

Inspection of a good school: Iver Heath Junior School

St Margaret's Close, Iver Heath, Buckinghamshire SL0 0DA

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2023

Outcome

Iver Heath Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this happy, inclusive school. They enjoy warm, respectful relationships with staff and each other, and have confidence that the staff will listen to them if they have any concerns or worries. Incidents of bullying are very rare and pupils are confident that staff deal with any effectively. Leaders are quick to address any unkind behaviour that pupils report. Pupils feel happy and safe.

Leaders at all levels have high expectations of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils understand the school's 'Golden Rules' and how they help keep everyone safe and able to do their best. Playtimes and lunchtimes are pleasant social events. Pupils work hard during lessons and achieve well.

Leaders have created a range of opportunities for pupils to lead in their school community. Pupils enjoy these roles where they learn to appreciate and consider other people's views.

Pupils relish the raft of different clubs on offer, including dodgeball, ukulele, drama, and bellringing. Leaders have ensured that every pupil who wants to take part in clubs and trips are enabled to do so, including pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils.

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

Leaders are determined that all pupils will learn to read well. They have revised their approach to teaching phonics, invested in a new phonics scheme and have trained staff thoroughly to teach it well. Pupils practise their reading using books which match the sounds they have learned. As a result, pupils catch up quickly if they join without the confidence or fluency needed. Pupils appreciate the recent investment in the library and enjoy the opportunities to share books with their parents when they come into school to see their learning. This is clearly encouraging pupils' love of reading.

The curriculum sets out the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. For most subjects this is carefully sequenced. For example, in music, pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about basic musical notation, which supports their composition of increasingly complex pieces. Music has strong focus and is enhanced by the wide range of clubs on offer that give pupils the opportunity to practice their skills further. However, in a minority of subjects, the expected knowledge pupils need to have by the end of Year 6 is not thought through explicitly enough. This means teachers are not clear enough about how to build up the necessary knowledge in each year group. This in turn hinders learning overall in those subjects.

Pupils enjoy their learning. Behaviour in lessons is positive and low-level disruption is minimal. This is because leaders have ensured that everyone understands the high expectations of behaviour and established effective routines to support them. Pupils are taught to reflect on their actions in order to help everyone achieve their best.

Support for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school. Since the last inspection, leaders have prioritised this area of provision. All staff are trained well to identify any additional needs pupils may have. Leaders have put in place effective procedures to ensure that these pupils receive the support that they need. Teachers make effective adaptations to learning to enable these pupils to learn the same broad and ambitious curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

The governing body has recently undergone some change. Governors are working closely with school leaders to implement systems and processes to help their shared understanding of the school's priorities and the actions needed to meet them. Governors have a secure understanding of the strategic nature of their role and the part this plays in the sustainability and development of the school overall.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They particularly appreciate the actions that leaders have taken to help manage their workload. They share leaders' determination and high aspirations for all at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders at all levels have prioritised this aspect of their school's provision. They have established a culture of vigilance and ensured everyone understands their roles in keeping children safe.

Leaders make the right checks before staff start working at the school. Staff are clear and confident about identifying potential signs of harm and what to do if they are concerned about a child. Training is thorough and updated very regularly. Leaders have established systems and expectations that ensure appropriate action is taken swiftly. Leaders persevere with other agencies in order to secure the best outcomes for their pupils.

Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe online and when out and about in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a minority of subjects, leaders have not been sufficiently precise about what they want pupils to know by the time they leave the school. This means that pupils' knowledge is not secure in each curriculum area. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the knowledge of what pupils should learn and how to best achieve that in all subject areas.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2018.

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	110279
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10269108
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Justin Whitsitt
Headteacher	Gary Jones
Website	www.iverheathjunior.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 February 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and chair of the governing body are both new to post since the previous inspection.
- The school currently uses no 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, inclusion leader and members of staff. The inspector also met with members of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and music. For each of these subjects, she held discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with staff and pupils and looked at pupils' work. The inspector also looked at pupils' learning in other subjects and explored the curriculum in history and geography. The inspector also listened to a range of pupils read.

- The inspector observed catch-up interventions to learn how staff provide extra support to pupils.
- The inspector met with leaders to discuss pupils' behaviour and the wider opportunities the school provides. She also spoke with pupils about these aspects of the school.
- The inspector looked at the school's safeguarding records and spoke with leaders, staff and governors about safeguarding. She spoke to pupils about the school's work to keep pupils safe.
- The inspector spoke with parents and considered responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils, staff, parents and carers.

Inspection team

Mary Ellen McCarthy, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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