

Inspection of a good school: Epworth Primary Academy

Birchfield Road, Epworth, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN9 1DL

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 June 2024

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 be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The principal of this school is Sean Woolley. This school is part of Isle Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sarah Sprack, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Barratt.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this exceptionally kind and caring school. They are cared for and feel safe. Pupils show this kindness to others. Pupils enjoy learning a foreign language to help pupils from another culture feel welcome. They flourish personally in this exceptional school.

Pupils meet the school's highly ambitious expectations for behaviour and progress. Pupils settle to learning activities with enthusiasm. They display exemplary attitudes to their learning. Pupils achieve well in end of key stage tests and assessments. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) also benefit from the excellent quality of education. Skilled adults ensure their needs are met. Pupils with SEND achieve well and flourish in this kind school. Pupils show great empathy for one another. Dedicated pupil well-being ambassadors are on duty at lunchtimes. They provide support to their peers should they need it.

The school offers pupils an extensive and stimulating array of trips and visits. Pupils excitedly explain how the school will support them with requests for different visits, such as a recent equestrian event. Leaders ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, can access these activities. Pupils discover new interests. They thrive through the broad experiences the school provides.

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

The broad and ambitious curriculum is exceptional. The school carefully considers the teaching of mixed-age classes. This helps to ensure that pupils make excellent progress through the curriculum. The use of a 'gradual release' means that pupils start their independent learning in lessons when they are ready. Those who need additional support are given it by teachers before moving on. This high level of personalisation helps pupils of all abilities achieve ambitious goals.

The school ensures that pupils regularly revisit their prior learning. 'Know more, remember more' tasks feature in every lesson. This supports pupils in learning the curriculum and remembering it over time. Pupils confidently and impressively use prior learning to help with new learning. For example, Year 6 pupils link their learning of tourism in Greece to their learning in history about ancient Greece and the Peloponnesian War. The school swiftly identifies any pupils who need support. This is done through highly effective use of assessment in foundation subjects. Pupils are not allowed to fall behind.

Expert adults support pupils who are in the early stages of reading. Pupils learn to read from the earliest of ages. Pupils who need further support are swiftly identified. Bespoke intervention ensures that pupils keep up. The school's ambitious reading list exposes pupils to a broad range of exciting and interesting texts. The texts are carefully created to support pupils' wider development. For example, pupils in Year 3 learn about disability when reading 'Edie Eckhart'. Pupils display empathy and care for their peers.

Children in early years get off to a flying start in their education. The language-rich environment helps children communicate well. For example, when learning about expressive arts and design, children explain what 'rhythm' and 'tempo' mean. Carefully planned learning activities inspire the children in their learning. Children are in well-established routines and behave exceptionally well.

The school provides an extensive array of wider activities. They are relentless in supporting pupils' interests and developing the whole child. The school links visits to careers wherever possible. For example, pupils in key stage 2 visit a motor sport event and meet with mechanics to learn about their job. The school organises a careers fayre that all pupils in the school access. A wide range of adults share their work experiences, including nurses, enviro farmers and solicitors.

The 'Epworth Offer' maps different experiences that all pupils will have by the time they leave the school. The varied range of activities prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. They also help pupils develop their empathy. For example, pupils have the opportunity to 'sleep under the stars'. Here, they experience sleeping without home comforts.

The school, trust and academy oversight committee are relentless in their focus to give pupils a truly excellent experience. The high level of challenge and support that the academy oversight committee provides supports the high standards in the school. Trustees and the chief executive officer are central to the school's striving for excellence. The workload and well-being of staff are central to the leaders of the school and trust.

Staff are proud to work at the school and know they are highly valued. The strong partnership between school and families is exceptional. One parent represented the views of many, saying, 'The school has instilled a genuine love of learning in my child.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 December 2014.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	138712
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10323036
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	334
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Barratt
CEO of the trust	Sarah Sprack
Principal	Sean Woolley
Website	www.epworthprimaryacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Isle Education Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, geography and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, 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 reviewed a work sample in history and discussed the subject with pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector met with members of the trust board, including the chair. They also met with members of the academy oversight committee, including the chair.
- The inspector spoke with the local authority lead officer for school improvement.
- The inspector met with the chief executive officer.
- The inspector reviewed a range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- The inspector considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.
- The inspector considered the views of pupils through their responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils and through meetings held with pupils across the two days of the inspection.
- The inspector considered the views of staff through meetings and through their responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.

Inspection team

Andrew Gibbins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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