

Ickburgh Special School

Ickburgh Road, Clapton, London, E5 8AD

Inspection dates 3–4 July 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is good school.

- School leaders make sure that the quality of teaching and learning is good. As a result, achievement is good.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage join the school with extremely limited skills and make good progress.
- Pupils make good progress across the school in developing literacy and numeracy skills.
- Teachers and teaching assistants successfully plan and teach activities that interest and motivate pupils to learn.
- Post-16 students are prepared well for the next stage of their lives through practical courses.
- Pupils who are supported by additional funding and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because their learning experiences are well matched to their needs.
- Leaders responsible for subjects make sure that all teachers plan and deliver lessons that provide pupils with appropriate sensory experiences.
- Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. Parents say their children feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Governors ensure resources are allocated efficiently so that additional funding has a positive impact on the achievement of the eligible pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not always use teaching assistants effectively enough to maximise pupils' learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 16 lessons, 14 of which were joint visits with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors listened and watched pupils responding to their teachers in lessons and in the lunch hall.
- Meetings were held with teachers, school leaders, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors watched videos of pupils performing in assemblies, and took account of feedback from staff questionnaires.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire, which provides evidence of the opinions of parents. However, inspectors took account of comments from parent surveys carried out by the school and spoke to parents as they brought their children to school.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including school improvement plans, information on pupils' current progress, pupils' written work, the governing body minutes and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Janev Mehmet, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Sandra Teacher

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ickburgh is a smaller-than-average-sized school. It serves pupils between the age of 3 and 19 who have profound and severe learning difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is higher than the national average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be entitled to free school meals and those who are looked after.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and of those who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average.
- Pupils at post-16 are not entered for GCSE, but take other accredited courses to prepare them for life after leaving school.
- The school is currently led by an executive headteacher following a number of changes in the leadership personnel. It is also in the process of moving to a new building.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that teachers always plan work for the most able pupils that challenges them and enables them to make consistently good progress
 - making more effective use of teaching assistants to ensure that all groups of pupils learn well in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Across the school, pupils make good progress from their very low starting points because their teachers have a good understanding of their needs and conditions. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and achieve well.
- Effective teaching of communication and mathematical skills across the school ensures pupils make good progress. The use of songs and routines helps pupils to practice words and numbers, and this develops their understanding well. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and teachers help to develop their understanding by using a range of sensory experiences. In an Early Years Foundation Stage class, for example, the teacher used shakers, sounds and fans effectively to engage the senses of the children as they listened to a story.
- Pupils eligible for additional funding make good progress in both English and mathematics. Those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress. Where necessary, the pupil's home language is also used. This is an example of how the school works successfully to promote equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- The most able pupils usually make good progress because teachers plan activities that are matched well to their abilities. However, there are occasions when they learn at a slower pace because they are not engaged or challenged enough.
- Pupils also achieve well in physical education because they have the opportunity to take part in a variety of sports. Pupils are encouraged to develop effective teamwork and communication skills through playing games of cricket, football and pétanque (a game using hollow metal bowls). These opportunities help build pupils' health and physical development well.
- Pupils take part in drama productions. Inspectors watched a performance of *The Wizard of Oz*, which helped to develop pupils' confidence and speaking skills.
- Pupils at post-16 make good progress in programmes that prepare them well for life after school. They take part in enterprise projects by cooking dishes and selling them. They also take part in gardening competitions and have won awards for the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good because teachers and teaching assistants use their knowledge and expertise of the pupils' disabilities effectively to plan and provide pupils with stimulating learning activities. As a result, pupils learn well.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not use teaching assistants as effectively as they could to support learning. As a result, some pupils are not always as engaged as they could be, and this slows their learning.
- Teachers plan subjects thoroughly so that elements of spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning are embedded in the daily activities of their pupils.
- The most able pupils are often given tasks that are more difficult than other pupils' work. However, this is not consistent across the school and occasionally slows progress.
- Pupils develop their skills well in listening, speaking, and reading because teachers encourage them to think for themselves and give them opportunities to enjoy games and activities that interest them. For example, during a 'shopping' role-play activity, a pupil was taught how to press a switch at a specific time with the use of music and movement.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics because teachers and classroom assistants develop problem-solving and investigative skills effectively. Teachers encourage pupils to make choices. For example, pupils in a post-16 class used symbols to decide how to raise money for the elderly. They listened well to each other and worked collaboratively.
- Teachers check the progress of pupils after every task to make sure they have achieved each

step. They provide clear verbal feedback to pupils about their achievement, and encourage them to improve further.

- Teachers collate examples of pupils' work and achievements and use these effectively to check their progress. These examples include photographs of pupils achieving their targets, which show how much they enjoy their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school community is very caring and staff help pupils to develop good relationships with others. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. As a result, pupils behave well and are courteous towards each other and their teachers.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. In their lessons, they usually listen attentively to instructions and are keen to achieve well in their tasks. For example, pupils who find it hard to pronounce words will persistently repeat the words they are practising in order to get it right.
- Occasionally, when pupils are not engaged well enough in their learning, they become restless and lose concentration.
- Pupils contribute positively to their school. They take part in gardening, fundraising for the elderly, and perform plays. Older pupils also help their teachers with stocktaking and other jobs around the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils are safe in school and happy to attend school regularly. Records show that there is hardly any bullying, and pupils are well supported in learning to keep themselves safe.
- Attendance is in line with the national average for similar schools. Parents acknowledge that their children are very happy in school and feel safe.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders have worked hard to maintain good-quality teaching and learning across the school. They reinforce high expectations for all staff and pupils and ensure that every pupil has access to experiences that interest them and help them to learn.
- Planning is detailed and focused on pupils achieving good outcomes. Systematic checking of pupils' progress is rigorous and leads to teachers providing tailored support for pupils.
- Teachers take part in regular training in specialist areas linked to the pupils' disabilities so that they are well equipped to meet their needs. However, leaders have not yet ensured that training enables all staff to maximise learning for the most able pupils, or to ensure that teaching assistants are used to best effect.
- Additional funding is allocated effectively. It is used to provide a wide range of therapeutic resources which have a very positive impact on pupils' well-being. Consequently, eligible pupils achieve well from their very low starting points.
- The subjects pupils learn are well organised by teachers. They plan and provide activities to take full account of pupils' specific needs. Pupils are motivated by the wide range of classroom and outdoor learning activities that develop empathy, teamwork and an understanding of the world. For example, during Brazil carnival week, pupils played parachute games in the playground, danced to Brazilian music and enjoyed eating Brazilian food. Pupils also go on a range of school trips.
- Safeguarding practices meet the statutory requirements.
- The local authority provides good support for the school. It has guided the leadership team to make some important decisions about the future of the school, such as the new building. It also provides a range of courses for staff at all levels, and has carried out joint reviews with the executive headteacher to support school self-evaluation.
- **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is proactive in securing strong leadership for the school. Governors have a good understanding of their roles and their accountability. School leaders are both supported and challenged to meet the needs of all staff and pupils. Governors build good rapport with parents during parent meeting days. They regularly take part in training and have a clear understanding of the school's information on pupils' progress and achievement. They ensure that teachers are suitably rewarded for good performance related to the quality of their teaching and pupils' achievement. Governors allocate additional funding in the best interests of the pupils concerned. Consequently, these pupils make good progress.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 100312 |
| Local authority | Hackney |
| Inspection number | 439445 |

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

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| Type of school | Special |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 3–19 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 58 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Adrienne Kelson |
| Executive Headteacher | Kt Khan |
| Date of previous school inspection | 28 June 2011 |
| Telephone number | 020 8806 4638 |
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