Inspection of Laycock Primary School

Laycock Street, Upper Street, London N1 1SW

Inspection dates:	26 and 27 June 2024

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	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is ambitious for the significant number of pupils attending who have an education, health and care plan. Many of these pupils attend the school's specially resourced provision for deaf pupils (specially resourced provision). The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) so that they can fully participate in school life. Staff encourage pupils to be aspirational. They help pupils to successfully take their next steps when leaving school.

The school has undergone significant changes in the last two years. Leaders ensure that the quality of education that pupils receive is strong and carefully thought out. The school provides many opportunities to nurture pupils' talents and interests. For example, pupils take part in visits to theatres and a university. Pupils participate in a number of sporting competitions.

Leaders have significantly improved behaviour around the school by introducing new systems. Pupils behave well, both in lessons and around the school. They are motivated and show respect and kindness towards adults and each other. At breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils play well together. Pupils enjoy school and they feel safe. There are positive working relationships between staff and pupils.

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

The school's leadership has improved the school's curricular thinking significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils receive a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum which identifies precisely what pupils should learn and when. Subject content is sequenced progressively from Reception to Year 6. The environment in the early years is welcoming and well resourced. Staff make sure that children are well cared for.

The interim executive board (IEB) uses its skills and experience to provide effective challenge and support. Members are strategic and ambitious about improving the school further. The school has been through many changes, including of leadership, and this has had an impact on staff morale. However, leaders are firmly focused on the school's ongoing improvement and have improved the school substantially over the current year.

Leaders provide staff with regular professional development opportunities which improves their subject knowledge. This helps pupils to deepen their knowledge and skills. For instance, in mathematics, pupils develop strong arithmetic skills. They write fluently and produce work of a high standard. In science, pupils increasingly use subject-specific vocabulary accurately. However, these changes have not had sufficient time to impact the outcomes of previous cohorts, hence historic published outcomes do not reflect how well prepared pupils are becoming for public examinations.

The school ensures that subject leadership supports teachers to deliver the curriculum successfully. This helps staff teach effectively and adapt their teaching successfully to meet the needs of pupils, including for pupils with SEND. Typically, staff check and address any misconceptions in pupils' knowledge and skills. In early years, staff do not address gaps in children's knowledge and skills precisely. This means some pupils are not fully ready for Year 1. In most subjects, pupils develop their understanding of complex ideas well, such as 'conquer' in history. Deaf pupils benefit from bespoke musical teaching. In some subjects, the school's work to improve the curriculum is recent and not fully embedded. This means that pupils' subject-specific knowledge and understanding in these subjects is not fully secure.

The school places a high priority on reading. Children in the early years follow an effective phonics programme. All staff, including those in the specially resourced provision, receive targeted training and have access to ongoing support. This helps them teach phonics consistently well. Pupils practise their reading regularly with books that are well matched to their reading ability. Those who fall behind are identified quickly and receive a range of support. Over time, some pupils in key stage one read below the expected standard for their age. The school provides these pupils with bespoke support, so they read with increasing confidence and fluency.

The school supports pupils with SEND by identifying and meeting their needs well. There is expertise in the specially resourced provision that ensures that the deaf pupils access the curriculum successfully. Staff provide personalised and expert support for pupils with complex needs. They work closely with a range of external agencies effectively.

Typically, pupils behave well in lessons. Leaders have introduced strong routines and have focused on developing pupils' emotional literacy. When some pupils struggle to regulate their own behaviour, staff help them with additional support and time in the 'reset' room. This means that the school is calm and orderly with suspensions used rarely.

The school has introduced robust systems and procedures for ensuring that pupils attend school regularly. They have raised the expectations for pupils to attend school, and they intervene quickly when attendance drops. As a result, pupils' rates of attendance have significantly improved.

The school is a diverse community which fully includes everyone in all activities. Pupils show respect for others and have a secure understanding of different faiths and cultures. The school offers several extra-curricular activities, including multi-sports, cricket and arts and crafts.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the school's curricular thinking is new and not fully embedded. This means that pupils do not develop their subject-specific knowledge and understanding in these subjects deeply. The school should make sure that curricular changes are fully embedded so that pupils can achieve consistently well across all subjects.
- In the early years, sometimes staff do not plan activities that precisely address gaps in children's knowledge and skills. As a result, some children are not well prepared for Year 1. The school needs to make sure that staff expertise to identify and check children's understanding supports children effectively to learn consistently well across all areas of learning.

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	100411
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	10323238
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	272
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Prue Barnes-Kemp
Headteacher	Jenny Lewis (Interim Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.laycock.islington.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 February and 1 March 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school has a Nursery class.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for up to 65 deaf pupils.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The interim executive headteacher was formally appointed by the school in April 2024.
- An IEB was put in place to oversee governance by the local authority in November 2023.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and

have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the lead teacher for the specially resourced provision and a range of staff. They held meetings with senior staff, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, staff and those responsible for governance. The lead inspector spoke with representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the view 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View online survey. They also spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors considered the responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.

Inspection team

Sam Johnson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Karen Kent	His Majesty's Inspector
Sophie Powell	Ofsted Inspector
Lisa Strong	His Majesty's Inspector

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