

Self-Evaluation Report September 2023

Conisbrough Ivanhoe Primary Academy (137765)

Conisbrough Ivanhoe Primary Academy is continuing to thrive despite the issues of the past few years that all schools have faced. In terms of pupil numbers, we are continuing to grow, with pupils on waiting lists for admission as well as other parents using the appeals process to find a place at this school. This is because we are a very popular and successful school – one that puts children first and puts excellent communications with parents at the heart of our mission. In early 2023, we were asked to host an SEMH hub at school in order to help children across the LA to integrate into mainstream school. We were asked because we are recognised as being exceptionally committed to inclusivity, and as having an exceptional relationship with our community. Theoretically, the hub should be up and running in January 2024 and it will serve children from within the school as well as the wider locality.

The school is (still) subject to a Ntl due to two late financial reports during 2020 when we changed School Business Managers unexpectedly. The Ntl also highlighted shortcomings in some processes when we hadn't kept up with all the changes in governance in the ten years since we became an academy. Governors have ensured that we have met all the targets of the Ntl in good time, but the process of the ESFA lifting it has been very slow due to the lack of communication from them. The last piece of the jigsaw seems to have been our need to employ our own CFO and we are doing this from October. The DfE/ESFA have continuously pushed an agenda of joining a MAT, without being able to furnish any educational benefits of doing so. We are not entirely against joining a MAT, but entirely against being pushed into doing something for reasons of dogma. We still have a close relationship with Venn MAT – indeed, we offered them support last academic year in terms of teaching personnel when they required some assistance. We have made use of their CFO, but this was on a time limited arrangement.

Conisbrough Ivanhoe Primary Academy is a stand-alone academy and has been since January 2012. We were one of the first primary academies in Doncaster. Since 2006, we have more than doubled in size from 168 pupils (F2-Y6) to 349 pupils. In 2006, Ivanhoe was the smallest school in Conisbrough and now it is comfortably the largest (except for the secondary school.) We had a double classroom built in 2020 to accommodate F2 in order to free up space in the main body of the school - such is the demand for places.

In externally-marked tests, Ivanhoe out-performs all the other local schools academically. In 2017 and 2018, we were the best performing school in Doncaster and in the top 100 nationally in 2018.

In 2023, the school's results were as follows: (Our results in black, **National results in red.**)

EYFSP - GLD: 48% (67%) all ELGs: 48% (64%)

Phonics - Year 1: 71% (80%) Y2: (re-sit) 31% (62%) By the end of Y2 81% (89%)

Key Stage 1

Reading: EXS+ 60% (66%) GDS 9% (17%)

Writing: EXS+ 44% (59%) GDS 0% (8%)

Maths: 63% (71%) GDS 14% (16%)

Key Stage 2 – Reading, writing TA and mathematics – attainment

Reading: EXS+ 73% (69%) GDS 24% (22%)

Writing: EXS 76% (68%) GDS 7% (10%)

Maths 85% (71%) GDS 20% (19%)

RW&M EXS+ 61% (54%) GDS 5% (5%)

It is interesting to note that in tests that are externally marked, we exceed national averages.

In terms of deprivation, Ivanhoe has fewer children in the bottom 10% in Indices of Multiple Deprivation than locally or nationally, but many more in the bottom 40% than locally or nationally. Indeed, 95% of Ivanhoe children are in the bottom 40%. There is exactly the same pattern in IDACI. A major difference lies in Education and Skills where 47% of Ivanhoe children are in the bottom 10% which is much higher than local or national figures. This mismatch is Ivanhoe's battleground in that Ivanhoe is a community where financial deprivation is less of an issue than educational deprivation, which means that our task is always to promote the value of education above financial security... so, for example, our community can afford to take nice holidays and they like to do so in term time as that makes them more reasonably priced, whereas we have to continuously press the argument that a child's education has more value than a foreign holiday. We always pursue parents who take their children out of school for holidays in term time – but we also work with our parents to avoid this – thus we have moved holidays around to create an extra week of school holiday in June where holidays are cheaper, so that parents can take advantage of the opportunity if they wish to have a cheaper time away.

The school has a good reputation for working closely with parents: every week, the homework front page acts as a newsletter and we also use Class Dojo to communicate with parents on a day-to-day basis. The Headteacher meets and greets every morning from the junior yard, as does the Parent-Liaison Officer – this allows us to deal with issues before they become issues. Parents know that they can speak to members of staff or to the HT without an appointment – indeed, through Class Dojo, parents know they have access to the HT at any time (any day of the week and any day of the year) which often provides advice and reassurance that parents find very valuable. Most educators do not see the value of this sort of level of communication - they suggest it is intrusive - but the end result is excellent communication between school and home, and this is the lubricant that makes the

whole engine purr. This relationship with parents is a great boost to the school (the good reputation of the school spread by parents is one of the reasons we have so many people applying to join the school at all key stages – we hardly have a catchment at all!). During Lockdown, our parents were overwhelmingly supportive of the school - and the school, in return, had the highest % of attenders in Doncaster. Our attendance has always been above the local and national average and a lot of this is down to the excellent relationship with have with parents and the school community: 2022/23 was problematic for the school in this respect, but we have turned to attendance as one of our School Improvement Priorities for 2023/24 and got off to a flying start.

Conisbrough is an extremely troubled town in many ways: alcohol misuse, drug misuse, domestic violence and criminal gang membership are all issues that we have to deal with regularly - and of course, children are the collateral damage in these cases. At the same time, aspirational parents send their children to this school, so there are often such huge differences within a class that we all have to be aware of. As part of our response to this, we have a full-time Parent-Liaison Officer who has responsibility for Safeguarding (as well as a second DSL.) We also buy in Speech and Language services, Specialist Inclusion Team and extra Ed Psych services so that we have a team whose focus is the most-vulnerable children in the school (as well as two SENCOs). Our response to meeting the needs of all children shows our commitment to all - a philosophy which runs through the whole school - other local schools tend to permanently exclude pupils, two of whom (both Y6) have then been 'allocated' to Ivanhoe where we have worked with them to give them the best opportunities to succeed and transition to secondary school: this is part of the reason that we are confident (and the LA shares our confidence) that we can make a success of the hub. At the same time as recognising that there are children here with quite profound issues (physical, SEN as well as behavioural/emotional) I must stress that there is a wonderful atmosphere in this school where children are polite, hard-working, fun to be around, kind to each other, sensible and caring: that atmosphere is palpable and something that is always remarked upon by visitors to this school. We had a wonderful response from the parent of a child who had moved to Conisbrough from the Ukraine recently, before moving to a different part of Doncaster – she thanked us for the ‘warm acceptance and friendly welcoming’ and reported that her son had said, ‘Ivanhoe was the best school ever! Let all schools be like this.’ This is not unusual for the many children who join our school from other schools: we truly are a welcoming, friendly school. Because we always try to improve and extend what we do well, 2023/24 is the year when the whole school will be focussing on kindness and what it means in a society that seems to have become less kind in recent years – another of our SIP priorities – we need children to **own** such an important concept.

At Ivanhoe, there is a strong sense of teamwork; staff are motivated by love of the school and their profession. The majority of teachers completed their ITT at this school which helps to inculcate the sense of passion for the school and for the community. Our team of support staff is very committed and very skilled. Ofsted reported in 2016 that: "the support that pupils receive from teaching assistants is exceptional" which sums up our own view - they are a key ingredient in an extremely strong staff. There is a sense in this school that every

member of staff has a voice that is heard and considered, it is as much a top-down as a bottom-up school, where we all have responsibility for what happens and we are all accountable.

We are a very successful school - and a major factor in that success is that we constantly question ourselves and push the boundaries of what we can offer, always looking for ways that change can lead to improvement: a good example of that is that currently, we are experimenting with the concept of 'classrooms without desks' having worked with an Outstanding Sheffield school on it. The purpose of the change is to encourage independence and choice – we also believe that it makes the classroom more spacious and more pleasant for children. We are at the early stages with this, but we believe that they are already a success and a further roll-out will likely follow.

We markedly changed our curriculum in response to Ofsted changes in 2019, completely rewriting it in 2018/19. We changed our day around to reflect the importance of the wider curriculum so that maths and English did not take priority in the school day. We introduced the concept of having 21 trips set in stone so that every child who has been through the school will have had 21 'essential' school trips (the list being developed by staff, students and parents) and we changed the school week around so that not only did children have slightly more school-based learning, but by going home early on a Wednesday, all staff could have PPA time together and uninterrupted. In 2020 we revisited the curriculum to prepare for a post-Covid world: we focussed even more on health and well-being, on inculcating a sense of responsibility to the world and for the world, and a determination to encourage awe and wonder in all aspects of the curriculum. To ensure that our bespoke curriculum guarantees challenging, relevant and exciting learning opportunities, all aspects are under constant review. Most recently (September 2023), on the back of teacher discussion and pupil voice, our curriculum delivery shifted towards a more cross-curricular approach, which allows the content which is taught to be of higher quality, and permits regular opportunities to revisit skills and knowledge, thus enabling children to embed learning to long-term memory. Subject leaders of Art & Design, History, Geography and Design Technology have mapped and contextualised their curriculums into topics; this allows ample time for other foundation subjects to be taught at a higher quality, ensuring that all children thrive from receiving a broad and balanced curriculum. Embedded in the topics, are opportunities to develop cultural capital through 'engage' and 'express' days, which include practical learning, educational visits, links with our community and children-and-parent workshops – creating long-lasting memories. We continue to maintain a 'health and well-being' focus, which is essential to our curriculum so that our pupils develop a healthy approach towards their physical and mental development.

That focus on health and wellbeing is reflected in the fact that the SIP has two of its four priorities as kindness and attendance...

We also offer wraparound care from 7.30 - 5.30 every day for those parents who need it.

This is a school that is seen as very successful, but it is one where there are many varied demands on us all - we work very hard indeed, but we do so out of love for the place and the profession, and of course, the children. We aim to make it a fun, happy, safe school where children get a great education.

Quality of Education

The introduction to the school on our website includes this: 'We have always been a school where behaviour is excellent and where children flourish both socially and academically, but the experience of Covid-19 has helped us to focus even more on the responsibility we have to bring joy into the lives of our children and to help them to understand how to take their place in the world, fully and actively enjoying and contributing to the best of their ability.' This is how we introduce our curriculum on the website:

At Ivanhoe, we recognise that children deserve a curriculum that has breadth, depth and balance and that is an exciting curriculum, personalised for our children; so that when children leave our school they will have had a great start, with opportunities and experiences that will be embedded for life.

Since Coronavirus came into our lives in 2020, we have had a radical rethink about our 'offer' and have agreed that we need to put a new focus on mental and physical health and well-being as well as a more profound understanding of our place in the world and the need to actively love what we do: our curriculum is not just about the quality of education, but the quality of life.

Ask any teacher at school, from the oldest to the youngest, and they can describe vividly their memories from their own primary school days. The primary school influences a child for life and our ambition is that Ivanhoe offers an experience that will do this by setting them on the right path from the minute they enter our doors. We want our children to be shaped by their primary school experience so that it is still with them into adulthood - still helping them engage with the world and still guiding them; the experiences still alive in them.

We are not afraid to say that our ambition is for children to love what they are learning - we want to inspire children and for them to see beauty all around them; thus they will value the world around them and engage richly and meaningfully in all they do.

In Conisbrough, we have a rich heritage that we use to support our curriculum. Our History teaching is blessed by the fact that we have the oldest church in South Yorkshire (St Peter's) and the wonderful Conisbrough Castle that inspired Sir Walter Scott to write 'Ivanhoe'; we focus on these by visits and using other visits to contrast our castle with another castle, and our church with a Cathedral, thus we can personalise using our locality, but also expand by taking the children further afield to contrast their experiences.

We have tried to approach our whole curriculum in the same manner, for example, by seeing how we can apply 'next steps' to what we teach - using local pathways in our music teaching so that those who enjoy our brass music lessons can access the brass opportunities in the wider community, and those who wish to do so in sport can access the pathways to local sports beyond the school - and this is an area rich in brass music tradition as well as sport. Obviously, we have been constrained by Coronavirus, but these are certainly our intentions, all other things being equal.

Our focus on cultural capital marries with our desire to give our children experience of the best that has been thought and said. With that in mind, our children will read classic English texts which otherwise they would probably not access - and they will see that you can enjoy Robert Louis Stevenson as much as you can David Walliams.

At Ivanhoe, we understand that our children will have far better life chances if they are highly literate and numerate, but we are determined not to pursue those aims if it leads to a curriculum that is narrowed and starved of opportunities to develop the whole child. By understanding our children, and by recognising how we can help them to be fully rounded citizens we can redress any social disadvantage that may have chained our community in the past. Our children are the future, and our curriculum will give them the very best chances in life and the very best chances to appreciate and enjoy their lives and the opportunities that come their way.

This is how we introduce the notion of cultural capital:

***"Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all you know on earth, and all you need to know."
(Keats)***

This school is committed to ensuring that children are given every opportunity to taste the best cultural experiences that we can offer in the hope that by gaining access to the best, children will understand that the most beautiful experiences are accessible and that they are their birth right. We see this as just as important as their understanding of British Values.

We were constrained by distance from school and to some extent by expense, but we believe we have a very good selection.

Reception, Y1 and Y2.

A stately home, the Railway Museum, Conisbrough Castle and one other castle, a zoo, a theatre (for a play, music or dance) Eureka Museum, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, The Deep (and the Humber Bridge) and a windmill and wind turbine.

Y3, Y4, Y5 and Y6.

Children will have opportunities to attend residential in each year from Y3-Y6. In addition, they will visit the National Space Centre, a coal pit, the Peak District (Iron Age forts) a

lighthouse and Flamborough Head, a cathedral, Castle Museum (York), Whitby, Beamish, the Derbyshire Caves, the theatre to see a Shakespeare play, and an art museum.

We take very seriously our task of providing an exceptional education - it is what we are here for! As a staff, we spent 2018/19 rewriting our curriculum to meet the stated aims of the New Ofsted Framework and were delighted to do that as it gave voice to what has always underlain our philosophy. In 2020 we tried to refashion it to respond to what we saw as a greater need for health and well-being, citizenship and awe and wonder in a post-Covid world. Our mission statement of some years, which is proudly expressed through large pieces of signage to welcome visitors to the school is stated this:

We will make our school a place where children are happy and where they have fun. Ivanhoe will be a safe, secure school where great teaching inspires children to reach their potential and achieve their ambitions. In this place, imagination will be as important as knowledge; children will enjoy a creative, enriching curriculum with school trips they will never forget. No child can learn and attain academic excellence unless they love their school; we will do all that is possible to help each of our children to believe, to achieve and to succeed.

So this is a school that is delighted to see that Ofsted has caught up with what we have been aiming towards for years. Our intent is clear and absolutely matches what Ofsted considers best practice as can be seen from reading the curriculum area on the website. Each Subject Leader has taken responsibility for redesigning their curriculum and writing a statement of intent they have taken on board the need to personalise it for this school and to emphasise both the inward and outward intent inward to the child, outward to how the child can use the curriculum to engage with the world (not just theoretically, but emphasising next steps, taking advantage of local offers.) As a staff, we have spent a considerable amount of time ensuring that we are all fully engaged in that process - and by the nature of this staff, that means that we are all on board: subject leaders speak with a powerful voice in this school and we share responsibility for all outcomes. Because of this, we are secure in the knowledge that neither SEND nor disadvantage prevents our children from excellent outcomes.

At Ivanhoe, we try to make reading come alive. In 2022/23, every year group in school had live meetings with published authors to help to engage children in our special year of reading. This shows our commitment to the pleasure principle as well as to our desire to introduce children to the best quality writing in the English language. Referring back to the Education and Skills deprivation element of our deprivation report, about 48% of our children come from families in the bottom 10% in terms of educational background so we understand the battle to allow our children their entitlement in terms of reading and writing (and speaking and listening.) We work extremely hard on phonics - which is a whole school effort - and we complement that with high quality reading texts and with a focus on the enjoyment of reading...and of course, we reward children for their reading at home so that those who show themselves to be keen readers are rewarded with a free sweatshirt for

their efforts. In 2022, we purchased a book-vending machine that can be used by children who have read five times or more in a week (each child who does that is put into a weekly class draw) this has proved a very popular reward for those children who read more frequently.

The impact of our curriculum is clear - our children achieve highly: "Pupils leave the school attaining standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are consistently above that expected for their age and above other pupils of the same age nationally." (Ofsted 2016) in 2019, Ofsted wrote, "leaders and governors have **improved** the quality of education since the previous inspection. Pupils do very well in the national assessments..." We believe that we send our children to secondary school completely prepared for the next stage of their education and as lifelong learners: our children will leave us knowing how to play a musical instrument and having seen Shakespeare on stage, which is something they are very unlikely to do at secondary school. We know that many of our children do very well at secondary school, accessing university education at the end of Y13 and we like to think that we helped them on their way by providing a great first step. In 2022, we heard that one of our ex-Y6 pupils had been given a place at Cambridge to study Law, and we know that many others have also accessed some of the best universities in the country.

Behaviour and Attitudes:

Ofsted has always found the behaviour of children at this school to be outstanding - and visitors to the school are always impressed by what they see, and this includes the many parents who look around the school seeking to have their children admitted into the various year groups. Children are sunny, happy, polite and friendly and also respectful - this is what is taken as the norm at Ivanhoe. This is something that we work hard at, but it is also part of the school tradition - so it isn't a particular task to instil: all adults are treated with equal respect and children are respectful of each other.

This does not mean to say that there are not children with great difficulties at this school. In Y1 we have a particular cluster of children who we believe have suffered greatly due to the effects of Covid in isolating children from school and from other children in their formative years. We are trying, and using a huge amount of our resources (without being funded by any SEN streams at the LA) to help those children to feel settled in school. There are other children at Ivanhoe who come from very troubled backgrounds (violence, alcohol, drug-use and poverty affecting their life-chances) and those children may struggle to demonstrate appropriate learning behaviour in class - but on a weekly basis, we celebrate learning behaviours with parents through Learner of the Week (Respect, Resilience, Independence, Pride, Curiosity and Determination) as well as daily Learner of the Day postcards, so there is a great deal of focus on behaviour(s). At the same time, we have a whole-school graduated behaviour system as well as graduated responses to poor behaviour. We have staff who are able to work with children to prevent poor behaviours by anticipating them – and responding. In 2023/24 we are prioritising the concept of 'Kindness' throughout the school

in order to put an absolute focus on consideration of others at all times. Conisbrough is a violent village, full of anti-social behaviour and we need to be doubly proactive in emphasising kindness and consideration. Children will be rewarded with badges, with invitations to the top table and with a variety of other rewards if they act as role-models in this way.

Our overarching SEN approach is to put a large amount of resources into meeting the needs of children as early as possible - thus making learning easier and more fulfilling, which reduces the number of behavioural issues that arise in class. Behaviour in school is also helped by our excellent relationships with parents: we are very much supported by parents, some of whom clearly struggle with their own children - but we rarely get into dispute with parents and so children understand that school and home work closely together.

We have a zero tolerance towards aggression, discrimination and bullying. We deal with children who struggle with social skills through use of nurture groups and/or supervised play as well as the therapies that we run in school. In November 2023, the whole school staff should be receiving 'Thrive' training in an effort to have a completely unified approach as well as to prepare us for the opening of the SEMH hub in the New Year.

Children know that if there are issues on the playground, they will be dealt with appropriately. The more difficult issues around aggression, discrimination and bullying are most likely to occur outside school and through social media. We spend a lot of time offering advice to parents and children about the ill-effects of social media, but undoubtedly, social media is a cause for conflict amongst children and grown-ups in Conisbrough - we do spend a considerable amount of time in school trying to unpick issues that have occurred on social media. Safeguarding was a priority area in our SIP in 2022/23, not because of concerns about safeguarding, but in order to attempt to make something that is very good, even better

We work very hard to meet the needs of children - we recognise that in society there are increasing numbers of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties that need addressing. Our response to this has been the increase in spending on Ed Psych services and Learning Support Services as well as employing dedicated staff who work with children whom we recognise as vulnerable: this is an ambition to **meet** the needs of children rather than **managing** the behaviours that result from their needs. We are convinced that this is the right approach. Ivanhoe staff want to help children - which can be exemplified in the way in which we catered for the two permanently excluded children whom the LA shifted onto us in the past few years: we took their education seriously even if their previous schools hadn't. We do temporarily exclude children when lines are crossed, but our aim is always to help children to help themselves and thus manage at school and we haven't ever permanently excluded anyone.

One of the visible ways in which children are motivated towards having a positive attitude is the school's use of coloured sweatshirts. If you are a 99%+ attender, you get a red sweatshirt from the school with '100% attendance' embroidered upon it. If you are a

Reading Champion you get a purple sweatshirt, and the Y6 choose their own colour each year (each year, a different colour.) Children wear their achievements with pride, which helps with that sense of community. We have a community of children who love school and who do their utmost to contribute fully to the life of the school - taking on extra work and being proud of their achievements.

In terms of attendance, we better the local and national average in both overall attendance and in persistent absence. We have many ways of motivating children to be in school. Good attendance is a constant message in our newsletters (homework front page) to parents. We have manipulated the school year to create a two-week summer half term holiday in order to give parents the opportunity to have cheaper holiday choices (the difference between the first and second week in terms of holiday prices is enormous.) We certificate children for attendance of 99%+ on a termly basis and we have the sweatshirts awarded for a full year of excellent attendance. We monitor attendance very closely and set up meetings with parents whose children fall behind. In addition, we are always prepared to pick up children when parents are struggling to get them in. Every member of the school community understands our view on attendance. Unfortunately, as I explained in the 'school context', this is a community whose wealth is more obviously expressed in terms of finance rather than in education and it is a constant battle to persuade parents that a holiday is less valuable to their children than time in school. We always pursue parents who have taken holidays in term time as well as those parents who try to trick the system by claiming that their children are poorly (when they are on holiday.)

Staff and students have a very positive relationship: staff love to work at this school, and their love for the task and their pride in their work, and their joy in the children are all obvious - especially to the children.

Personal Development:

At Ivanhoe, we recognise that pupils' broader development is essential if we are to produce citizens of the 21st Century who can go forward confidently and take the world in their stride. This is a deprived community, but the deprivation is greater in educational terms than it is in cash terms (see school's context). In general, it is the range of experiences that our children have in their home environment that we have to develop in the school environment if we are to succeed in our desire to see them well-rounded. As a school (pre-Covid) we created a list of 21 'essential' trips that every child would experience from Reception to Y6 (in addition to class trips that might also be organised) so that every child will have seen the best of human endeavour whether it's a castle, a lighthouse, Shakespeare at the theatre, a cathedral, a country house and so on: we want them to know what the world has to offer. From 2022/23, we have also decided to take each year group from Y3-Y6 on residential – from a local activity centre, to the coast, to a distant activity centre and to London. At the same time, in 2022/23, every child at the school had a live experience with a published author in this academic year in order to stimulate writing and reading, but also to

understand that writers are also people (and were children once!) and that writing is a profession that all our children can aspire to. Each year group engaged with a different author, which was quite an achievement.

Our curriculum is designed to help children to be literate and numerate whilst at the same time exposing them to a broad curriculum that shows them the world and allows them to take steps to take part beyond school in valuable activities locally. We have put a further emphasis on health and well-being post-Covid as well as helping our children to be responsible members of the world and people who see awe and wonder in everything. At the same time - we want to give them the very best, which is why all children have the opportunity in Year 4 to play a musical instrument, and those who want to continue this beyond year 4 have that that facilitated by the school. Not only do we put on ambitious plays/musicals, but we have taken it a step further by partnering with Doncaster's Cast Theatre to include one performance at a theatre to make the experience more valuable and more complete. This school promotes learning behaviours as we believe that if we can help to inculcate an appreciation of the best approach to learning, we will have developed a skill for life that can be utilised for whatever new academic experiences our pupils face. We make pupils proud of their great learning attributes in the hope that those attributes will always be part of their make-up. Obviously, some of this has taken a knock in the past few years, but we will adhere to the principles going forward.

The school puts considerable extra resources into pastoral support. We understand that it is parents as well as children who require support and our approach is thus about teamwork with the family. Increasingly, we are moving towards meeting needs as early as possible utilising the extra SIT, SALT and Ed Psych support we buy in, as well as having members of staff working exclusively with those particular children identified as vulnerable for one reason or another. We understand that we are vital in promoting healthy lifestyles as well as healthy attitudes and that is our work on a daily basis across the curriculum as well as through PHSE, PE etc.

We work tirelessly to ensure that our children can take a full part in the society in which they live - our aim is to equip our children to go into the world so that they have choices about their lifestyles and the way in which they live: they can only do this if they understand the world and how to take a part in the world. An important part of moving freely in the world is having a real sense of the values of society - and so British Values (in the widest sense) is a thread that is woven into the whole fabric of the education we offer. Our website is clear about our aims. In 2022, part of the Y6 invited the Shadow Secretary of State for Education to come to the school to meet with them – she couldn't come in 2022 but managed to come in 2023 to see the ex-Y6 (released by their secondary schools for the day) as well as the then current Y6: it was a fascinating meeting with someone who had had a very similar background to our children and who had become a very successful and respected politician.

Conisbrough society is recognised by staff here as quite closed and inward looking in many respects. Many parents and grandparents of our children have been fastened to this area - often for economic reasons, but also being tied to tradition. We want our children to have a university education and to have the freedom to take their place in the world - this begins with education, but we also understand that we need to make the world accessible, with all its amazing difference and thus we need to teach children to acclimatise themselves to difference and accommodate all that is beyond what they have considered 'usual'. Our children are by nature accepting of others - we have a great many children who join mid-year and no problems with integration, and our children are accepting of children who attend school with any special needs and of any ethnicity; however, this is an inward-looking part of the world and we have to develop children's understanding of diversity so that it is well-established by the time they leave us: this is what we do across our curriculum as well as through PHSE and other opportunities.

Our children are encouraged to think about their positive role in society. Ours is a very caring school where the many charities we support are well-funded by the incredible generosity of children and parents.

Leadership and Management:

In many senses, this is a school where we are all 'leaders'. As in all schools, there is a hierarchy of leadership, but we are as much a bottom-up as a top-down institution - we listen to each other and share ideas and we judge decisions in a collegiate fashion and on their merit. Obviously, those in senior leadership positions shape the direction of the school, but we are all leaders in that everything is shared and fashioned as a staff team. We all have strong, shared values - and a good example of this is the fact that all the curriculum policies are written by curriculum leaders who have responsibility for ensuring that staff understand and follow policy; this means that we are able to deliver an excellent education.

Teachers are encouraged to develop their understanding at all times, expanding their knowledge and working towards future ambitions. The school embraces a 'grow your own' culture, so most teachers on the staff were trained here, which maintains a committed and valued staff cohort. The NQTs in the school each have a mentor and share weekly meetings and observations in order to fast-track development. All teachers have planning time together which means that communication and the sharing of best-practice is facilitated to the highest extent.

We all aim to help children complete their programmes of study. As a school, we have devoted considerable additional resources to help those children most vulnerable in terms of falling behind. Our SENCOs work assiduously to meet the needs of pupils with SEND - harnessing additional speech and language therapy, learning support services and educational psychology services. In addition, we have employed a member of staff to be designated additional support (not classroom based) so that we can meet the needs of all.

We work extremely effectively with our school community. Parents and carers know that they have access to the HT, the PLO (Parent Liaison Officer) and the SENCOs at all times (parents and teachers also have excellent working relationships.) There is a newsletter every week (the homework front page) and dojos pretty much every day. We hold parent consultation meetings during the day and the evening.

This school is run with the view that staff work best when they feel valued. We keep administrative tasks to the minimum and seek to work efficiently at all times. Every member of staff knows that every voice is heard. We particularly value family commitments, and staff know that we support them to attend family celebrations as well as family crises - we all support each other in this - which makes for a very strong and loyal team. Staff do work very hard at this school - but this is out of mutual respect for other staff and love of what we do; but no one feels that they are pressured to do so.

There is no harassment or bullying at this school - probably due to what is written in the paragraphs above: we take shared responsibility for decisions, we look after each other in times of celebration or crisis and we like each other very much - and we love the school and our school community. The only people who have chosen to leave this school within the past years are those who have been promoted to other establishments.

Governance at Conisbrough Ivanhoe Primary Academy has undergone improvements and changes since the pandemic and issuance of the Ntl. The board has grown and attracted parent governors and independent governors with strong skillsets. The board has adopted hybrid working to make meetings easier and the chair of governors and head keep in regular contact. Our finance link governor has been heavily involved in the Ntl process, working closely with the school business manager on finance related items.

The school has a very strong culture of Safeguarding, with a full time, dedicated Safeguarding Officer: we all use CPOMS which is the best way of keeping a record and sharing information. Our safeguarding training is up to date.

Overall Judgement:

All areas are outstanding .

Safeguarding is effective.

Early Years:

Intent

At Ivanhoe, FS leaders construct an ambitious Early Years curriculum which is designed to give all children the knowledge, skills, self-belief and cultural capital they need to succeed. We believe that building upon children's experiences is as important as building upon their knowledge and skills. Therefore, trips, experience days and bringing people into school are woven into the curriculum. For example, a trip to the theatre, the wildlife park and a stately

home enhance the learning experiences of children, as well as African drummers, a space dome and workers from the 'helping' professions coming into school.

The curriculum is reviewed and re-designed each year to reflect the changing needs of its children. Leaders consider carefully the needs of the children in context, and plan and sequence the curriculum to build on what children know and can do, towards the desired knowledge and skills for their future learning. Our ambitions for each and every one of our children are limitless, and so our curriculum provides no limits or barriers to children's achievements, regardless of their backgrounds, circumstances or needs. We ensure that where necessary, the curriculum and its approach to delivery, is personalised to ensure that success is inevitable, not just possible!

A large number of children enter our FS with speech and language skills that are below or well below those typically expected (32% below ARE in Listening, Attention and Understanding at 2022 On Entry baseline screening, reduced to 14% by the end of the year, and 52% below ARE in Speaking at 2023 On Entry baseline, reduced to 25% by the end of the year) and so we have a sharp focus from day 1 on developing children's ability to communicate effectively and in acquiring a rich vocabulary. We invest in private Speech and Language Therapy services to help us successfully assess and build strategies and programmes to realise our aim, which is for EVERY child to leave the FS with the communication and language skills – including a wide vocabulary – necessary to best ensure successful future learning and life skills.

Our phonics teaching begins early in F1, and focuses upon children developing the underpinning skills needed for successful systematic teaching of phonics later on. We use the RWInc programme as the school's approach to teaching early reading and synthetic phonics to ensure all children are able to meet the ELGs in reading and writing, and be ready for Year 1 where they will continue to build on the skills necessary to become capable, confident readers.

Implementation

At Ivanhoe, we plan learning across the curriculum that is meaningful and useful – always asking ourselves 'why' and 'what for?' to ensure that learning meets the needs of our children.

We believe that for children to learn and develop to the best of their ability, they need adults in place who understand best how young children learn and develop, and possess the necessary skills to support them. Staff use their expertise to ensure that the pedagogy throughout the FS matches the needs of pupils, and evolves sensitively as it responds to the changing needs of the children as they progress.

Staff in the FS are skilled and experienced in teaching synthetic phonics through the RWInc programme. The school buys into an annual support package, providing developmental support throughout the year ensuring practice remains highly effective. Whilst we believe in the principles of the RWInc programme, and its impact is evident in our school, staff use

their pedagogical knowledge to adapt the programme and their approach to it, to suit the needs of different children.

From the very first day in F1, children's love for reading is nurtured. Children in F1 are sent home with carefully chosen story books to share with their parents, alongside themed story baskets designed to enliven and enrich the reading experience. We have a reading reward challenge so that children are encouraged and rewarded for reading regularly at home. For F2 children, alongside storybooks to share, phonics reading books are aligned precisely with the RWInc programme, and are chosen for children according to their developing phonic knowledge alongside their reading confidence and ability. We want to develop capable, confident readers, and so we spend a lot of time ensuring that parents understand our aims and how they can help their child by delivering parent workshops. In addition, we invest in providing all children with a set of RWInc sound cards with which to practise at home to support rapid recognition of GPC and early word blending.

Teaching throughout the foundation stage is found by leaders to be highly effective. Staff present information clearly to children in a way that engages them and allows them to be actively involved in learning discussions. Staff use questioning well to clarify and extend children's understanding, addressing any misconceptions before moving on. Staff respond and adapt their teaching where and when necessary to ensure all learning opportunities are maximised.

In the Early Years, we use stories as part of our everyday teaching: to introduce new mathematical concepts, PSHE teaching, supporting topic themes and promoting lines of enquiry. We also have a minimum of 15 minutes dedicated story-time every day. Staff tell stories with enthusiasm and expression, in a way that engages and excites children. In F1 stories are often accompanied by props to aid engagement, a strategy which is reduced as children progress through the foundation stage, to enable children to develop skills in listening to stories without the need for visual stimulation. At Ivanhoe we have a sharp focus on the need to develop children's vocabulary. Stories are one way in which we work upon building vocabulary with our youngest children - that and through the RWInc programme.

Mathematics is taught throughout the Foundation Stage using the White Rose Maths scheme as a starting point. Our maths curriculum is designed to ensure that children spend sufficient time exploring, using, and understanding numbers, so that they have a strong basis for more complex learning later on.

Children are assessed throughout the Foundation Stage using both short incidental and longer planned observations. Longer observations are used to focus on the Characteristics of Effective Learning and help staff develop a clear understanding of how the children in their care learn, and how they can best support them in developing the Characteristics further. We use the knowledge gained through adult-led activities and quality interactions during co-play to deepen our understanding of children's attainment and next steps, and use these to inform future planning. Leaders understand the limitations of assessment and

therefore work to develop systems that avoid unnecessary burdens for staff and children. Staff organise targeted interventions for children who need it in a timely manner, enlisting the support of 'specialists' where necessary. At Ivanhoe we try and involve all stakeholders in children's assessment, and work to engage parents in the process through the sharing of achievements and experiences through Class Dojo portfolios.

Staff in the Foundation Stage work tirelessly to create an environment that supports the school's intent of an ambitious curriculum (that included F1 staff moving seven tons of pebbles to create an interactive area at the bottom of the outdoor area in 2023!) Resources are carefully chosen to promote learning in the prime areas and in developing the Characteristics of Effective Learning. Open ended provision encourages our children to explore, co-operate, think creatively and problem solve.

Behaviour in the Early Years is excellent. Children are supported well to develop high levels of self-control, co-operation and respect for themselves and others. The curriculum is designed to afford children a wide range of experiences that promote understanding of people, families, communities, religions and traditions beyond their own. Through experience days, children learn about religious festivals such as Diwali and Lunar New Year, alongside Easter and Christmas, and are encouraged to explore the similarities and differences between them.

Through PSED teaching and circle time activities, children in the Early Years are tasked to consider the importance of keeping ourselves healthy – physically, emotionally and spiritually. Outdoor equipment – both static and open-ended - has been carefully selected to enable children to develop the necessary skills to create and manage their own risks (within reason) under the supportive and watchful eye (and if necessary, intervention) of an adult. Equipment that also helps develop the vestibular system, supports physical development in both gross and fine motor ways.

Engaging parents in Children's learning and development is something that we are passionate about at Ivanhoe. In the Foundation Stage, we hold parent workshops in both F1 and F2. F1 workshops focus on the importance of play in developing early mathematical and literacy concepts, as well as developing those physical skills needed for successful learning later on. Workshops in F2 focus more carefully on how parents can support children's learning in reading, phonics and maths, including observing teaching sessions, watching video clips of teachers modelling reading with children, and receiving resource packs to take home. Reports are issued to parents three times per year about how well children are progressing, and parents are invited to attend face to face discussions at these times. Parents have online access to children's observation and assessment information and can view this at any time. Homework is sent out in F2 with detailed information about what children have been learning that week and how parents can support this.

Impact

Children make good progress through the foundation stage, considering low starting points on entry to F1 (and F2 for those joining our reception class that did not attend our Nursery).

Attainment on entry is found to be below the level expected in most areas, with attainment in the Prime Areas of Self-regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationship with fewer than 35% of pupils working at the expected level. A significant proportion of children come to us with poor levels of development in Speaking and Understanding (52% and 32%), which impact upon all other areas of development.

A large portion of children enter Ivanhoe with limited experience of the world around them, and with attainment levels below that expected in The Natural World, and People, Cultures and Communities (between 0-9% at the expected level). Through a broad, rich curriculum that opens up opportunities to explore the world around them and learn about different places, people and cultures around the world, children begin to build cultural capital (64% ELG 2023)

By the end of the foundation stage, children have historically attained in line with National expectations at GLD. Since the COVID pandemic struck, we have seen lower profile scores at the end of FS. The negative impact of COVID on young children's communication, language and social skills has been widely documented. 48% of pupils achieved GLD in 2023, and 48% met the ELGs in all Prime Areas. This cohort is particularly challenging, with a number of children having a high level of SEMH need which was extremely disruptive for the whole cohort and impacted negatively upon outcomes across the year group.

As a result of high-quality teaching and experiences, children develop the skills and attitudes needed to begin Year 1, and for those children who did not meet ELGs, Year 1 teachers are well prepared as to how they can best support them to achieve them quickly in the Autumn term.