

The Ropsley Church of England Primary School

Address: School Lane, Ropsley, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG33 4BT

Unique reference number (URN): 120536

Inspection report: 14 July 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ● ●
Expected standard	● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✓ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children get off to a positive start in the early years. The curriculum is ambitious. Leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge children need to be ready for their next stage of education. Staff talk with families, visit nurseries and make their own observations to understand children's starting points. They use this information to tailor provision closely to children's needs. Staff plan activities that help children gain important knowledge. As a result, children achieve very well.

Skilful phonics teaching helps children learn how to break words down into sounds. Children learn to read fluently and accurately and use their phonics knowledge when writing. During indoor and outdoor activities, staff use rich vocabulary and ask carefully chosen questions to extend children's thinking. Children remember this vocabulary and use it in their play, such as when they share the cakes they make in the mud kitchen. Staff also use routines, including snack time and handwashing, to develop children's language, self-care and independence. Learning time is consistently used effectively to have the greatest impact on children's development.

Children who may face barriers are identified early and included fully in the early years provision. Staff work closely with families and external professionals, making appropriate adaptations that promote independence. Leaders check the difference their work makes and closely track children's progress. Children achieve highly across the early years and are well prepared for Year 1.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

This is a highly inclusive school where leaders and staff know pupils and their families well. Leaders identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately by working with families, previous settings and specialists to understand any barriers pupils may face.

Staff have high expectations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those known to social care. They make precise adaptations, such as providing visual instructions, using reading technology and offering alternative ways for pupils to record their work. These adaptations help pupils to be fully included in lessons and learn successfully alongside their peers.

Leaders check closely whether the support that they offer has the intended impact. They review pupils' progress, attendance, wellbeing and participation and adjust support when needed. Staff consistently apply specialist advice in their daily practice so that pupils receive the right help. Leaders strategically use additional funding to ensure that the school's academic and pastoral provisions provide disadvantaged pupils with the right help and opportunities. This helps pupils overcome barriers and participate fully in school life.

Pupils known or previously known to social care receive personalised support for their learning, attendance and wellbeing. Leaders work closely and productively with families, the local authority and external services to ensure that the school's provision meets pupils' needs.

Inclusion extends across the wider life of the school. Pupils, regardless of their backgrounds and any barriers they face, regularly and enthusiastically take part in clubs and wider experiences. Where the usual offer does not meet a pupil's needs, leaders provide an appropriate alternative so that no pupil misses out.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders put pupils at the heart of their decisions. They are reflective and review their work carefully. As such, leaders have a forensic understanding of the school's context, strengths and priorities. Leaders have created an ambitious culture focused on development and inclusion. Staff receive high-quality professional learning opportunities and develop the knowledge and skills to contribute to whole-school development; for instance, they play a role in evaluating the school's work and deciding what should continue, change or improve. When leaders identify an area for development, they take prompt and effective action.

Leaders apply their open-minded and ambitious approach to the school's professional learning offer, which is carefully planned and enables staff to improve their practice. They check how well training improves the quality of the school's provision and further develop their strategies when necessary. They work effectively with the diocese, local authority and other schools in the GRACE collaboration to continue refining their practice. In each aspect of the school's work, leaders have acted to bring about rapid improvement. For example, leaders recently adapted the writing curriculum after identifying that pupils needed more support. This has resulted in improvements to the teaching of writing and to pupils' achievement.

Governors actively review leaders' work in relation to the school's key priorities. They consider how they can sustain and build on the school's work so that pupils' needs continue to be met. Governors use their knowledge and skills to support and challenge leaders. They check the impact of spending decisions on pupils' academic outcomes and access to wider opportunities. This helps leaders to maintain high expectations of what all pupils can achieve, regardless of their starting points or barriers to participation in school.

Staff feel valued and well supported. Leaders listen to their concerns and take practical steps to reduce their workload and protect their wellbeing. They have developed excellent, positive relationships with the wider school community. Parents and carers who shared their views unanimously praised the school and its leaders. They value leaders' visibility, communication and support.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Over time, pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need as they progress through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make suitable progress from their starting points, and leaders monitor their progress closely. Pupils leave the school well prepared for secondary education.

Pupils quickly learn to read accurately. They recognise the sounds they have been taught and blend them to read words. Pupils apply their phonics knowledge successfully when reading and spelling.

Pupils generally achieve well in mathematics. Recent outcomes in the Year 4 multiplication tables check have improved. Leaders' work to improve the quality of pupils' writing has had a positive impact. Pupils have developed their use of vocabulary, composition and sentence construction. However, some older pupils do not develop their writing as well as they might, including in relation to the accuracy of their transcription (handwriting and spelling). This limits the quality of some pupils' written work.

Pupils talk confidently about important subject content across the wider curriculum. They use this knowledge to connect ideas and link them with earlier learning. For example, pupils explain techniques used in art and compare beliefs from different faiths.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have built a positive culture of regular attendance. Overall rates of attendance are above national averages. Attendance for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is also above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is low.

Leaders monitor attendance across the whole school for different groups of pupils and for individual pupils. They respond quickly to any issues and work with families to identify barriers and provide early support when needed. Pupils facing challenges receive help that meets their needs. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and understand the importance of attending regularly.

The school is calm and orderly. Pupils arrive happily, settle quickly and generally behave well in lessons and at social times. In a small number of lessons, staff do not consistently notice quickly enough when some pupils become distracted.

Leaders used feedback from staff and pupils to introduce a behaviour system that set out more clearly their high expectations. Pupils typically live up to these expectations and enjoy earning reward points and celebrating each other's successes. Staff make suitable adjustments for pupils with SEND, such as short regulation breaks, support from a trusted adult and adjustments to routines. Bullying is rare. Pupils understand the difference between bullying and occasional unkindness. They know that unkind behaviour is not accepted in their school.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Since the previous inspection, leaders have refined the curriculum. It is broad and ambitious, with knowledge and vocabulary carefully organised and sequenced for mixed-age classes. Staff ensure that pupils revisit important learning over time. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn to distinguish between human and physical features in geography. In Years 5 and 6, they draw on this knowledge when studying mountain ranges.

Teachers deliver the curriculum effectively. They adapt learning so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons and access the same curriculum as their peers. In a small number of lessons, pupils who grasp concepts quickly do not consistently and promptly benefit from purposeful opportunities to further develop their knowledge.

Staff teach the school's phonics programme well. Reading books are carefully matched to the sounds pupils know, enabling them to practise and apply their phonics knowledge successfully. Older pupils' reading ability is thoroughly checked, including through regular quizzes linked to the books they read. The teaching of mathematics helps pupils to build secure foundations in number before applying their knowledge to problem-solving.

Leaders monitor the delivery of the curriculum to check the quality of the school's provision. For example, they visit lessons, review work in books and speak with pupils. This helps them to identify strengths and make further refinements when needed. For example, the school has revised its approach to teaching writing. Teachers now provide opportunities for pupils to rehearse ideas orally and ensure pupils build their use of ambitious vocabulary.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders provide a clear programme for pupils' personal development and wellbeing through lessons and the school's values. Pupils learn about relationships, physical and mental health, different faiths and cultures and fundamental British values. They understand the importance of democracy and individual liberty. Pupils understand that discrimination is wrong.

Leaders have put in place a thoughtfully designed and coherent programme to ensure that pupils understand how to manage risks. Pupils learn about online and offline risks in the classroom, from external speakers and through wider experiences. For example, younger pupils learn to use tools safely in the Woodland School. Older pupils have explored how to leave group chats and manage peer pressure.

The wider offer is broad and pupils are supported to take advantage of the opportunities available to them. Pupils develop their interests as they choose from a broad range of clubs, including 3D printing, craft and gymnastics. They broaden their horizons as they take part in visits, performances, community events and careers activities. Many hold leadership roles and take pride in the role and the impact that they have on school life.

Leaders track pupils' participation in wider opportunities closely. They speak with pupils and tailor the offer to ensure that pupils are engaged and able to benefit. As a result, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit particularly well from the wider opportunities that the school offers.

Pastoral support is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils can seek help from trusted adults. This support helps pupils grow in confidence and take part in school life.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils at Ropsley are happy and describe their school as a welcoming and friendly place. They feel safe and know which adults to talk to if something is worrying them. Pupils trust staff to listen and help because relationships are positive. They feel well known and cared for. Staff notice when pupils need help with their learning or have worries. Pupils are supported to feel comfortable at school; moments of reflection are part of daily life and sit at the heart of the school's calm and thoughtful ethos.

Pupils behave well in most lessons and around the school. They treat each other with respect. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that adults deal with any problems that occur. They learn about different faiths and cultures and know that it is wrong to treat anyone unkindly because of who they are.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They talk enthusiastically about what they remember in subjects such as art, geography and religious education. Younger children enjoy phonics and practical learning in Reception.

Pupils are proud of the school's success and feel that there is something for everyone; they are particularly engaged with sport. They take part in a wide range of clubs, outdoor learning and trips. Many pupils take on responsibilities that give them a voice in school life. Pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe, including when online, near water and using tools outdoors.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities participate fully in lessons and the wider life of the school. By the time they leave, pupils have the confidence, knowledge and skills they need to be ready for secondary school and speak warmly about their time at Ropsley.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers embed the revised approach to teaching writing so that pupils consistently secure the knowledge that they need, including in relation to the accuracy of their transcription (handwriting and spelling).
- Leaders should ensure that pupils who grasp concepts quickly, routinely benefit from opportunities to extend and deepen their learning.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Gary Reeves.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders, local authority representatives, governors, pupils, parents and carers during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Lincoln. Its last section 48 inspection was in May 2024.

The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Ann Cook

Lead inspector:

Haydn Mitton, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Martyn Skinner, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 14 July 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

110

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

105

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

14.55%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

5.45%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

11.82%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	57%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	58%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	57%	61%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	56%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	79%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	75%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	86%	74%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	78%	73%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	66%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	63%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	64%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	72%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	80%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	83%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	79%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	78%	73%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	43%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	71%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	43%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	57%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	43%	68%	-25 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	71%	80%	-8 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	43%	78%	-35 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	57%	80%	-23 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	3.5%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.3%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.0%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	6.2%	13.0%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.1%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.1%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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