local nurseries to gain information about each child and parents also contribute to this initial assessment at an induction meeting. Staff have an excellent understanding of each child's abilities before they start, therefore ensuring that children settle quickly and make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is good. The teacher ensures that there is a range of activities for children to complete. For example, children were observed carefully following instructions to make honey sandwiches for Winnie the Pooh and marmalade sandwiches for Paddington Bear. They also enjoyed developing speech and language skills when successfully discussing which 2-D shapes make up different 3-D shapes.

- The teacher ensures that frequent, accurate assessments are undertaken to carefully plan out children's next steps in learning. Parents can contribute to their child's ongoing progress by completing 'WOW!' cards that inform staff when the child has completed something new at home.
- Relationships between adults and staff are warm and positive. Well-established routines help to ensure that children's behaviour is good. Children get on well with each other, line up sensibly and share resources maturely.
- There are good links with outside agencies such as the school nurse and the speech and language team. Any child who requires extra support therefore receives it promptly.
- Staff have successfully used the community to help deepen children's knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, recent visits by a local nurse and the police community support officer enabled children to develop a better understanding of 'people who help us'.
- Safeguarding is effective. Adults receive the same training and follow the same effective reporting procedures that exist in the school. A number of adults have the paediatric first aid qualification.
- Parents are positive regarding the provision in the early years with one parent commenting, 'They have done wonders with my child!'

School details

Unique reference number	120611
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10057685

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Pauline Start
Headteacher	Bruce Johnson
Telephone number	01406 380369
Website	www.cowbit.lincs.sch.uk
Email address	joanne.drew@cowbit.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average. There are no pupils who have an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above the national average.
- Since the last inspection, the school has experienced a turbulent time as there has been a high turnover of staff. However, currently, the staffing situation is settled.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning in all classes.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, school leaders/teachers, a representative from the local authority and a group of governors, including the chair and vice-chair.
- The inspector scrutinised in detail, the work in a range of pupils' books from all year groups and a wide range of subjects. This activity was undertaken partly with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of the school's documentation, including: the evaluation of the school's own performance and its development plan; information on pupils' attainment and progress; records relating to behaviour and bullying; attendance records; safeguarding procedures; and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour around the school, including at break and lunchtimes. He spoke formally with a group of pupils and informally with others around the school. The inspector listened to pupils read from Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6.
- The inspector took account of the 13 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. The inspector spoke with parents before school and considered the six responses from parents to the Ofsted free-text service. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupils' survey or to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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