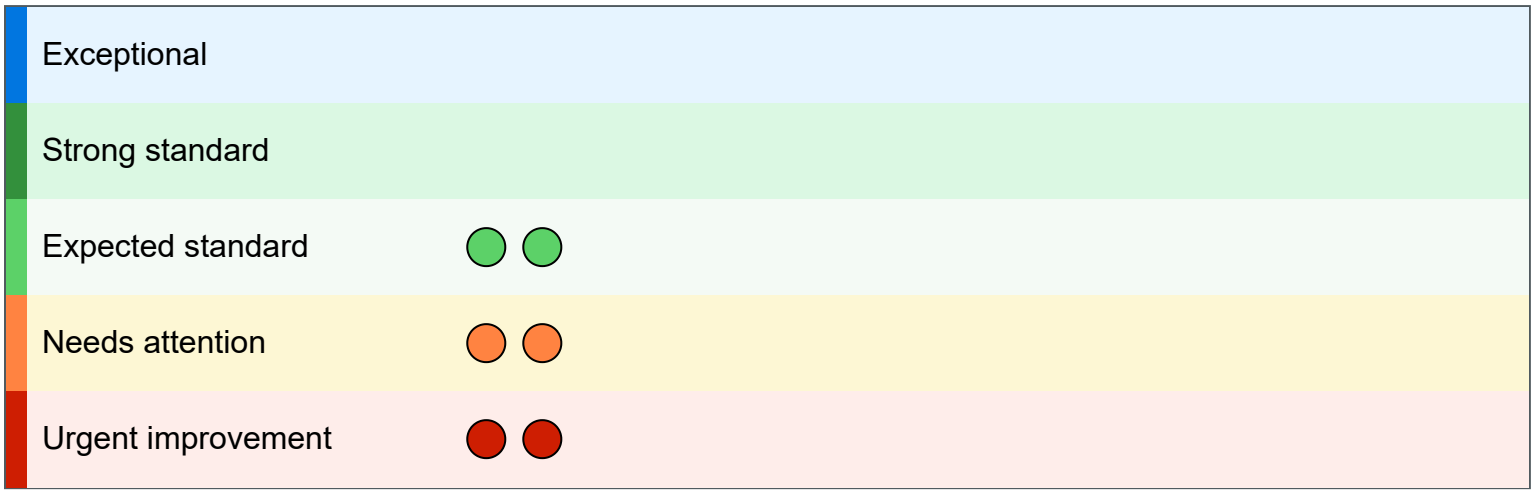
William Lovell Church of England Academy

Address: Main Road, Stickney, Boston, Lincolnshire, PE22 8AA

Unique reference number (URN): 138756

Inspection report: 10 March 2026



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.

This school requires significant improvement

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **significant improvement** because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Expected standard

Inclusion

Expected standard

School leaders have established a clear framework for identifying and assessing the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have strengthened their approach to using this information to provide school staff with clear guidance on what pupils need to belong and to be successful. Effective systems ensure that staff teams plan together to support pupils, when academic or pastoral needs emerge. Staff get training about how to identify and meet pupils' needs. This is having a positive impact. Increasingly, pastoral leaders are successful in ensuring individual pupils attend and behave better. Leaders monitor the effectiveness of interventions and their robust pupil premium strategy closely. They are using this information to inform improvements to the curriculum and teaching.

The school is committed to knowing each pupil well so that they can thrive. Leaders have organised the school day to promote a sense of belonging for all pupils. For example, 'aspirational leaders' greet their pupils each morning, supporting pupils to be ready for the day's learning.

The arrangements to ensure alternative provision (AP) benefits pupils. They carry out robust checks on the welfare, safety and progress of pupils who attend AP. Leaders ensure that pupils who are looked after or known to social care receive the right support, including through their work with external agencies.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

The school's ethos and values of 'excellence, growth and responsibility' are at the heart of its personal development programme. This programme is designed to support pupils to meet the challenge to be part of the 'William Lovell legacy' by becoming positive, active citizens. For example, leaders prioritise giving pupils meaningful opportunities to develop leadership and discussion skills, both in lessons and in house activities. It provides pupils with effective opportunities for spiritual and moral reflection and development. Pupil leaders value the chance to be role models. Other pupils benefit from their example.

Pupils talk confidently about their secure understanding of fundamental British values, such as tolerance and respect for people's distinctive characteristics. They apply this understanding in the way they respect each other's values. Pupils develop appropriate knowledge about how to stay physically and mentally healthy. This includes learning how to identify online or offline risks to their wellbeing. Through the school's high-quality pastoral care, pupils get support to apply this learning in their lives. Knowledgeable, caring staff

provide pupils and their families with the support they need. The school works well with external organisations for the benefit of pupils.

The school provides personalised careers education and guidance. This helps pupils to be ambitious and well informed about their next steps. For example, pupils in Year 11, including those who face barriers to learning, explained how the school has told them about options, like studying aero-space and aviation, or mechanics. 'Futures' events help pupils and parents and carers to learn about the range of post-16 options available. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support to take their next steps with confidence. A meaningful work experience programme further prepares pupils to take their next steps in life.

Needs attention

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

The quality of teaching varies. Typically, teachers make checks on how well pupils have learned the curriculum. However, they do not always make use of these checks to understand where pupils have gaps in learning. They do not routinely address these gaps or provide pupils with effective guidance so that they can improve their work. Teachers make appropriate adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders provide training that helps teachers improve their subject knowledge and deliver the curriculum more effectively.

The school does not support pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read well enough. Some pupils do not receive the support that they need to become better readers. When pupils do get support, they make good progress. The school is developing its approach to using assessment to design high-quality literacy and numeracy provision.

Leaders know what they need to do to secure improvements to the curriculum and to teaching. However, the actions they are taking are at an early stage. For example, they have recently reviewed and improved the school's offer at key stage 4 to ensure that it provides pupils with the right foundations for their next steps. A new digital strategy means that pupils often access curriculum and teaching resources independently.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention

Leaders are aware of the school’s areas of strength and weakness. They recognise that in order for pupils to thrive, their attendance and achievement need to improve significantly. Since being appointed, current leaders have focused on setting a culture of ambition and high expectations built on the school's values of excellence, growth and responsibility. Leaders have identified and prioritised suitable actions for improvement and draw on the support of the trust and other external partners to achieve them. This work is at varying stages of implementation and impact. For example, the effective work to ensure systems and practices are inclusive sets important foundations to continue to develop curriculum and teaching.

A coherent programme of professional learning and training is helping staff to build the expertise they need to continue to improve the school. In this small secondary school, leaders think carefully about how best to deploy and develop staff in the best interests of pupils. The majority of staff, including those early in their careers or new to the school, feel well supported by leaders. They value the training they receive to improve their practice. They support leaders' priorities to improve attendance, behaviour and achievement.

Those responsible for governance know and carry out their duties to safeguard all members of the school community. Together with trust leaders, they recognise their ongoing role in working with school leaders in the best interests of pupils. They recognise the need to prioritise robust support and challenge for the school and its leaders so that pupils attend and learn better.

Urgent improvement

Achievement

Urgent improvement

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, do not progress well across a range of subjects. Consequently, by the end of key stage 4, pupils achieve weak outcomes that do not reflect their potential. The school does not provide effective support to all pupils who have gaps in important literacy knowledge. Leaders have begun to make the changes required to ensure pupils achieve better. Pupils' work is starting to show early signs of improvement. However, due to variable teaching and low attendance, pupils' achievement remains too low.

The proportion of pupils who remain in education, training or employment is below average. Leaders are taking effective action to improve this. The impact of this action is seen in raising current pupils' aspirations about their next steps.

Attendance and behaviour

Urgent improvement

Pupils' attendance is low. Many pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are persistently absent. The school has implemented effective strategies to support pupils and their families. Leaders apply clear policies and procedures. However, this work is not having the desired impact for some pupils. As a result, too many pupils miss out on the opportunities the school provides.

Leaders have secured a significant reduction in suspensions. They have implemented an effective strategy to ensure that pupils behave well. Clear routines and boundaries mean that pupils know how to conduct themselves well. The school celebrates pupils' achievements and recognises when they do the right thing. Leaders ensure that staff are there to support pupils at social times and as they move around the school. Consequently, pupils usually conduct themselves well at these times. A small number of pupils do not have positive attitudes to learning. Occasionally, learning is disrupted or pupils treat others with disrespect. When this is the case, leaders apply sanctions appropriately. Following the school's ethos, they prioritise forgiveness and supporting pupils to do better next time. The school does not tolerate bullying or discriminatory behaviour. If it happens, leaders take suitable action.

Generally, staff feel well supported in managing pupils' behaviour. They support the school's priority to continue to improve behaviour and to raise attendance.

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

Pupils feel safe and can be themselves in this friendly school. They enjoy positive relationships with caring staff, who treat them with ‘unconditional positive regard’. The school works hard to get to know each pupil as an individual. Many pupils say they enjoy coming to school. However, a significant number of pupils do not attend well. They miss out on learning.

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, do not achieve as well as they should. Pupils are not being prepared well for the next stage of education. While pupils’ experience of learning is starting to improve, teaching is not yet consistently effective. Some groups of pupils receive support to get better at reading, but many others miss out. They have gaps in their reading, writing or mathematics knowledge. Leaders know that the curriculum and teaching need to improve to ensure that pupils achieve more highly.

The school has set high expectations of how pupils conduct themselves. Most pupils meet these expectations consistently. As a result, the school is calm and orderly. On occasion, there are disruptions to learning or pupils do not treat each other well. When this happens, leaders ensure that pupils get good support to behave better next time. As a result, suspensions are falling. Pupils say bullying does not happen often. They trust the school to deal with it if it does.

Pastoral support is a strength of the school. Pupils benefit from a well-planned programme of personal development that includes a range of clubs and activities, like chess, rugby and singing clubs. Pupils get high-quality careers information and guidance. They value the opportunity to do meaningful work experience. As a result, pupils have ambitious plans for further education, work or training.

Next steps

- Leaders must continue to act swiftly and decisively to improve the attendance of all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders must make sure that their actions to improve the curriculum lead to significant improvement in the achievement of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders must continue with their strategy to ensure that the curriculum is taught effectively and consistently well across all subjects.
- Leaders must ensure that pupils at all stages get the support they need to secure their foundational knowledge, especially in literacy, so that they can access the curriculum.

- The trust, including those responsible for governance, must ensure that their work to support and challenge the school continues to lead to sustainable improvements.

About this inspection

This school is part of Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jacqueline Waters-Dewhurst, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jerry Woolner.

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 and other senior school leaders, trust executive leaders and trustees, including the chief executive officer, during the inspection.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is a Church of England school, which is part of the Diocese of Lincoln. Its last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in June 2023.

The school currently makes use of three alternative provisions, including one that is unregistered.

Headteacher: Emma Bennett

Lead inspector:
Aoife Galletly, Ofsted Inspector

Team inspectors:
Duncan Ramsey, Ofsted Inspector
Julie McBrearty, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

This data is from 10 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

315
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: 1,067

School capacity

450
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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

51.43%
Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 28.9%

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

6.98%
Well 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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

34.60%
Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Above 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

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	12.7%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	8.2%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	3.6%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	29.4	46.0	Below
2023/24 (final)	27.1	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	26.7	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-1.34	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.04	-0.03	Below

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	14.3%	25.8%	Below
2023/24 (final)	5.9%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	4.5%	25.2%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	27.3	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	25.1	34.6	Below
2022/23 (final)	24.6	35.0	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-1.26	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.39	-0.57	Below

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	14.3%	53.1%	-38.8 pp
2023/24 (final)	5.9%	53.1%	-47.2 pp
2022/23 (final)	4.5%	52.4%	-47.9 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	27.3	50.4	-23.1
2023/24 (final)	25.1	50.0	-24.9
2022/23 (final)	24.6	50.3	-25.7

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-1.26	0.16	-1.43
2022/23 (final)	-1.39	0.17	-1.56

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	84%	91%	Not available
2022 leavers (revised)	92%	93%	Not available
2021 leavers (revised)	97%	94%	Not available

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 (2 term)	14.4%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	14.5%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	12.8%	9.0%	Above

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 (2 term)	40.1%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	48.4%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	40.5%	26.5%	Above

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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