

Inspection of Isambard Kingdom Brunel Primary School

Thomas Place, Wellington, Somerset TA21 8FP

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Isambard Kingdom Brunel Primary School is much loved by pupils, parents and the community. Leaders pride themselves on building an effective education for children that begins in the Nursery. Leaders know every child and family well. They demonstrate warmth and high ambition for all. Pupils know this, and they are proud of their school.

At breaktimes, pupils enjoy a range of activities and play. Each day, Nursery children join the rest of the school for family dining, where they learn the formalities of dining and enjoy eating together. Pupils show care for one another. Children learn to share and take turns.

Leaders run a large number of clubs and activities for pupils. From performance to reading and multi-skills to craft, a majority of pupils participate in the clubs. Pupils enjoy a range of educational visits, including to the local secondary school. The breakfast club and after-school club are well attended and provide a range of structured activity. Parents and families are wholeheartedly supportive of the school. They appreciate the strong communication from leaders and appreciate how well staff know them.

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

Leaders have planned a broad and ambitious curriculum for every child. Leaders have carefully mapped the curriculum, from the early years to the end of key stage 2. As the school grows, they know what pupils will learn and when. In mathematics, pupils secure their learning through 'maths meetings' before their daily lesson. Teachers check what pupils have understood to make sure pupils only move on when they are ready. However, sometimes this does not happen quickly enough. At times, pupils who are ready do not progress to new learning promptly.

In the large nursery provision, staff observe the children's development carefully. They plan play to provide the next steps children need in their learning. Staff ensure that activities and play are age-appropriate and developmental. Leaders in Nursery and in the early years work closely to ensure the curriculum is well mapped. They read books to children with themes that are revisited as children move into Reception class. In Reception, teachers develop communication through high-quality interactions with children. Leaders plan a range of activities, including a focus on numeracy and literacy. Yet, activities and resources do not always help children to build on what they know and can do.

Pupils in the early stages of learning to read follow a well-implemented phonics programme. This begins in Nursery, to prepare children for starting school. Leaders ensure staff have the training and resources they need. Leaders track pupils' reading closely. They make sure pupils get precise support when they need it. This helps them to make progression.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders identify need early. They work with the trust to share expertise and resources for SEND. This means pupils have effective adaptations to their learning when they need it. Parents of children with SEND appreciate the communication and support they have with leaders. Along with bespoke training, teachers receive detailed information on pupils' needs. This means they provide and adapt the learning appropriately for pupils with SEND.

Leaders have planned a thorough personal, social and health education curriculum. They revisit pupils' learning through assemblies and carefully planned curriculum activity. This means pupils recall their learning well. Leaders run workshops to keep parents informed about what pupils are learning. Pupils celebrate diversity and they learn to respect differences. They learn how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the community. Pupils confidently describe their learning and why it is important.

Trust and school leaders are ambitious to provide an education from the age of two that removes all barriers to learning. Leaders plan carefully for the growth of the school, and keep their vision central to all they do. The local governing body members support leaders in this. They have recently reviewed their work. They focus on supporting and challenging leaders effectively. Staff value the work they do with colleagues across the trust to develop their specialisms. They feel well supported by leaders, who recognise the challenges of workload. Pupils, parents and the community are fully supportive of the school. Many parents describe leaders as 'going above and beyond' to provide a school where their children 'flourish'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

As the school grows, leaders have built a safeguarding team to deal with increasing safeguarding needs. Leaders identify concerns early. As children join from the Nursery onwards, leaders build strong relationships with families. This means leaders are thorough and prompt in acting on issues or following up with support. Staff receive frequent and detailed training. This supports them in being vigilant for small signs that may indicate a growing need. Staff know their pupils and families well.

Staff check daily with pupils to see how they are feeling. They encourage pupils to talk about their emotions. Pupils value this.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, the learning activity does not meet the needs of pupils. This is because checks on what pupils know and can do are not always timely. As a result, pupils who are secure in their understanding do not move on promptly to new and more complex learning when they are ready. Leaders need to make sure learning activities are well matched to what pupils know and can do.
- In early years, activities and resources do not always help children to build on what they know and can do. When this occurs, children's knowledge and recall are not as strong as leaders intend. Leaders need to consider how the resources children use promote their learning more precisely.

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	147842
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10256601
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	159
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Richmond
Headteacher	Richard Healey
Website	www.ikbschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Isambard Kingdom Brunel Primary School opened in September 2020. It is part of The Castle Partnership Trust.
- Currently there is a Reception class, a Year 1 class and a Year 2 class.
- The school has a large nursery provision. Nursery children are part of school life.
- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.

- The lead inspector observed pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 read to a trusted adult.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, leaders, teachers, trust leaders, governors and trustees.
- The lead inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. Inspectors spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation, including development plans, improvement reports and minutes of meetings.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text comments, and to the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Rachel Hesketh, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tom Page

Ofsted Inspector

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