

Inspection of a good school: The Ilsleys Primary School

Church Hill, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 7LP

Inspection date:

19 July 2022

Outcome

The Ilsleys Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a strong sense of family here. Staff and pupils told inspectors they look after each other because they care. Each morning, families gather in the playground and speak warmly with each other and members of staff.

Pupils enjoy school. Year 6 pupils are proud of the work they do as anti-bullying ambassadors. Leaders have ensured that they are expertly trained to deal with reports of bullying. The anti-bullying ambassadors know to speak to a member of staff if they need help to deal with a problem. The ambassadors help younger pupils to feel safe, because they know whom to talk to if they have friendship problems. Pupils say that bullying is very rare, but if it does happen it is sorted out straightaway.

Leaders, governors and staff have high expectations for children. They want the very best for everyone. Pupils are challenged by staff to do their best in lessons. Leaders ensure that staff maintain the focus of ensuring every pupil achieves their very best.

The behaviour of pupils is exceptional. Pupils play a positive role in the life of the school. They have consistently strong attitudes to learning. They help each other in lessons and look after each other during playtimes.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have planned a broad and ambitious curriculum. It is well sequenced and designed to help staff plan and teach lessons effectively. Curriculum thinking skilfully breaks down learning into small parts. In core subjects, new knowledge builds on what pupils already know and can do. This detailed thinking is not yet as strong in the wider curriculum. In some subjects, such as history and geography, staff do not consider individual pupils' starting points as well as they do in reading and mathematics. Some staff regularly check pupils' understanding of their work with precise use of assessment. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make

good progress through the curriculum. They receive extra support when necessary, but usually learn alongside their peers.

Reading is a high priority of the school. Leaders have ensured that staff who teach phonics are expertly trained. They teach phonics in a systematic way. Children love learning to read. In the early years, children throw themselves into activities designed to help with their comprehension of words. Staff check pupils' learning of phonics regularly. Older pupils read confidently and enthuse about reading. They read from a wide range of genres. Pupils who decode confidently focus on reading with fluency and expression.

Children benefit from a rich learning environment in Reception. The dedicated outdoor space is thoughtfully designed to support learning. This means it is always a hive of purposeful activity. The teaching of early reading and mathematics is strong. Children join in a range of activities designed to engage them in deep thinking. Children benefit from learning in a small class because staff know them well and tailor learning to their individual needs.

Leaders have adopted a therapeutic approach to behaviour management. There is no low-level disruption in lessons. Pupils focus on being kind to each other. From the moment children join the school, they learn how to support each other's learning. In lessons, children use the 'cognitive crew'. These characters exemplify positive learning behaviours that assist children with their own learning. In lessons, older pupils use these learning traits to great effect.

There is a plethora of activities designed to support the wider development of pupils. This is a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy a myriad of experiences designed to enrich the curriculum. Pupils recently took part in a memorable trip to the Houses of Parliament. This helped them understand about democracy and experience part of the history curriculum first hand. Pupils learn about different religions and cultures. They learn what it is like to grow up in modern Britain. A comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme ensures pupils learn how to be healthy and how to keep themselves safe. A well-structured programme of assemblies ensures pupils learn spiritual and moral lessons. Pupils relish participating in sports clubs after school. Recently, the whole school took part in the school production. This was much appreciated by parents and was another popular event that brings the school community together.

Governors provide excellent support for leaders and staff at the school. They hold leaders to account in order to continually improve the school. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working here. They feel proud to work at the school. Staff say leaders are mindful of their workload so they can focus on providing the best education possible for the children in their care.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a strength of this school. Leaders, including governors, are meticulous in the processes they use to ensure children are safe. Safeguarding concerns are rare.

Despite this, all staff know how to identify any concerns they may have. They are given regular training and updates by leaders. When a concern is raised, leaders are swift to respond.

Pupils feel safe at school. They learn about online safety in PSHE. Strong relationships between staff and pupils mean that all pupils know whom they would talk to and trust if ever they had a concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not use assessment as well in the foundation subjects as they do in the core. In some lessons, teachers do not consider the different starting points of pupils and help them learn as well as they could. Leaders should ensure the strong practice developed in core subjects is broadened to all subjects, so pupils develop their talents and strengths to the best of their ability.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2011.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	109813
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10227795
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	64
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Browne
Headteacher	Kate House
Website	http://theilsleysprimary.net
Date of previous inspection	28 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a small school with three classes. There is one class for early years and Year 1. There are mixed-age classes for Years 2/3/4 and Years 5/6.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of a federation with another local primary school. Both schools are led by the same headteacher and governed by the same governing body.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also heard pupils read.
- Inspectors also considered the wider curriculum and looked at samples of pupils' work, including geography and English.

- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff, pupils and parents. The lead inspector also met with governors and spoke to a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents and records, including the school's record of recruitment checks. Inspectors also talked to a range of parents, staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector spoke with staff, pupils and parents to gather their views. They considered 23 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 10 free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of 9 responses to the staff survey and 18 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Fisher-Pink

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022