

# Ickniel Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109579
<b>Local Authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	356579
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Carolyn Carnaghan

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	632
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Christopher Perrott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Linda Crick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	Birdsfoot Lane Luton LU3 2JB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 534000
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. They observed 27 lessons taught by 18 teachers. The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at policies, documents, plans and the responses to 123 parental and carers' questionnaires. They held meetings with staff, pupils, parents and carers and members of the governing body. A sign language interpreter was present during part of the inspection.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How effectively does the Early Years Foundation Stage prepare children for their education and do they make sufficient progress across all the early learning areas?
- Do those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who are deaf, make sufficient progress and can they contribute fully to the life of the school?
- What is the school doing to improve teaching across all year groups, particularly in mathematics, in order to raise progress and ensure the needs of all abilities are met?
- Is the monitoring of teaching and the curriculum effective enough to ensure good practice across all subjects?

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school with a higher proportion than average of pupils from diverse minority ethnic backgrounds, predominantly Pakistani and Bangladeshi. There are higher than average and rising proportions of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and a very high proportion of those with statements of educational need predominantly with sensory and/or physical difficulties. There is a well above average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. There is specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs for up to 31 primary deaf pupils. A very small number of such children are taught in the Nursery. Support is also provided for older pupils as they progress through the main school. The resource base provision is managed by the school and funded by the local authority. The base also provides support for deaf pupils aged 0 to 11 years across the local authority. The school has an average proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

The school is satisfactory. Most pupils make satisfactory progress and attainment is average. This represents satisfactory achievement. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are deaf, make better progress than others.

Pupils arrive in Reception with lower than expected skills and make good progress. Several have already come through the Nursery and these deaf children also make good progress. The outdoor activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage are limited, however, and do not match the indoor provision. Deaf pupils take a full part in Key Stages 1 and 2. The good provision they receive, either in mainstream lessons or when they are working with skilled support staff within the resource base, leads to good development of their academic and personal skills. This is a very inclusive school. Communication is at its heart and helps build pupils' confidence and ensures most are out-going and warm towards one another.

Pupils are exceptionally aware of being safe. They understand how to be safe on the internet and those who are deaf receive appropriate support and safety advice. Behaviour is consistently good, helping lessons to move along harmoniously. The school is a vibrant part of its local community, exporting its high values and spirit of inclusion to neighbouring schools via its outreach work. Pupils work well together in teams, through cooperation, regardless of individual difficulty or disability. The school encourages parents and carers to avoid holidays in term time. Despite its continuing efforts, attendance remains average.

Lessons are generally lively and build satisfactory learning. Progress in literacy and numeracy has improved recently, becoming more consistent. However, those who are more able, among hearing pupils, are not always given the chance to excel through extended opportunities, particularly in writing. Teachers sometimes make pupils wait while others catch up, or the lesson's learning objectives are not ambitious enough. However, the good quality support and effective interventions provided by skilled teaching assistants ensure deaf pupils make good strides in their learning. Assessment is used to carefully track pupils' progress but individuals do not always know what they need to do to succeed further. The curriculum is rapidly improving and providing teachers with more challenge and imaginative contexts on which to build progress, which is rising.

The strength of the work to promote inclusion helps support pupils' good personal development and ensures pupils have satisfactory equal opportunities. Leadership and management of inclusion for special educational needs and/or disability, including for deaf pupils, is good because support is well targeted and deployed. The good outreach work across the local authority is well monitored and the school's overall evaluation of its activities is satisfactory. Leaders and managers ensure no discrimination and incidents of racism are very rare. The strength of this aspect, along with improved monitoring of teaching resulting in more good lessons, and an improved curriculum, means the school

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has a satisfactory capacity to improve. The governing body supports the school well but does not have the expertise to fully hold it to account.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Increase pupils' rate of progress and raise attainment by September 2011 by ensuring that:
  - learning objectives in lessons are more carefully focused on progress
  - teaching always provides extended tasks and opportunities for the more able hearing pupils, particularly in creative writing
  - assessment is used to ensure pupils understand their own achievement and what they need to do next.
- Develop the outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage to further enrich learning activities.
- Extend the expertise of the governing body so they can more effectively challenge the school and hold it to account.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

<b>3</b>
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Pupils' achievement is satisfactory; their progress, from average starting points in Year 1, is also satisfactory. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve well. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make satisfactory progress, although Bangladeshi pupils often make good progress. Most pupils leave having reached average attainment.

The good support from dedicated staff ensures pupils enjoy learning and can contribute to school life. For example, a mass signing in assembly in an attempt at a record for signing and singing, was ably run and supported by a team of staff who ensured all could learn the song and keep up with rehearsals and performance. Most pupils can use sign language, something that helps enormously in maintaining a close-knit community.

Pupils' core skills in English and mathematics are improving slowly as a result of successful work in developing teachers' skills and enlivening the curriculum. Achievement is more consistent, particularly in mathematics where it was weaker during the previous three years. There is still scope to stretch pupils further, for example, those who already understood the vocabulary for a particular mathematical problem had to wait while others were reminded.

Most lessons enable pupils to develop their literacy skills through carefully planned and taught learning activities. Challenging tasks are helped along by English as an additional language and signing learning assistants, so deaf pupils, for example, take risks, speak up boldly and try out their learning across different contexts. In a Year 2 lesson pupils reversed the roles in Little Red Riding Hood, exploring what a kind, good-natured wolf would have done. The imaginative feedback included pupils using puppets on sticks to talk through the revised roles. Language was additionally developed in a learning support

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group when the pupils used more puppets to explore it further. More-able pupils do not always get the chance to extend their output in writing, however.

Pupils are happy and confident, sometimes going the extra mile to help a friend who is unwell or unhappy. The importance of living healthily is clearly understood, even to the extent that discussion and preparation for good eating goes on in a German club. The school council is active and musical opportunities are enthusiastically taken up in choirs and bands. Pupils speak confidently and warmly about their school and are very aware of the relative differences between their lives and those of others, further afield.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

Teaching includes a broad range of strategies to enliven learning, including information communication technology (ICT), role-play and cross-curricular approaches.

Most lessons start with whole-class activities, where previous learning is recalled and carefully used to set up what is to follow. Sometimes these sessions go on too long and pupils lose concentration because learning objectives are not sharply focused on their progress. As a result, lessons do not always help the more able hearing pupils, to progress as quickly as they could. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who are deaf, receive good support in and outside the classroom. Support teachers ensure their work is tailored accordingly, so raising their progress. Where teaching is most

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successful, pupils are quickly moved on to tasks that are well matched to ability. For example, in a mathematics lesson pupils moved around a carousel of activities, each with objectives suited to the desired learning outcome.

Teaching in English is imaginative, stimulating reading and writing across genres and styles. Pupils are encouraged to read, supported by meetings involving parents and carers. Tracking of pupils' learning is very efficient and leaders and managers have a clear view of every child's progress. Marking is diagnostic, often giving helpful comments, though not always how to build learning through follow-up work. Assessments provide the school with progress information and this is put to good effect, helping target pupils, for individual support. Pupils are not always clear of their next steps or their own individual targets, however.

The creative curriculum successfully focuses on developing speaking and listening skills. Modern languages are taught and very much enjoyed. Enrichment augments a good curriculum, with plenty of trips to interesting places, such as theatres and film studios. Writing is starting to be a clear focus, though not yet extensively enough. Interventions enable pupils who are struggling to make real strides.

There is a well-mapped series of pathways for care that teachers follow, depending on the needs of each child. Sometimes outside agencies are involved, such as the 'greenhouse mentoring', where pupils are linked with specialist support workers who successfully help pupils to improve their behaviour. There are three family support workers who make effective links with the parents and carers before they come to school, to ensure successful transitions into education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior staff have empowered middle leaders and teachers. They demonstrate very good understanding of pupils' needs, though this is not always translated, cohesively, into better teaching. The senior team's monitoring of staff ensures they are held more effectively to account for pupils' progress and aspirations are shared by all. Appropriate plans are in place to address weaknesses and there is substantial evidence this is improving progress in lessons.

The governing body actively supports the school. It understands the school and makes good contributions to it. The governing body is building its challenge to the school but does not currently have enough expertise amongst members to fully hold it to account.

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Parents and carers are closely involved with the school, invited to attend workshops to support learning and celebrate successes. The many partners involved with the school provide some of the good care and support pupils receive. The increasingly large group with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive additional help, from health and social care professionals. In addition, the school has excellent links with neighbouring schools, enabling smooth transitions to secondary education.

Pupils are very safe at school because senior leaders ensure those coming into contact with children are carefully vetted. The environment is safe and interaction with partners outside school is secure. The school community is warm and welcoming and the pupils feel very much part of this. Pupils have many chances to engage with others from different environments and faiths, such as through music, and learn much about their world through the good curriculum.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Almost all children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception year. A few who are deaf enter the school in the Nursery. Children's age-related skills are lower than expected on entry. Children make good progress towards their early learning goals across most areas of learning, leaving with skills that are average for their age.

Children receive good and safe provision and swiftly begin to enjoy the wide range of both adult-led and child-initiated activities. The indoor area provides a good mix of creative and more skills based learning. Children start to learn to use letters and sounds and begin to make good strides in their personal development. Children who are deaf receive well-targeted care, often one to one, or in small groups. This quickly helps them to take part in everything on offer.



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Teachers and support staff help children learn to communicate effectively with each other, regardless of any disability. The leaders and managers have clear understanding of the children and use careful assessments to inform their clear planning for future learning and support. The activities in the outdoor learning area are limited, particularly in larger toys and creative learning activities. The good use of amplification technology by staff enables deaf children to access all the learning activities. Independence is encouraged and the focus on communication skills ensures children are well prepared to enter the main school when the time comes.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The below-average percentage of responses to parental and carers' questionnaires show that the majority think their children enjoy school. A few stated that they are not helped to support their children's learning, the school does not take account of their suggestions and that it does not meet the particular needs of their child. The inspection evidence indicates that the school provides opportunities to support pupils' learning and that parents and carers are encouraged to communicate with teachers. The inspection found that the school provides good care, guidance and support for pupils, regardless of their needs.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Icknield Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 123 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 633 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	57	51	41	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	50	61	50	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	47	38	63	51	11	9	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	33	66	54	9	7	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	48	37	70	57	6	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	34	66	54	13	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	44	63	51	1	1	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	37	30	64	52	9	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	27	64	52	9	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	23	78	63	6	5	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	21	77	63	11	9	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	43	35	72	59	5	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	43	60	49	6	5	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



3 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Icknield Primary School, Luton, LU3 2JB**

Thank you so much for making us feel welcome when we recently inspected your school. We found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education. Your school cares for you well and when you need extra support, there is always someone there to help.

We found that many of your lessons are good, but there are some that do not fully stretch you and that, sometimes, you could learn more quickly. In the main though, we found that you love coming to your school because it helps and supports you, in meeting your needs. Here are some of the things we have asked the school to do to make it even better for you.

Improve your learning by making sure all lessons really stretch you, particularly by giving you more chances to use your writing skills.

Help you understand how well you are doing by using assessments better and always showing you what you should do next, to improve your learning.

Enrich the outdoor learning area for children in Reception and the Nursery so they can learn and enjoy themselves more.

Ensure the governing body checks up on the school more effectively to make sure it is improving.

You can help by making sure you always come to school, continue working as hard as you can and keep on being the happy and smiling pupils you already are.

Yours sincerely

Carolyn Carnaghan

Lead Inspector

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