

Inspection of a good school: Ickniel Primary School

Birdsfoot Lane, Luton, Bedfordshire LU3 2JB

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2023

Outcome

Ickniel Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like their school. Pupils' positive approach in school shows that they know that learning is important. They work hard to live up to the school aims: believe, achieve, succeed. Starting in the early years, pupils show curiosity and take pleasure in learning new things. When they find something difficult, pupils work well with staff and other pupils to find ways of overcoming whatever challenges they face.

The positive atmosphere in classrooms and around the school demonstrates that pupils enjoy being at school. They delight in learning about the diverse backgrounds and experiences of pupils at the school. Deaf pupils are fully included in school life. Many pupils who can hear are learning and using sign language so they can communicate with deaf friends. Pupils are aware of the various needs of those around them. They go out of their way to help each other.

Pupils rightly feel safe at school. They know their 'fab five' adults identified as people ready to listen to any concerns that arise. Pupils also know how to keep themselves safe at school, home, in the community, and online. On the rare occasions when bullying happens, staff deal with it well and it stops.

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

Using up-to-date research, leaders have carefully designed a curriculum that prepares pupils well for their next steps in education. Leaders give teachers the guidance they need to plan and deliver effective learning activities. This includes providing high-quality professional development for all staff. Leaders' 'spot checks' on the delivery of the curriculum and follow-up training ensure that teachers and teaching assistants provide the best possible teaching.

Teachers give pupils lots of opportunities to review what they have been taught. This helps pupils remember knowledge from previous topics. Staff regularly check what pupils

know and remember. When staff find pupils have forgotten or misunderstood something, they provide effective help so that pupils do not fall behind.

Leaders' approach to the teaching of reading ensures that pupils learn to read well. Although some pupils in the younger years struggle to learn the basics of early reading, staff provide support so that these pupils catch up. Many pupils enjoy reading and recommend books to their friends.

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to learn the curriculum. Leaders identify needs accurately. They also provide staff with the guidance and training needed to plan effective learning activities for these pupils. Staff use leaders' guidance and provide the help these pupils need. Deaf pupils benefit from an effective blend of specialist provision and mainstream education. While learning how to live happily as a deaf person, these pupils also receive the support they need to study the school's curriculum successfully.

Many children join Reception with underdeveloped spoken language. Some staff provide some effective support. This, however, is not the case on a consistent basis. This is because leaders have not clarified how staff should teach spoken language. As a result, many children continue to struggle to express themselves using coherent sentences. Some pupils continue to struggle until key stage 2, where staff provide much more effective support.

Children in the early years quickly learn the school's values. Most children sustain concentration and listen well to others. In lessons, older pupils typically work without disruption. Pupils and staff understand leaders' approach to managing behaviour. Staff use the behaviour policy consistently so that pupils maintain leaders' high expectations of behaviour. For those pupils that find it hard to manage positive behaviour consistently, staff provide effective support.

Staff provide many enriching opportunities for pupils to learn about themselves and the wider world. Pupils share their diverse lifestyles and beliefs with each other. For example, pupils introduced the 'prayer club' where they can share their approaches to spirituality. Pupils understand the importance of democracy and the rule of law in contemporary Britain.

Governors have the expertise needed to carry out their duties effectively. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors hold leaders accountable for the quality of the school's provision and ensure that leaders make improvements where necessary.

Leaders and governors have positive relations with staff and parents. All staff who responded to Ofsted's online survey said that they enjoy working at the school and feel well supported. Staff appreciate how leaders ensure workload remains manageable when introducing changes at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure staff understand the regular training they receive. Staff are alert to the signs of potential harm. They act swiftly and appropriately when concerns arise. Pupils understand the risks they face and what to do when they feel worried about issues at school, home or in the community. Leaders work well with external agencies and make sure that vulnerable pupils receive the support they need.

Leaders ensure all background checks are carried out to determine the suitability of adults working at the school.

Governors scrutinise leaders' safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that they are carried out effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that staff in Reception teach children how to use spoken language effectively. As a result, children speak with phrases or simple sentences and cannot express themselves well enough. Leaders need to clarify how staff should teach spoken language and provide the training needed to make the necessary improvements.

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 January 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	109579
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10255180
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	605
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Umair Ahmad
Headteacher	Joanna Farbon
Website	www.icknielprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher joined the school in March 2019.
- The school is the primary specialist provision for deaf pupils in Luton. This provision is for two- to 11-year-olds with bilateral permanent severe or profound hearing loss.
- The school does not have any pupils attending alternative provision.

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 held discussions with governors, representatives from the local authority, the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, members of senior leadership team, teachers, members of support staff and pupils. When inspectors were talking with deaf pupils, communicators helped inspectors and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: music, physical education and reading. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about

their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke with pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.

- Inspectors spoke with leaders and staff about safeguarding policies and practices at the school. Inspectors looked at records about safeguarding, the school roll, the behaviour of pupils, the provision of pupils' personal development and leaders' approach to managing the workload of staff.
- Inspectors considered the 66 responses from staff and the 37 responses from parents to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Al Mistrano, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Stevens

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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