

Stubbin Wood School

Common Lane, Shirebrook, Mansfield, Derbyshire NG20 8QF

Unique reference number (URN): 147627

Monitoring inspection report:

3 February 2026

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

- There are significant weaknesses in the school's safeguarding practices. This places pupils at potential risk of harm. The school must act urgently to prioritise the safety and well-being of all pupils and staff. It must ensure that there are sufficiently well-trained staff, up-to-date and accurate risk assessments, robust safer recruitment processes and effective recording of physical intervention.
- From the Reception Year to the sixth form, pupils often experience a curriculum offer that is poorly conceived, disjointed and lacks purpose. The school does not check systematically how well pupils learn and where they have gaps in their knowledge. As a result, the provision is failing to meet their needs fully. The school needs to ensure that the curriculum, including the sixth-form programme of study, is designed precisely and resourced sufficiently so that it meets the full range of pupils' needs and prepares them well for adulthood.
- The school's approach to teaching early reading is inconsistent. This means some pupils do not get better quickly enough at learning to read. This limits their ability to access other areas of the curriculum. The school needs to ensure that staff have the skills and expertise necessary to ensure that those pupils who are able learn to read well.
- A minority of pupils in the school display challenging behaviours. When these pupils become distressed, some staff are not confident in managing this. The school needs to ensure that it provides appropriate support so that all staff feel confident to help pupils regulate their emotions and feelings.
- The school does not meet the requirements of the provider access legislation. This means that pupils, including students in the sixth form, are not prepared well enough for their next steps. The school must ensure that it develops a comprehensive careers education offer so that all the requirements of the provider access legislation are met.
- The school's systems to quality assure and evaluate the provision lack rigour. As a result, leaders do not have a secure understanding of what is working and what needs to improve. The school needs to ensure that leaders' actions to improve the

school are informed by robust monitoring and tracking systems to check on the quality of the provision.

- Many staff and parents are concerned that their views about the school are not listened to or acted on. This affects staff's morale and parents' confidence in the provision that their children receive. The school needs to promote a culture that allows the views of all stakeholders to be expressed freely, listened to respectfully and responded to appropriately.
- Senior leaders and those responsible for governance lack the capacity required to swiftly resolve the ongoing and extensive issues that are affecting the school. This has led to a decline in the quality of education and care that pupils receive. The school should ensure that there is leadership capacity at all levels so that the necessary improvements are rapid and sustained.

Leaders and trustees are taking effective action to improve the school, but continued work is needed to remove the special measures designation.

HMCI strongly recommends that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers.

The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any further monitoring inspection we carry out.

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

- *Leadership and governance*
- *Safeguarding*
- *Curriculum and Teaching*
- *Behaviour and attitudes*
- *Post-16 provision*

Leadership and governance

Leaders have taken steps to strengthen the school's systems and address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The introduction of a school improvement board is helping to provide clearer oversight, and trust-level support is now more stable. This key change to governance ensures that leaders are making progress in relation to the main priority areas. They provide appropriate levels of support and challenge to leaders. Leaders work closely with the local authority, which maintains regular contact with the school, to ensure that pupils are safe and that the school continues to improve. This joint work is helping to strengthen safeguarding procedures, refine oversight and support leaders' actions to stabilise the school. Leaders have improved safeguarding processes internally, established a clearer curriculum, strengthened expectations for teaching and prioritised staff training. As a result, leaders now have a more accurate understanding of the school's weaknesses and are beginning to act on them.

Leaders' current priorities to strengthen safeguarding practice, embed the new curriculum, improve reading and ensure staff understand pupils' needs are appropriate. Trustees,

senior leaders and local authority partners are focusing on the right areas and have begun to put systems in place that are increasing staff's confidence.

Parental confidence, while still low overall, is beginning to show some early signs of improvement as leaders increase communication and work more proactively to engage and reassure families. Many actions to improve the school remain recent and leaders recognise the need to ensure that systems become established, consistent and sustainable across all sites, so that all pupils receive the education and care they need.

Safeguarding

At the previous graded inspection, safeguarding was evaluated as being not effective.

Leaders have strengthened safeguarding leadership, improved record-keeping and introduced regular briefings that have increased staff's understanding of expectations. Pupils report that they feel safe in school. Leaders' actions have led to clearer systems for reporting concerns and more robust oversight of safeguarding practice. Site security has improved, and risk assessments are now more detailed and reviewed more routinely. These developments have contributed to a noticeable reduction in concerns about pupils not being safe. Staff increasingly understand the importance of reporting low-level issues. Leaders use this information more effectively to identify patterns and take appropriate action.

Despite this progress, safeguarding is not yet consistently effective across all sites. Some basic routines, including daily checks of the premises and accurate registration, are not implemented reliably. The school continues to rely on a significant number of temporary staff, some of whom do not yet fully understand pupils' individual needs. Leaders have not ensured that safeguarding routines are embedded securely and that all staff, including temporary staff, are trained and confident in their responsibilities.

Behaviour and Attitudes

Leaders have increased oversight of behaviour and taken steps to strengthen staff's understanding of behaviour as a form of communication. Leaders have provided staff with training in relational approaches and safer physical intervention to help them to respond more appropriately when pupils become distressed. Leaders' focus on improving the communication tools available to pupils, including the development of communication stations, core boards (for communication) and clearer routines, has begun to help pupils express their needs more independently and confidently. Staff are increasingly using these tools when pupils are anxious to identify potential triggers and support pupils to settle. Records of incidents are now more detailed, and pupils report that staff help them to calm down and feel safe.

Despite these improvements, behaviour routines are not yet firmly established across all sites. Some staff remain unsure about how to implement some aspects of their training. In some lessons, pupils' behaviour continues to be affected where work is not well matched to their needs. The high level of temporary staffing continues to limit the consistency with which behaviour expectations and communication strategies are applied.

Curriculum and teaching

Leaders have introduced a clearer curriculum structure that clearly identifies what pupils should learn, and staff have begun to receive training to support its implementation. Leaders have developed systems to support pupils to communicate more effectively with their teachers. These systems include communication stations and core boards, which are increasingly visible across classrooms. However, the curriculum is at an early stage of implementation, and its quality varies significantly. In some classes, work is too easy or too difficult, limiting pupils' engagement and progress. Where pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have an education, health and care plan, teachers do not routinely use the agreed targets to inform planning, and expectations are not consistently clear.

Leaders have strengthened the reading curriculum and provided staff with phonics training. Some pupils now decode more confidently, and a greater emphasis on reading for pleasure is evident. Despite this, early reading is not yet implemented consistently well. Some staff do not model the sounds that letters make accurately or address misconceptions promptly. Learning environments that are too busy or too noisy prevent pupils from being able to concentrate effectively on their reading.

Post-16 Provision

Leaders have strengthened risk-assessment processes to support pupils to access the community and have begun to broaden preparation-for-adulthood opportunities. Relationships between staff and students are positive and students report that they feel safe. However, the curriculum lacks coherence and students do not make as much progress as they could. Careers education and work-related experiences are still developing. There remain some issues with the way the curriculum is designed. For example, teaching does not consistently build on what students already know or can do.

Additional next steps

Leaders and trustees should continue to work to address the priorities for improvement identified in the previous 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 first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures 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 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.

Since the previous inspection there has been a change to the leadership within the trust, and an interim chief executive officer (CEO) is currently in post.

During this inspection, meetings were held with the principal and other senior leaders, the interim CEO, other staff, and the chair of the school improvement board, to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection.

Lead inspector

Nyree Parker His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector

Andy Lakatos Ofsted Inspector

Deborah Mosley His Majesty's Inspector

Jo Ward Ofsted Inspector

About this school

School capacity 225

Number of pupils on roll 261

Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable) No

Type of specialist provision (if applicable) Not applicable

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