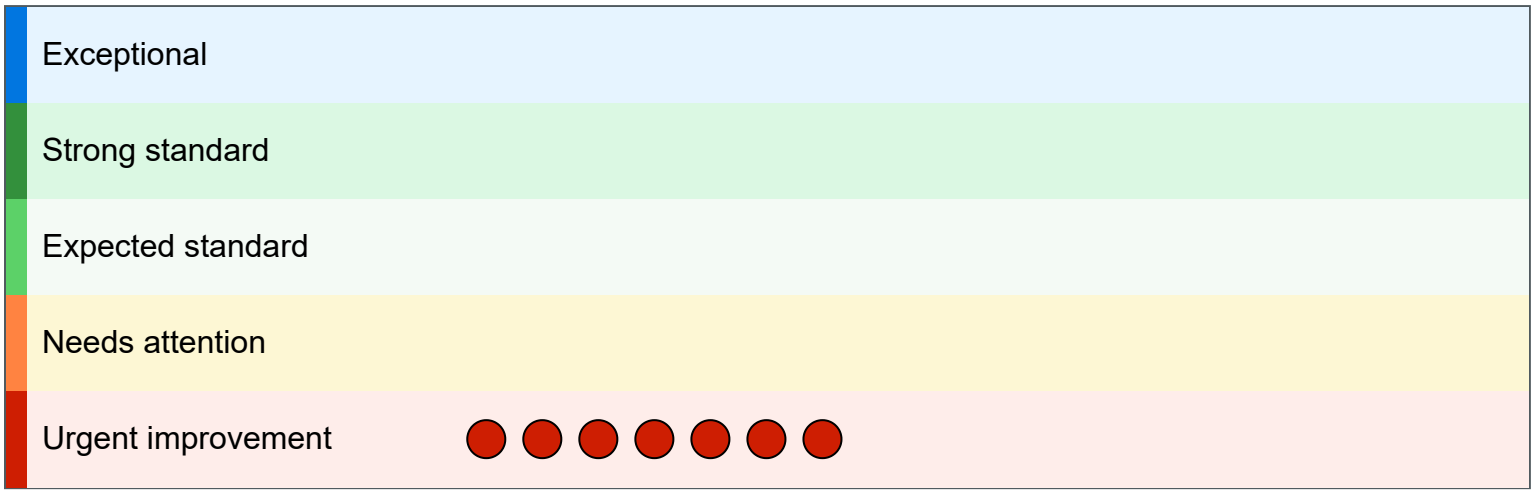
Cambois Primary School

Address: Cowgate, Cambois, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 1RD

Unique reference number (URN): 122179

Inspection report: 23 September 2026



⊗ Safeguarding standards not met

Leaders have not ensured that there is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that adequately protects children from harm.

Leaders and governors do not carry out their safeguarding responsibilities well enough. They do not make sure that pupils, especially those who are vulnerable and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive the support that they need to stay safe in school.

Leaders do not ensure that pupils are adequately supervised during the school day. This is particularly true at breaktimes. Staff do not intervene effectively to maintain pupils' safety on equipment outside. Some pupils, including those who are the most vulnerable, explore in areas of the school that are out of the sight and/or hearing of staff. Some pupils hurt others. This is not dealt with effectively by staff and so continues.

Leaders do not ensure that all aspects of the statutory welfare arrangements in the early years are met. For example, no key workers have been allocated to children, there are no risk assessments for intimate care and some members of staff lack training in this. There is no complaints policy on the school website.

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 special measures

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **special measures** because it is failing to provide an acceptable standard of education, and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Urgent improvement

Achievement **Urgent improvement**

Pupils struggle to build their knowledge over time because of the lack of a coherent curriculum and poor teaching. Many pupils find it difficult to access the curriculum because they lack basic knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. Children leave the early years without the knowledge that they need to be successful in Year 1. Work in books shows

that pupils' gaps in key skills and curriculum knowledge are not addressed quickly enough. Therefore, for some pupils, this gap widens during their time in school. Many pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do not make the progress that they should.

Pupils are not adequately prepared for the Year 7 curriculum and beyond. This is reflected in pupils' results in the national tests and assessments that they complete at the end of Year 6. The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is below the national average.

Attendance and behaviour

Urgent improvement

Too many staff do not have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They apply the school's behaviour policy inconsistently. The behaviour of a significant number of pupils hinders the learning of others. Although some pupils are polite and respectful towards adults and want to learn, too many pupils distract others from their learning. Offensive language, throwing objects and talking loudly over the teacher’s voice is commonplace. Staff do not establish routines for pupils' movement around school, including transitions to and from the outside area. Consequently, there are incidents of pushing and unwarranted physical contact between pupils. Leaders do not ensure that pupils are adequately supervised outside. Staff do not intervene when pupils place themselves and others at risk of harm. Pupils are not taught how to use the outside resources in a constructive way that promotes positive social development. Bullying occurs and staff respond quickly to this. However, there are times when bullying continues.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils to attend well. They analyse attendance carefully. Staff work closely with pupils and families to ensure that any barriers to good attendance are explored fully. Where appropriate, the school seeks help from external agencies to provide support. This has resulted in a reduction in persistent absence.

Curriculum and teaching

Urgent improvement

Leaders have identified that the curriculum is not well structured and does contain the information that teachers need. This means that there are no explicit expectations of what pupils should learn. Consequently, teachers' expectations of pupils are too low.

Pupils’ experiences do not successfully help them to develop the knowledge that they need in many subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders do not ensure that teachers have the subject knowledge that they need to help pupils learn all that they should. In mathematics, some pupils are taught quick fixes rather than the mathematical knowledge that they will need in their next phase of education.

Leaders do not ensure that gaps in pupils' understanding are identified. The school lacks a consistent approach to checking what pupils know and so teachers do not identify where there are gaps in their learning. Teachers do not consistently provide guidance that helps pupils to improve their understanding or the quality of their work. They do not adapt teaching well enough to meet pupils' needs effectively.

Leaders are in the process of changing the phonics programme, as they recognise that too many pupils do not develop their early reading knowledge as well as they should. However, this weakness is also due to lack of coherency in the overall reading curriculum and the support for pupils to become fluent readers.

Early years

Urgent improvement

The provision in the early years is not effective. It does not help children to achieve as well as they should from their various starting points. Leaders are supported by the local authority. Together, they have reviewed the early years curriculum and introduced some changes to the provision. However, many of these developments are not embedded and have not had a positive impact.

The quality of teaching and learning is poor. Staff do not use interactions well to extend children's language, vocabulary and thinking. The activities provided for children are limited in scope, poorly resourced and lack a clear learning purpose. Tasks are not sufficiently ambitious or well designed to address gaps in children's knowledge and skills. Children do not develop the characteristics of effective learning well enough. They lose focus quickly and move between different activities with limited engagement. Children do not develop the language, literacy and communication skills that they need to be ready for the demands of key stage 1.

Leaders do not ensure that statutory welfare arrangements are in place. Children are not allocated a key worker. At times, children spend extended periods without meaningful interaction with staff, including when they are distressed. Despite recent staff training, there is an inconsistent approach to establishing positive behaviours and routines.

Inclusion

Urgent improvement

Leaders, with external support from the local authority, are starting to accurately identify areas for improvement in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, teachers' expectations of what these pupils should and could achieve are low. This includes pupils who attend the special educational needs unit that is on site. Staff do not take appropriate action when pupils underachieve. Leaders' checks on the support that pupils receive to overcome barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing are not effective. The school does not ensure that pupils with SEND get the help and provision they need. This includes provision set out in pupils' education, health and care plans.

Leaders do not ensure that staff have the knowledge they need to support all groups of pupils well. Training is not effective in upskilling staff. This means that the support they provide does not meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable pupils. Some strategies to overcome barriers to learning and/or wellbeing rely on pupils attending before- or after-school clubs. Those pupils who cannot do so miss out on the opportunity to catch up with their peers.

Transition arrangements for children joining the early years are weak. Staff are unaware of strategies that would help children settle quickly into their learning.

Leaders' plans for use of the additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils are not published. Leaders' use of the funding is not effective. It does not ensure that these pupils thrive.

The use of alternative provision for some pupils is appropriate. Learning plans are in place and school leaders liaise effectively with the provision.

Leadership and governance

Urgent improvement

The school has declined significantly since the previous full inspection. The governing body is not fulfilling its statutory duties in terms of its responsibilities for: safeguarding; provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities; equity of provision in personal development; early years welfare arrangements and pupil premium expenditure. A lack of effective systems means that governors do not have an accurate understanding of the school's provision and effectiveness, including the scale of the improvements that are needed. Recently, there has been significant staff absence and turbulence in leadership. This has weakened oversight of the school's day-to-day operations and limited leaders' capacity to maintain consistent standards and to implement necessary improvements.

School leaders have had significant support from the local authority (LA) since January 2026. LA officers have identified substantial weaknesses in provision that are negatively impacting on standards. Staffing ratios have been reviewed and resources are now appropriately allocated. However, despite this support, progress towards improvement is too slow.

Staff have welcomed the recent changes in leadership. The positive approach of the new leadership team has raised morale. They are championing a brighter future for the school and have set out an improvement agenda. The school building and environment have already been made more fit for purpose. However, there is still a lot to improve across all areas of the school's work. Staff believe that their workload is considered and that there is a changing culture for the better in school. Previously, staff have not had the training that they need to support pupils well.

School leaders are establishing positive relationships with parents and carers. However, a significant number of parents remain/are dissatisfied with the quality of education provided and communication from the school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Urgent improvement

The school has an established personal, social, health and economic (PHSE) curriculum that meets statutory expectations. Leaders do not have a secure understanding of how well the PSHE curriculum is implemented or adapted to meet the needs of different pupils. Quality assurance is highly inconsistent. This contributes to leaders' lack of clarity about how successful the PSHE curriculum is. This means that the PSHE curriculum cannot be reviewed and then revised in any meaningful way.

There are some valuable wider opportunities for pupils, including outdoor learning at the beach school and cycling proficiency. A limited range of clubs, that largely remains the same throughout the year, are available. These activities do not amount to a rich, varied and

coherent programme of personal development for all pupils that systematically develops their talents and interests. The school's work does not effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Pupils in the school's special educational needs (SEN) unit do not consistently access the same age/stage-appropriate PSHE curriculum or wider experiences as their peers. Nor have leaders considered suitable adaptations or alternatives for them to take part in. They miss out on enrichment activities, such as educational visits and extra-curricular activities.

Opportunities for leadership, citizenship and involvement in the wider community are similarly underdeveloped or ad hoc. Pupils in the SEN unit do not routinely participate in whole-school opportunities. Leaders do not systematically track participation to identify pupils or groups who may be missing out on enrichment. Consequently, some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, participate in few or no additional activities, without leaders identifying this or taking targeted action. The personal development programme lacks equity. The school is not meeting its equalities duties.

Leaders do not consider how the personal development programme responds to significant contextual needs, such as the high prevalence of speech, language and communication needs.

More recently developed pastoral provision is responsive to individual pupils' needs. This includes family support, additional check-ins and strategies designed to support pupils' attendance and emotional wellbeing. This is having a positive impact on pupils' attendance.

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

Pupils do not consistently experience high-quality education and support in an environment where they are kept safe and can thrive.

Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Not enough is expected of them. Pupils have wide gaps in their knowledge of reading, writing and mathematics. These gaps are not closing quickly. Disadvantaged pupils, including some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not receive the support that they need to progress from their starting points. Overall, many pupils do not gain the knowledge they need for the next stage of their education.

Lessons are routinely disrupted by poor behaviour because staff do not manage behaviour appropriately. Unkind actions, including incidents of bullying, mean that some pupils do not enjoy school. The school’s systems to ensure that pupils are kept safe are not effective. Pupils are at risk of harm on the school site because staff do not supervise them well enough. Some pupils engage in unsafe behaviour that puts them and others at risk of harm. This behaviour is not addressed by staff and so persists. Overall, pupils do not attend well. However, fewer pupils are persistently absent from school than has been the case in the past.

Children in early years do not get the support that they need. The teaching that they receive does not develop their knowledge well enough. The environment does not promote

children's independence and natural curiosity. Many children do not gain the knowledge and skills needed for successful learning in Year 1 and beyond.

The school does not support pupils' wider development effectively. Pupils, and in particular some pupils with SEND, do not develop their understanding of fundamental British values, such as respect for others' views and beliefs. The activities and teaching they experience are not well considered. Consequently, too many pupils' social and cultural understanding is underdeveloped. Pupils enjoy spending time with their friends. Many speak positively about the relationships they have with staff.

Next steps

- Leaders and governors must fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They should provide effective oversight and challenge, particularly in relation to safeguarding, the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and areas requiring urgent improvement.
- Leaders must accurately identify the needs of pupils with barriers to learning and/or wellbeing, especially pupils with SEND, and ensure that they receive the support they need to thrive.
- Leaders must ensure that staff apply the behaviour policy consistently, so that all pupils learn in a calm, orderly environment.
- Leaders must ensure that there is a coherent curriculum that is delivered well by teachers, so that pupils build a secure body of knowledge across the curriculum.
- Leaders must ensure that the provision in the early years complies with statutory guidance and nurtures children well, so that they develop the knowledge and learning traits that equip them well for Year 1.
- Leaders should ensure that they enable staff to develop/build their expertise, so that teaching is consistently effective, particularly for pupils with SEND, and helps pupils to achieve well.
- Leaders should ensure that there is a wide, rich and varied personal development offer that is equitable for all pupils and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

About this inspection

The inspection started in 23 September 2026 as a focused monitoring inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. Inspectors decided to deem the inspection a full inspection under section 5 of the same Act. As a full inspection requires more time to complete than a focused monitoring inspection, we returned on 24 September 2026 to complete the full inspection, which concluded on 24 September 2026. The focused monitoring inspection was carried out following a number of complaints made to Ofsted that raised serious concerns. His Majesty’s Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised. Inspectors sought to establish whether leaders and governors were fulfilling their statutory duties in

terms of safeguarding, provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupil welfare and oversight of educational provision.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection. The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any monitoring inspections that we carry out.

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.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the interim headteacher and other leaders during the inspection.

An inspector spoke with the chair of the governing body.

An inspector spoke with representatives of the local authority.

The substantive headteacher was not in attendance at school during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The interim headteacher has been in place since 1 September 2026.

The school includes a special educational needs (SEN) unit. All pupils attending the SEN unit have education, health and care plans.
This provision is for pupils with: speech, language and communication needs, autistic spectrum disorder, social, emotional and mental health needs and moderate learning difficulties.

The school currently makes use of one alternative provision, which is registered.

Headteacher: Marianne Allan

Lead inspector:
Mary Cook, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Catherine Beard, Ofsted Inspector
Hannah Millett, His Majesty's 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 23 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

136
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: 268

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)

44.72%
Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.5%

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

43.38%
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: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

22.06%
Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well 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

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	49%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	45%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	40%	61%	Below
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	84%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	82%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	90%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	81%	73%	Above

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	57%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	45%	72%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	50%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	69%	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	65%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	64%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	75%	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	33%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	38%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	33%	46%	Close to average
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	83%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	75%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	100%	62%	Above
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	39%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	38%	59%	Below
2023/24 (final)	50%	58%	Close to 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	56%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	63%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50%	59%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
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	33%	68%	-34 pp
2024/25 (final)	38%	69%	-32 pp
2023/24 (final)	33%	67%	-34 pp
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	83%	80%	4 pp
2024/25 (final)	75%	81%	-6 pp
2023/24 (final)	100%	80%	20 pp
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	39%	78%	-39 pp
2024/25 (final)	38%	78%	-41 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp
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	56%	80%	-24 pp
2024/25 (final)	63%	81%	-18 pp
2023/24 (final)	50%	79%	-29 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
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)	7.3%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	7.6%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.7%	5.9%	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 (3 term)	28.6%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	27.8%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	21.4%	16.2%	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.

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