

The Icknield Primary School

Lynton Way, Sawston, Cambridge CB22 3EA

Inspection dates

16–17 January 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has high expectations of pupils and staff and a clear understanding of what constitutes effective teaching and learning. Therefore, pupils' outcomes are rapidly improving.
- School leadership has been effective in bringing about improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' outcomes. The quality of teaching is now good and pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have ensured that the broad and balanced curriculum is effective. Pupils enjoy the subjects they are taught and are motivated to learn well.
- Pupils are safe. They say they feel safe and they have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. Parents, almost unanimously, agree.
- Pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge and questioning skills enable pupils to make good progress. Teaching assistants support and promote pupils' learning effectively.
- In 2016 and 2017, the proportions of key stage 2 pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined was above the national average.
- Leaders track pupils' progress and attainment closely in reading, writing and mathematics. For other subjects, this is in the very early stages and is not yet fully developed.
- In 2017, too few pupils achieved greater depth in mathematics at key stage 1 and the higher standard at key stage 2. Leaders have introduced new approaches to teaching mathematics, but it is too soon to see their impact.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start. Outcomes have remained consistently above the national average for several years.
- The early years outdoor area is underdeveloped. It lacks the resources needed to fully promote high-quality learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - equipping subject leaders with the skills and knowledge they need to use the school's newly introduced monitoring and assessment system effectively
 - measuring pupils' attainment, and tracking pupils' progress, in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Increase the proportion of pupils who achieve the higher standards in mathematics by:
 - providing more high-quality opportunities for all pupils to apply their mathematical learning and challenge their reasoning
 - rigorously monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of newly introduced teaching approaches.
- Develop the early years environment so that the outdoor area matches the good quality of the indoor areas.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership, ably supported by her leadership team and the governors. She has made a significant and positive difference since joining the school in 2016. There have been difficulties in recruiting teachers since the previous inspection, but the school is now fully staffed. As a result, current pupils are receiving a good and improving standard of education.
- The local authority provided good support during the headteacher's recent period of planned leave. For example, advisers arranged for a local authority consultant headteacher to mentor the interim headteacher. Many parents commented positively about the strong leadership provided by both the interim headteacher and the substantive headteacher. For example, one parent said, 'The new headteachers have put in place a lot of welcome changes in the school.'
- The headteacher has taken many effective actions to improve teaching. For example, she has enabled the staff team to use pupils' assessment information successfully to improve the teaching of English and mathematics.
- The headteacher rightly focused her attention on raising the achievement of all pupils in English and mathematics, including pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. As a result, pupils' outcomes in these subjects climbed significantly between 2015 and 2016, and remain broadly in line with the national average.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Equality and diversity are promoted well through the school's programme of assemblies and visitors to school. For example, the Royal British Legion visited the school in November, supporting pupils in learning about Remembrance Day.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Teachers use 'sparky starts', dynamic and stimulating introductions to topics, to fire pupils' imaginations. For example, inspectors observed Year 2 pupils working with a parent playing steel pans and sharing carnival pictures to introduce their topic relating to African culture.
- Pupils are well educated about the importance of fundamental British values. They used key themes to create their whole-school 'Icknield values tree'. The school tree promotes qualities such as democracy, kindness and respect. These values are woven through each 'class charter' and ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is spent effectively. The sport premium leader meets with pupils termly to discuss extra-curricular opportunities they would enjoy. As a result, a basketball club and yoga club are now in place and an increased number of pupils now take part in sport.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding successfully to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders' comprehensive pupil premium strategy shows clearly how the additional funding will be spent. The funding has a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils' pastoral and academic progress. For example, eligible pupils receive fully funded peripatetic music tuition. Disadvantaged pupils currently make better progress than

other pupils in school in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Parents value and support the school. Several parents told inspectors that the headteacher has brought about rapid improvements since her appointment. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to others. They feel that their children make good progress and are well looked after. Many parents chose to leave additional free-text comments such as 'I have nothing but praise for the school. Both my children attend Icknield and I wouldn't look anywhere else.'
- The leadership of provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is effective. These pupils make very good progress from their starting points as a result of good-quality provision that meets their individual needs.
- Leaders for subjects other than English and mathematics do not use the school's new monitoring system well enough. They have not had sufficient training to provide them with the skills needed to use the system effectively. As a result, leaders do not have enough impact on improving the progress pupils make in the subjects they are responsible for.

Governance of the school

- Governors provide good support to leaders. They are not afraid of challenging school leaders' actions or seeking more information to assist them in their role of holding the school to account. They use their individual skills and experiences well to support the school to continue to improve.
- Governors are sharply focused on school improvement and know the school's strengths and areas for development. They have an accurate understanding of the quality of education at the school as a result of their monitoring activities.
- Governors ensure that their statutory responsibilities are met fully, especially in safeguarding pupils' welfare and monitoring the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They analyse national and school pupils' achievement information and hold leaders to account for the quality of teaching and the impact this has on academic standards.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff benefit from regular training that complies with present safeguarding guidance. Systems are in place to ensure that concerns are identified early and responded to rapidly. Staff work well with families, as well as other agencies in social care and in the community, to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for.
- Leaders are effective in identifying pupils who may be vulnerable and quickly take appropriate action to support them. The overwhelming majority of parents, pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaires recognised and appreciated that the school places a high priority on ensuring pupils' safety and care.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The high expectations of the leadership team have resulted in improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school. The positive impact of leaders' monitoring activities and performance management of staff are evident in the improved outcomes for pupils. The overwhelming majority of staff who responded to Ofsted's staff questionnaire agreed that the school has improved since its last inspection.
- Difficulties in recruiting teachers led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in the past. Leaders have worked hard to ensure that the school is now fully and appropriately staffed. The quality of teaching is now good and improving as a result of the more stable and secure staff team.
- Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and ensure that the classrooms are well ordered and calm. Staff lead by example and set high standards for pupils. Skilful questioning enables teachers to identify misconceptions quickly and highlight opportunities for pupils to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants make positive contributions to learning because they support groups of pupils appropriately. Consequently, pupils make good progress in a range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive a high standard of tailored support from skilled staff. They are included fully in lessons and their individual strengths celebrated. For example, where pupils have particular strengths in mathematics, pupils' skills are used to explain mathematical concepts to others.
- Phonics teaching is highly effective. Leaders have found that pupils respond well to teachers' energetic and inspiring delivery. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and lessons are well resourced, enabling pupils to make good progress in learning about the sounds that letters make.
- The teaching of reading is effective across the whole school. Pupils are provided with texts to read that are well matched to their reading abilities. Parental support for reading at home is high. Consequently, pupils read confidently and fluently. They enjoy reading and are able to speak at length about their reading books, demonstrating clear understanding of what they have read.
- Pupils' achievement in writing across the school is a key strength because teaching is highly effective. Evidence in books demonstrates pupils' pride in their neatly presented work and shows that pupils use the spelling, grammar and punctuation skills they have been taught. Writing displays across the school give examples of high-quality writing in different subjects and genres. For example, a Year 6 pupil's 'Ominous owls' poem began 'Stealthy assassin, lethal talons...', showing a good grasp of poetic features.
- The quality of mathematics teaching is improving. Pupils are well supported to deepen their conceptual understanding through the use of a range of appropriate mathematical apparatus and equipment.
- Very recently, new strategies have been introduced to improve teaching and pupils' outcomes in mathematics but these are not yet established fully in all classes. Leaders are aware that they need to monitor closely the quality of teaching and learning across

the school to ensure that the achievement of pupils, particularly at the higher standard in mathematics, continues to improve. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical learning across the curriculum.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school and 'the Icknield values' that are woven throughout individual 'class charters'. Pupils are taught to be kind to each other and show respect for different lifestyles and opinions. One told inspectors, 'The best thing about Icknield is we're all friends and we all get along.'
- Through a well-planned programme of personal, social and health education, pupils develop a good understanding of how to stay safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet. Pupils are well aware of online dangers, such as accessing age-restricted smartphone apps. Pupils told inspectors that there is very little bullying but if it did happen they are confident that the adults would sort it out quickly.
- Leaders ensure that pupils develop a sense of responsibility. Each year group has class ambassadors who are passionate about sharing 'great things' about their class. Class names, such as 'hard-working hedgehogs' in Year 2, give each cohort a sense of identity. Year 6 buddies support Reception children at lunchtimes and playtimes and are positive role models. They also relish their responsibility in caring for the school's chickens.
- Pupils feel valued and listened to, and enjoy positive relationships with staff. As a result, they feel confident to express their opinions. Leaders acknowledge and act on pupils' suggestions. For example, the newly formed school council described how they had decided that orange juice was not a healthy breaktime drink because it 'eats away your tooth enamel'. Therefore, they were busy planning posters they wished to launch in assembly to inform the school that 'water is best'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Good behaviour is evident throughout the school due to the consistent implementation of the school's effective behaviour policy.
- The headteacher has spent considerable time and effort improving behaviour at the school since her appointment. As a result of her actions and strategies, such as electronic merits and raffle ticket prizes, pupils' behaviour is now good.
- The frequency of fixed-term exclusions and repeat exclusions has reduced considerably. Since the beginning of the academic year, there have been no exclusions.
- Leaders and managers have worked effectively to improve the school's attendance rate and reduce lateness. As a result of the approaches they have introduced, attendance is now above average and repeated lateness has been dramatically reduced.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In the past, pupils' outcomes were poor. Since the appointment of the current headteacher in 2016, pupils' outcomes have risen dramatically. This is as a result of a clear focus on monitoring and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the school.
- Key stage 2 pupils now achieve the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics in line with their peers nationally. In 2017, key stage 2 outcomes for pupils' progress remained broadly average for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Key stage 1 pupils' achievement is improving. In 2017, the proportion of key stage 1 pupils who reached the expected standard in reading was above the national average. The proportion who reached the expected standard in writing and mathematics was similar to the national average. This was a good improvement on the 2016 results.
- In Year 1, the proportion of children who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check increased in 2017 and was similar to the national average. Phonics teaching across the school is now good, enabling pupils to learn and apply new skills rapidly.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. Current progress for these pupils across the school is good because teaching staff carefully plan interventions that are tailored to their specific needs.
- Across all year groups, disadvantaged pupils' progress is improving considerably. Leaders are ensuring that the difference between the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally is diminishing. Teachers have implemented detailed action plans to ensure that these pupils make rapid progress. Current assessment information illustrates that disadvantaged pupils are making faster progress than other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In mathematics, the proportions of pupils in key stage 1 who reached greater depth, and in key stage 2 the higher standard, were below average. The school has invested heavily to improve the resources available to pupils in order to improve these results. Current work in pupils' books suggests that these actions are beginning to have a positive impact.

Early years provision

Good

- The proportion of Reception children achieving a good level of development has remained above the national average for the past three years. This is as a result of effective leadership of the early years. Staff make accurate assessments of children's learning needs and ensure that children make strong progress in all areas of the curriculum. Consequently, children are well prepared for Year 1.
- The early years leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has a good understanding of the children's interests, strengths and needs. The early years leader uses this information well to ensure that children's individual needs are met. She leads the Reception class very well.

- Staff have a good understanding of the early years curriculum. They plan activities that engage children and motivate them to learn. Children's knowledge and skills are assessed regularly and activities are then provided that capture children's interests and build on what they already know.
- Children enjoy the activities teachers plan for them and behave very well. Classroom routines are well established and children learn and play happily alongside each other. Inspectors observed children exhibiting resilience and perseverance. For example, pupils were painstakingly using a fishing rod to 'fish for phonemes' at the bottom of a water tray, guided by the class teacher.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in the Reception class are good. Teachers ensure that well-organised resources are accessible for children to investigate and explore their own ideas. Indoors, learning areas are welcoming and stimulating.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use observations to assess precisely how well children are learning and developing. They quickly recognise when children need additional support and put this in place. This ensures that children make good progress from their starting points.
- The school's online reporting tool enables parents to be well informed about their children's progress and how to support learning at home. For example, the class teacher posted a video clip of her correct pronunciation of the phonemes children were learning that week.
- Adults ensure that children are safe and that safeguarding arrangements are secure and effective. The children know how to stay safe, at a level appropriate to their age, and take steps to manage their own health and well-being.
- Transition arrangements are good. Children feel settled before they start school as a result of home visits, weekly 'taster sessions' during the term before they start school and various parent information sessions run by the class teacher. Consequently, the partnership between home and school is strong.
- The outdoor area is poorly equipped and unappealing. Consequently, children do not choose to work outside because the learning environment is not as well equipped as that indoors. The early years leader has accurately identified the outdoor learning environment as an area for improvement.

School details

Unique reference number	110671
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10044751

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	169
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Liz Gibson
Headteacher	Anneka Stockdale
Telephone number	01223 508 750
Website	www.icknield.cambs.sch.uk
Email address	head@icknield.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 May 2016

Information about this school

- The Icknield is a slightly smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average. However, the proportion of pupils who are supported by a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium grant is broadly average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited a number of classrooms, many with the headteacher, to observe teaching and learning and to talk with pupils about their work.
- Inspectors met formally with the headteacher, interim headteacher and other leaders, including the SEN coordinator and the leader of the early years. Meetings were held with five governors, including the chair, and with a group of 10 pupils. The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- Along with pupils, inspectors looked at a wide variety of pupils' work from this academic year. Pupils' work on walls was also viewed.
- An inspector listened to small groups of pupils read and another spoke with pupils about their reading in lessons.
- The inspection team checked the school's documentation on safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and the quality of teaching. The lead inspector also considered the school's evaluation of its own work, its plans for improvement, information about pupils' progress and governing body minutes.
- Inspectors took into consideration 41 responses from parents to Parent View and 85 free-text comments. In addition, 23 pupil responses and nine staff responses were considered.

Inspection team

Stephen Cloke, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lyn Beale

Ofsted Inspector

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