

# Inspection of school: The Ickniel Primary School

Lynton Way, Cambridge CB22 3EA

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Inspection dates:

14 and 15 November 2023

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded 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.

The headteacher of this school is Diane Mitchell. This school is part of Anglian Learning, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jonathan Culpin, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Helen Pain.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils have positive relationships with staff, which helps them to feel safe. They know that trusted adults will help if they are worried about something. Pupils show respect to their teachers. They show this by behaving well in lessons. Pupils are confident to answer questions and ask for help if they need to.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' achievement, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This means that pupils try hard in lessons. In some subjects, staff are new to their leadership roles and have not yet begun to check exactly what pupils are learning in phonics sessions. This means some pupils fall behind and do not learn as quickly as they could.

In the early years, staff help children to settle well. Children quickly adapt to routines, such as being quiet and respectful in assembly and taking turns to answer questions.

Pupils enjoy the wide-ranging opportunities the school provides. They contributed to a review of the school's values, which include resilience, and being unique and ambitious. Opportunities are planned to develop pupils' broader development, such as supporting charities and taking part in school productions as well as musical and sporting events.

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

The school has an ambitious, well-planned curriculum. The trust and the school have identified what they want pupils to know and remember in each subject, for example mathematics and history. Leaders have used appropriate checks to assess where there are gaps in learning and in many subjects, pupils are helped to keep up or catch up quickly. However, in early reading, too many pupils fall behind and do not catch up quickly enough. While it is planned, some staff have not yet received appropriate training. They do not have the necessary skills to help pupils catch up quickly.

The school makes sure that those in the early years or at the early stages of reading have the correct books to help them get better at reading. However, because a small number of pupils fall behind in their knowledge of phonics, they do not make as much progress as they could. Children in Reception enjoy their learning and respond well to all adults. They learn to count and recognise numbers and have many opportunities to use this knowledge. Children learn about the recent past and show an understanding of historical events. For example, they could explain why they stood silently for the recent Act of Remembrance along with the rest of the pupils.

The school sets clear expectations for pupils' behaviour and pupils adhere to these well. This means that classrooms are calm and disruption to learning is rare. Children in Reception learn quickly about these expectations. Any pupils with additional emotional needs receive effective support. This enables them to engage in all areas of school life.

The school ensures that attendance has a high priority. Leaders analyse reasons for persistent absence and provide support to those pupils who need it.

The school identifies and supports pupils with SEND effectively. Staff make sure that the curriculum is broken down into small steps when necessary. They make sure that pupils with SEND learn alongside their classmates and that they access the same ambitious curriculum. Pupils have meaningful targets. Some pupils work on these outside the main classroom when this helps them. Pupils learn and achieve well because of this support.

The school provides a range of personal development opportunities that support pupils' personal development well. Pupils are taught about mindfulness and this prepares them well for lessons and the tests they take in Year 6. The school celebrates a range of languages and cultures in assembly time. Pupils learn to sing in Spanish and are proud of this ability.

The trust provides good support for the school, which includes training and mentoring. The trust, school leaders and those responsible for governance ensure that staff workload and well-being are considered. They provide appropriate resources and give those teachers at the beginning of their careers the necessary help to ensure that they are effective.

The vast majority of parents and carers are positive about the school and its leadership. A few expressed concerns about support for pupils with SEND. However, those pupils are

indeed well supported in school. The school has plans to enhance parents' understanding of its support systems and procedures.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Although there are plans in place to support pupils to catch up in their reading, not all staff have received the necessary training to facilitate this effectively. Pupils sometimes struggle to grasp phonics at the desired pace, leading to some falling behind. Leaders should ensure that all staff undergo training to help pupils to catch up promptly and keep up with their peers.
- Leaders have planned what they want pupils to learn in phonics but do not always check that this is happening in some classrooms and intervention groups. This means that some pupils fall behind in phonics. The school should ensure that all leaders check that pupils are learning the planned phonics curriculum as well as they intend.

## **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 predecessor school, The Icknield Primary School, to be good in January 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](#)' 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	148454
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10295131
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	202
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Jonathan Culpin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Diane Mitchell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.icknield.cambs.sch.uk">www.icknield.cambs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The Icknield Primary School joined Anglian Learning in April 2021.
- When its predecessor school, The Icknield Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, inspectors judged the school to be good.

## 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 the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the chief executive officer of the trust, the vice-chair of the trust, the director of primary education, the director of inclusion, the special educational needs coordinator and four governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a

sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- 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 spoke to pupils about their experience of school life and their views on behaviour and bullying. She observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The inspector observed several pupils reading to a familiar adult and also observed intervention teaching with groups and individual pupils.
- The inspector considered the 66 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the 45 free-text responses. She also considered the 50 responses to Ofsted's online pupil surveys and the 17 responses to the online staff survey

### **Inspection team**

Linda Allison, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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