

Inspection of a good school: Laycock Primary School

Laycock Street, Islington, London N1 1SW

Inspection dates:

28 February and 1 March 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have designed a broad curriculum for all, including those pupils in the specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (specially resourced provision). They want each pupil to enjoy learning and achieve well. The curriculum for early reading is effective in supporting pupils to become confident readers. However, in other subjects, the way the curriculum is taught is less successful in ensuring that pupils learn and remember knowledge.

Leaders make sure that all pupils take part in a wide selection of enrichment activities. They have identified sixty cultural activities that pupils will have experienced by the end of Year 6. Pupils speak fondly about the educational visits that they have been on.

Breaktimes are lively and fun, with pupils especially enjoying taking their turn to ride the go-carts. Staff make sure that pupils are kept safe. Bullying is rare, and staff deal with it well when it occurs. Leaders are implementing new rules and routines to support pupils' learning in lessons. Pupils are usually keen to learn. Sometimes though, pupils find it hard to concentrate on their work and learning becomes disrupted.

Parents and carers are particularly appreciative of the support that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive. The specially resourced provision for deaf pupils is ambitious in its work to meet pupils' needs. Learning alongside their peers, these pupils receive consistently high-quality support from skilled, well-trained staff.

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

From the early years upward, leaders are working on ensuring that the design and delivery of the curriculum are ambitious for all subjects. The national curriculum is at the heart of all curriculum design. Leaders know what they want pupils to learn and

remember. Leaders have also thought about how they expect teachers to deliver the curriculum so that pupils understand and remember subject content. Teachers use their sound subject knowledge to explain new ideas clearly.

Much of leaders' work on developing curriculum implementation is at an early stage. Sometimes the way the curriculum is taught does not help pupils to grasp and recall key ideas in a subject. Some activities and resources are not chosen purposefully to help pupils to understand and remember subject content. In other instances, teachers set work that is insufficiently demanding or without fully considering how a task will support pupils to know and remember more.

Leaders' approach to early reading, including phonics, is effective. Teachers are well trained and have the expertise to successfully deliver the early reading programme. Pupils enjoy reading and listening to stories. As soon as children join Reception, they begin learning phonics. Pupils learn and practise sounds step by step. Leaders have thought very carefully about how to support the reading development of pupils who attend the specially resourced provision. They ensure that these pupils receive support from skilled staff to become confident, accurate readers.

Pupils with SEND receive expert support. They learn the same curriculum as their peers. When necessary, activities are adapted to meet these pupils' needs. Each year has a class which specifically caters for deaf pupils. These pupils learn and achieve successfully because leaders and staff have high expectations for them.

In the early years, consistent routines and expectations are well established. Children learn and behave in considerate ways. In Years 1 to 6, pupils mostly behave well. In some instances though, they can become distracted in lessons, and this interrupts learning. Leaders are taking steps to improve pupils' attitudes towards their work. For example, they are making adaptations to the behaviour policy. Nevertheless, leaders are still adjusting this policy, and at times, it is not implemented consistently by staff. Leaders are working closely with staff to ensure that all are clear about expectations.

Leaders understand the importance of supporting pupils' wider development. They aim to ensure that pupils experience life beyond their immediate environment. Pupils are encouraged to live the values of the school which include being aspirational, creative, curious, resilient, respectful and friendly. Pupils speak excitedly about their outings to London museums. The residential trip for Year 6 pupils is something that pupils especially look forward to. This trip forms a key part of the provision leaders put in place to promote pupils' character development and prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.

Leaders ensure that staff are well supported by professional development opportunities. They are also mindful of staff's workload and well-being.

The governing body is taking effective steps to strengthen its oversight of leaders' work. It is working closely with leaders to identify the right areas for improvement and ensure that these are acted on in a timely and effective way.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. There is regular staff training to support staff in upholding their safeguarding duties. Staff are knowledgeable, and identify and report any concerns promptly

Leaders and staff work together well to ensure that pupils at risk receive timely and suitable extra support. When needed, this includes ensuring that further help is secured for pupils and families through services offered by external partners.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teaching sets activities that are unhelpful in supporting pupils' learning. When this happens, pupils' understanding and recall of some subject content can be less secure. Leaders should continue their work to strengthen the use of subject-specific teaching approaches which focus on ensuring that pupils' knowledge develops fully and securely.
- Leaders' new behaviour policy is securing improvements in pupils' attitudes to learning, but it is not implemented consistently. Some behaviour in lessons prevents pupils from fully accessing the curriculum. Over time, this reduces how well pupils are able to understand and remember knowledge. Leaders need to complete their work to finalise the behaviour policy and ensure that teachers follow the guidance and expectations consistently.

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 May 2012.

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	100411
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	10212357
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	362
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stephen Deutz
Headteacher	Amy Lazarczyk
Website	www.laycock.islington.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been appointed since the school's previous inspection.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for deaf pupils, with one class in each year group specifically catering for deaf pupils.
- Leaders make use of one registered 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 headteacher was absent from school during this inspection. The deputy headteacher is currently the acting headteacher.
- The inspector met with senior leaders, including the acting headteacher. He also met with the chair and other members of the governing body.
- The inspection included deep dives in these subjects: early reading, geography and mathematics. The inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons,

reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject leaders and teachers.

- The inspector also visited lessons and reviewed pupils' work for some other subjects.
- Through discussions with leaders, governors, pupils and staff, the inspector considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. The inspector also looked at records related to safeguarding, including records of checks carried out before staff are appointed.
- The inspector met with pupils to discuss aspects of safeguarding. He spoke to pupils during lesson visits. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. The inspector spoke to staff about behaviour and their workload in the school.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Luke Stubbles, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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