

Inspection of a good school: Iver Heath Infant School and Nursery

Slough Road, Iver Heath, Iver, Buckinghamshire SL0 0DT

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 February 2023

Outcome

Iver Heath Infant School and Nursery continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly and welcoming school. Clear routines and warm relationships help children make a positive start, whenever they join the school. Pupils enjoy attending and are enthusiastic about their learning. There are high expectations for all. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. This is a highly inclusive school where staff work hard to meet the individual needs of all.

Staff care deeply about the well-being of pupils. Leaders value the personal development of pupils just as much as their academic outcomes. Right from the beginning of Nursery, children are helped to recognise and name their emotions. As pupils go through the school, they develop successful ways of managing emotions. They learn about their rights such as to feel safe and respected. Staff are proud to ensure pupils are equipped with skills to help them throughout life by the time they leave the school.

Pupils behave well and bullying is rare. When it does occur, it is dealt with swiftly. Pupils understand and respect the school rules. Older pupils are proud to be role models for their younger peers and are involved in setting and monitoring school rules.

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

The curriculum in some subjects, such as mathematics, is well considered and sequenced. In these subjects, teachers provide effective support so that all pupils, including those with SEND, can fully access the curriculum and achieve well. This work begins in the early years where children's needs are identified quickly and accurately. Teachers have a detailed understanding of what pupils know and can do. They use this to adapt their lessons so that pupils are focused on the most useful next steps in their learning. Time is given for pupils to embed their knowledge before moving on. In subjects where this is not yet the case, such as art, geography, and history, leaders have not yet finished creating an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum. This means that pupils' knowledge and understanding do not consistently build over time.

A love of reading is promoted right from the start in Nursery. The new phonics scheme ensures consistency of phonics teaching across the school, including in early years. Leaders are passionate about all pupils learning to read quickly. Assessment is used well to track the progress of pupils. Most pupils make good progress, and those who are behind are helped to catch up. However, some pupils, including the weakest readers, are sometimes given books that do not fully match the letters and sounds they already know. This means that they do not have enough opportunities to practise, so they can quickly become confident and fluent readers.

Parents appreciate that staff provide a great deal of support for their children. They are grateful that staff get to know their children as individuals. One parent commented that 'Teachers and support staff are very polite, helpful to parents, and nurturing towards the children'.

Governors know the school well and have confidence in the school's leaders. They have a strong understanding of how well pupils are achieving in English and mathematics. Governors provide effective support and challenge for leaders. Staff value the support provided to help them develop their skills and manage their workload.

Leaders work closely with families and other agencies to highlight the importance of regular attendance. They have focused on reducing persistent absence, but this is still stubbornly high. More pupils attend more regularly than before, but leaders acknowledge there is more work to do to ensure this is the case for all.

Pupils are respectful and keen to learn. They behave well in lessons. This is because of the high expectations and well-established routines from Nursery onwards. Pupils are attentive and respond well to questions posed by teachers. As a result of the respectful attitudes and sensible behaviour of pupils, everyone can get on with their learning.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. This aspect of the school's work is designed to help pupils develop knowledge about aspects of life in modern Britain such as British values, citizenship and healthy relationships. This links carefully with work to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils understand that not everyone holds the same beliefs and that other people's lives may differ from their own. There are opportunities for all pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to join in with clubs after school. These include football, gardening and art. Forest school sessions also help to foster skills such as self-esteem and independence.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding has a high priority. There are trusting relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils feel safe, stating that 'any grown up will help us if we are worried'. Leaders provide staff with training to help them identify any concerns. Staff do this promptly when they need to. They understand that safeguarding is a collective responsibility.

Leaders work well with families and make timely external referrals where appropriate. They carry out all the necessary employment checks on staff and keep robust records. Governors check that safeguarding procedures are effective. Pupils are also taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Reading books do not always match pupils' phonic knowledge. This means that pupils, including those who are furthest behind, do not always catch up quickly enough. Leaders must ensure that reading books match sounds that the pupils have learned in class, so that they catch up quickly in line with their peers.
- In some foundation subjects, leaders have not yet identified the precise knowledge and skills that pupils will learn. This means that pupils' understanding does not consistently build over time as well as it might. In these subjects, leaders need to ensure that the curriculum specifies the full range of key knowledge and skills that pupils will learn and remember as they move through the school.
- Leaders recognise that persistent absence is too high. As a result, some vulnerable pupils miss valuable learning time. Leaders need to continue the work they are doing to improve attendance for those pupils who are regularly absent.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2013.

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.

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	110343
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10256531
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Cathy Walker
Headteacher	Susan Perry
Website	www.iverheath-inf.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has joined the school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other leaders throughout the inspection.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils and teachers and looked at pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils read to a familiar adult. The inspector also considered the curriculum in other subjects with school leaders.
- The inspector met with four governors, including the chair of governors, and a representative from the local authority.

- The inspector evaluated safeguarding by talking to designated safeguarding leads and governors, reviewing recruitment checks on staff and reviewing other safeguarding documents and records. The inspector also spoke with pupils and staff.
- The inspector considered the views of parents and staff from the Ofsted surveys. The inspector also spoke to pupils and staff to gain their views.

Inspection team

Clare Wilkins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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