

Iceni Primary Academy

Address: 98 Main Street, IP26 4LP

Unique reference number (URN): 151432

Inspection report: 11 November 2025

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Attendance is high. This is true for all groups, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or pupils who are disadvantaged. Leaders take a tenacious and detailed approach to managing attendance. They use a range of strategies very successfully to ensure pupils want to come to school. Staff work very closely with families to provide a bespoke wellbeing offer so pupils and their parents and carers are comfortable knowing pupils will be safe and well looked after. Pupils make a prompt start to the day. They settle quickly and begin their work. Pupils who need help with transition into school are very ably supported and so access learning full time in class.

Bullying is rare but has been addressed very swiftly and effectively when it has occurred. There is no low-level disruption. Pupils enjoy school and play and learn together happily. Pupils are directly taught how to self-regulate, and they apply this independently. The school is consistently calm, orderly and welcoming. Pupils and staff demonstrate respect for each other. Pupils' emotional needs are well catered for. This reduces any potential anxiety or frustrations, allowing pupils to focus fully on their learning.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

The school takes a highly tailored approach to ensure that all pupils access the full curriculum and the wider opportunities the school has to offer. This attention to detail is consistent throughout the whole school. Staff have the required knowledge to identify pupils' needs early and accurately. Staff use a range of information in close partnership with parents, carers and external professionals to support pupils. Staff at all levels know all pupils extremely well.

Carefully considered adaptations are not just for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), but for any pupil who may need support to alleviate any worries, ease curriculum access or overcome disadvantage. These can range from having a specific resource, additional adult support or the way in which learning is presented. As this is a common and widespread practice, pupils are readily accepting and caring towards the needs of others. Therefore, pupils are valued, gain confidence and have equality of opportunity. Leaders use robust checks to ensure that highly effective support strategies are put in place. They intervene quickly if this is not the case. Pupils with SEND have targets precisely matched to their needs so that they continue to flourish from their starting points.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

All leaders know the school extremely well. They are clear on its strengths and have accurately identified areas to develop. They are unwavering and highly effective in their determination to deliver their strategic vision for all pupils of 'belonging and becoming' and build on the school's community role. Leaders at all levels have ensured the smooth transition from the predecessor school to now being a separate primary school. They demonstrate their impact on improving pupils' outcomes, on how well pupils are included in

school, in realising their ambition for high attendance and in ensuring that pupils behave consistently well. They are quick to take effective action when they have an area that needs improvement.

Staff morale has also remained high during this period of change, and parents and carers praise the school. The trust, trustees and local governors fulfil the agreed school oversight and governance model very well. They offer the school effective challenge and support. Staff receive bespoke professional learning that is also extended by the expertise at trust level, for example for spellings, inclusion and safeguarding. Leaders and the trust use a range of highly effective measures to monitor standards and care at the school.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils overall achieve above national averages at the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Work in books across the school also shows that pupils are reading, writing and are numerically capable at the standard expected for their age. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged. Pupils attain more highly in reading, so leaders are rightly focusing on improving pupils' achievement at the higher standards in writing and mathematics. Pupils who have been reluctant writers now sustain longer pieces of writing. The recent focus on spellings has had a positive impact. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make sustained progress from their starting points. However, in some subjects in the wider curriculum, pupils' knowledge and understanding are not as detailed as it should be.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of how well the curriculum is taught. They keep a watchful eye on any aspects of the curriculum that may need refinement to ensure that it remains relevant to pupils' needs and sustains ambition. The school rightly prioritises a focus on reading, writing, spelling and mathematics. Staff have the necessary expertise to teach these subjects well. There is a clear focus on developing a rich vocabulary and exposure to a range of literature. Teachers know what they need to teach and when for all subjects. Pupils particularly enjoy music and practical science experiments as well as visits that bring the curriculum to life.

Overall, the curriculum is taught well. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils' capabilities to adapt learning to meet needs and fill gaps, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, pupils have any misconceptions addressed. Staff put in place timely and appropriate interventions so pupils who find learning tricky do catch up. Staff check this support is working as intended. However, there are some instances when staff are not as consistent in ensuring that the work they set deepens and extends knowledge for some pupils, for example pupils who can work at the higher standard.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children make a positive start to school life and overall achieve well. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or pupils who are vulnerable. Children quickly settle and learn to follow the high expectations staff have of them. They know how to take turns, listen and sustain focus. They develop into busy, chatty, independent and curious learners. The school ensures that the early years curriculum builds knowledge logically over time, especially in early reading, writing and mathematics. Phonics is taught well. Leaders also ensure that children have the breadth of knowledge ready for Year 1.

Staff adapt the curriculum to meet the specific strengths, interests and needs of the children, and they liaise with parents and carers over this. For example, this is seen in how well staff support children who speak English as an additional language or who are emotionally vulnerable and where pupils are ready to start writing words independently. Staff ask children questions to support them when they are learning. Staff choose activities carefully to help children learn new knowledge as well as rehearse what have they learned already. However, there are instances when staff do not use their chosen activities as well as they could to deepen children's knowledge and understanding.

Personal development and well-being

Expected standard 

The school follows a well-thought out personal development programme that meets all statutory requirements. It is also responsive to teaching pupils about aspects that are specifically relevant to them or that are more topical, such as how to stay safe online and how to support their mental health and wellbeing. The school ensures that pupils are taught about life beyond their local area so they are aware of the diverse society they live in nationally and internationally. Pupils learn about different cultures and religions and the value of democracy, for example. They are starting to show an age-appropriate understanding of this. However, some pupils need more support to secure and deepen their understanding of the content that they are taught.

Leaders give thought to wider opportunities and experiences and ensure all pupils can access these, especially pupils who are disadvantaged. Leaders have enhanced playtimes by setting up specific activities that give all pupils the chance to problem-solve, collaborate and manage risk. Pupils know and follow the school values of 'be kind, work hard and aim high'. They take an active part in community life and fundraising, so learn to be considerate community citizens.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils here benefit from a personalised approach to help them succeed, no matter their starting point or circumstance. From the outset, staff ensure they quickly get to know pupils' strengths, interests and needs. No stone is left unturned in how to help pupils belong and feel welcome. This includes pupils having bespoke equipment, resources or learning adaptations so that they can access their learning successfully. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure at school and can be themselves. They want to be at school and attend well. With their barriers to learning overcome, pupils typically achieve well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or pupils who are disadvantaged. While the proportion of pupils with significant barriers to learning is low, they are very well catered for.

Pupils value being part of this family-focused school and community. They enjoy sharing learning in school with their families, such as reading sessions and family orienteering days. Pupils gain unique experiences, such as playing in a steel band or going to the seaside. Pupils make friends easily as they are kind and respectful to each other. On rare instances when this is not the case, leaders take swift and effective action. Pupils are not worried about bullying, but they know what to do if they are. They learn in calm and orderly classrooms and rise to the high expectations of the 'Iceni Way'.

Children in Reception quickly settle into routines, take turns and enjoy their creative play. Pupils enjoy the structured play activities at lunchtimes. They enjoy school trips, fundraising and receiving rewards in assembly for their effort and conduct. Pupils relish leadership roles, such as the Academy Council and library monitors. They leave Year 6 well prepared for secondary school.

Next steps

- The school should ensure that teaching gives pupils more opportunities to apply and extend their knowledge so that they make the progress of which they are capable.
 - The school should use its checks on learning more precisely to ensure that pupils develop a detailed knowledge and understanding of what they are taught in the wider curriculum.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Academy Transformation Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mark McCourt, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Patricia Beanland.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty’s Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the principal, assistant principal, senior staff, teachers, support staff and pupils during the inspection. They also spoke to representatives from the trust leadership, including the CEO. The lead inspector spoke to the chair of the trustees and the vice-chair of the local governing board. Inspectors engaged with pupils throughout. They also spoke to some parents.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use any alternative provision.

This is the first inspection since the school became a primary academy in September 2024. Its predecessor school was an all-through school within the same trust. The principal was the head of the primary school at the predecessor school.

Principal: Emma Owner

Lead inspector:

Sara Boyce, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Jonny Wallace, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 11 November 2025

School and pupil context

Total pupils

105

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

105

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

10.48%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

0.95%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) support

16.19%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and maths measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		61%	
2024/25	80%	62%	Above
2023/24		61%	

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23		60%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		74%	
2024/25	90%	75%	Above
2023/24		74%	
2022/23		73%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		72%	
2024/25	80%	72%	Above
2023/24		72%	
2022/23		71%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in maths

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in maths.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		73%	
2024/25	90%	74%	Above
2023/24		73%	
2022/23		73%	

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (1 term)	4.0%	5.1%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (1 term)	9.6%	14.3%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standards expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standards set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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