

Heartsease Primary Academy

Rider Haggard Road, Norwich NR7 9UE

Inspection dates	24–25 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The executive headteacher has provided determined and inspirational leadership.
- The new headteacher, in a short period of time, has gained the respect of the staff, pupils and parents through setting and pursuing high aspirations for all.
- Leaders, including directors and governors of the Heart Academy Trust, have ensured that they constantly provide the bespoke support and challenge required to continually improve the school's work.
- The leadership of teaching is exceptional. Leaders throughout the school ensure that pupils experience first-rate teaching.
- Staff work diligently to meet the needs of pupils in lessons. Consequently, pupils, including the disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs or disability, in all year groups, make good and rapidly accelerating progress.
- The most able pupils are well supported to make substantial progress from their starting points.

- Pupils' writing reflects outstanding achievement. Their work in mathematics and reading is good and rapidly catching up to the same standards.
- Teaching assistants are pivotal to the excellent learning experiences that pupils receive. They liaise with class teachers exceptionally well to ensure that the pupils they work with receive effective support.
- Pupils are motivated, confident and impeccably behaved. They are proud to be pupils at Heartsease and are excellent ambassadors for the school.
- Leaders set no limits to what pupils can achieve. The school's 'challenge' curriculum provides extensive possibilities for pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding across all subjects. The skills that pupils develop as they learn ensure they are very well prepared for their next stage of learning.
- The school's specialised speech and language resource provision is exceptionally effective. Highly individualised support results in pupils making good improvements in their learning and progress.
- Provision in the early years has been developed well. The rapid improvement in children's outcomes in 2015 is set to continue.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that outcomes are outstanding by:
 - improving attainment in mathematics and reading to match that in writing
 - ensure that the improvements in the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the early years continue to increase to be above the national average.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

is outstanding

- The executive headteacher, in both her current role and as the previous headteacher, has led Heartsease to become an excellent school for its pupils. Her insightful, thorough and motivational leadership has set ambitious expectations for staff, pupils and the community. Everyone at every level is involved in making a difference to pupils' achievement and outcomes.
- The local academy board, alongside the executive headteacher, has been fastidious in its recruitment of a high-quality headteacher. The transition to establish the new headteacher has been seamless.
- The Heart Academy Trust has supported Heartsease in its pursuit of excellence. For example, the trust has provided excellent in-house training, coaching and focused individual support to develop leadership skills in staff. As talent has been identified and developed, the leadership team has grown and been strengthened considerably.
- All leaders, the trust and the academy board know the strengths and development priorities of the school intricately, and regularly review its effectiveness to continue to ensure excellence. Development planning is sharply focused, and all staff are aware of the priorities for improvement and address them in their own work.
- The executive headteacher, the trust and other leaders are using their knowledge and understanding of educational excellence to help other schools improve. In recognition of their outstanding work, the school has been made the lead school in the multi-academy trust.
- Senior and middle leaders are central to the school's improvement. They are staunchly committed to raising the achievement and aspirations of the pupils in their care. Leaders, such as those in charge of key stages or subject areas, including English and mathematics, are given clear responsibility and autonomy for making improvements. They are wholly accountable to senior leaders for their work and the impact they have on raising standards. This leads to pupils in every year group making good or better progress that continues to improve rapidly.
- Leaders ensure that pupils consistently receive high-quality teaching. Their monitoring looks at a wide range of information about pupils' learning and progress. This then forms the basis of staff training and support, which is carefully targeted to develop their skills and subject knowledge. Pupil progress data also informs the decisions made about teachers' salary progression.
- Leaders of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability are very well trained and highly effective. The support for pupils who have language and communication needs is outstanding. The school has an excellent reputation for this work with the other local schools. Staff have excellent specialist expertise and use the external advice of a speech and language therapist well. They have high aspirations for pupils' progress even if their starting points are low and their challenges many.
- Leaders have created a curriculum which enables pupils to thrive academically and personally. Leaders are unwavering in their determination to create a curriculum that 'has no ceiling' for pupils' achievements. The curriculum makes sure that pupils develop a real breadth and depth of knowledge, skills and understanding in highly creative and innovative ways. The heavy emphasis on cross-curricular skills means that pupils can use new literacy and numeracy skills proficiently and securely in all of their learning. Additionally, the clubs and trips are numerous and offer something for everyone. Pupils can be 'eco-green warriors', gardeners, artists, dancers and school councillors. They can also opt to represent the school in various community and regional activities, such as the East Norwich Youth Project. This curriculum ensures that pupils are confident, articulate and well prepared to access the next stages of their learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. The curriculum and school environment provide numerous reinforcements of what it is to be a responsible and caring citizen in Britain. Displays, including the 'brilliance boards', celebrate not only pupils' multifarious successes and achievements, but also the rich diversity of the community and the nation. As a result, pupils talk confidently about the importance of treating people with respect, and model this behaviour in their everyday interactions.
- The primary school physical education (PE) and sports funding is used highly effectively. Pupils benefit from specialist PE coaches in lessons and also an increase in the number and variation of additional clubs available. The funding also contributes to improving the way that teachers measure the pupils' progress during PE lessons, for example using tablet computers to enable immediate opportunities to measure and evaluate performance and progress. This leads to pupils making better progress because their starting points are measured accurately.



Additional pupil premium funding for supporting disadvantaged pupils has been used expertly to raise pupils' achievement. The funding has enabled the school to acquire a pastoral support manager and a positive play leader who are having a significant impact on the attendance and achievement of pupils. Moreover, it is funding curriculum enhancement, additional training, family and community days, parent and child community classes and mentoring for pupils. It is also funding high-quality training of leaders. For example, the current leader of this aspect of the school's work was trained by a national lead for pupil premium.

■ The governance of the school

- The local academy board plays a highly effective role in developing the school's excellent provision. Governors have relevant expertise and use this very well in their work. They are tenacious in their challenge to leaders, keeping the achievement of pupils at the core of everything they do.
- Governors have created a governing body structure tailored to the specific needs of the school. They
 know the school 'inside out', including its strengths and areas for improvement. This means that they
 are well informed to challenge the senior team and the trust, when required.
- Governors are insightful in their understanding of their statutory duties and use this to ensure that
 they are undertaking their many roles effectively. Governors, for example, check the salary and pay
 progression of staff, asking astute questions about the rationale behind the executive headteacher's
 decisions and amending decisions if the evidence requires them to.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff are well briefed on current information and policies in order to keep up to date with their responsibilities. Senior leaders and governors ensure that keeping pupils safe and secure is part of the culture of the school. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, through careful planning in the curriculum. They say that they feel safe and are very confident to talk to staff when they have concerns, especially highlighting the pastoral support manager and the positive play leader as key workers in the school for pupils who want to talk about issues affecting them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

is outstanding

- Teachers constantly challenge pupils to be better learners with high aspirations. Pupils respond to this challenge by making the most of their learning time and using every opportunity to improve their work.
- Teachers have established a culture of high achievement in the classroom. At every stage, teachers encourage pupils to make their own choices about their learning, based on an excellent understanding of their individual targets. This high level of involvement contributes to the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and plays an integral part in their rapidly improving progress.
- Teachers use the school's own tracking systems precisely to plan effective learning which supports and stretches individual pupils. They have all been involved in the creation of new 'progress grids' and use them well to identify pupils' various starting points and create a long-term plan for pupils' learning. They regularly review this learning to amend their strategies.
- Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to challenge and question pupils, especially the most able, who achieve very high standards in their work. They also use questions skilfully to enable pupils to reason, debate, discuss and articulate their learning. Where pupils misunderstand or make mistakes, teachers help them to explore where they have gone wrong and find new ways to get to the right answer. As a result, pupils show immense resilience in their learning and see their mistakes as another way to improve, rather than a reason to give up.
- The teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics is highly effective. Pupils gain depth in their knowledge because teachers plan competently and skilfully impart their subject expertise to pupils. This is particularly so in PE and French, where specialist coaches and teachers are used successfully. Pupils' work and displays show that they are set tasks which provide them with the chance to consider themselves as, for example, scientists, artists, historians and musicians. Pupils' experiences are enhanced further by learning-focused visits and residential trips.
- Phonics is taught very well, especially in Years 1 and 2. Pupils can sound out new words with confidence; they can quickly differentiate between 'alien' and real words and use these skills in their wider reading to very good effect regularly. Teachers use assessments of prior learning to identify where individual pupils are struggling with certain sounds. Teachers then address these misconceptions guickly.
- Classrooms provide a rich environment for learning. Displays are not only vibrant but are central to the learning in lessons. Each display in a classroom reflects a different aspect of the pupils' learning and acts as a reference guide for pupils. Pupils routinely use the walls to find answers and improve their work.
- Additional resources are used very specifically with pupils to ensure that their learning needs are met. For



example, in mathematics, although everyone learns the same content, those who require greater support will access different resources to those who need greater challenge to learn at a more rapid rate. This is a key reason pupils' progress in mathematics is accelerating quickly. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils made predictions and then had to investigate whether their predictions were accurate. The resources used in this lesson made mathematics relevant to pupils by using everyday examples to support their investigation.

- The learning environment supports the development of speech and language well. Pupils are encouraged to talk and are confident to do so. There are a range of facilities and resources, including multi-sensory equipment which is used effectively to enhance and improve pupils' speech development. Consequently, in the short time they are in the unit, pupils make rapid progress.
- Highly skilled teaching assistants are well directed to work with small groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs or disability. They also work for short periods with pupils who are not quite sure of aspects of their work, for example the meaning of certain words or the precise use of punctuation. This helps pupils to quickly resume their activities and continue working alongside their peers.
- Homework provision is regular and well considered by the school, and makes a positive difference to pupils' achievement. The homework that pupils receive reinforces their knowledge and understanding. The school communicates effectively with parents about it and consequently parents can support their children with their homework.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils love to learn at Heartsease Academy and quickly develop positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are rightly proud of their work, especially in writing, and confidently talk about what they have done and showcase it on the 'brilliance board'. Other pupils then regularly and voluntarily read the work on display to see how they can achieve the same high standards.
- Pupils are given a range of opportunities to 'have their say'. The school council, pupil advocates, enterprise activities and the eco-council are just some of the formal methods that the school uses to ensure that pupils reflect on different issues and have an opportunity to make a difference to everyday school life.
- Pupils welcome everyone to their school and community. Assemblies, lessons, displays, religious education days, 'beliefs and cultures events' and trips all emphasise the importance of valuing the differences between people and of respecting everyone.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for at Heartsease. Pupils who spoke to inspectors showed a deep understanding of what it means to say that they feel safe. They also talked extensively about the care, support and guidance given by all staff, but most notably the pastoral support manager. The school's curriculum underpins the teaching of a range of aspects of pupils' safety from e-safety to road safety. Almost all parents who responded to Parent View and all of those spoken to by inspectors reported that they feel that their child is safe in school.
- The work of the school's positive play leader is exemplary in supporting pupils when they are sometimes vulnerable because of varying circumstances. The atmosphere in the positive play room is vibrant yet tranquil, which allows pupils to work with her in a safe yet fun environment. Her enthusiasm and passion for the work that she does with pupils contributes to outstanding pastoral support in the school. Support for the well-being of pupils is well suited to their needs, as each programme is unique to each pupil. Parents are heavily involved and good communication between home and school means that these programmes play a large part in helping pupils to eradicate the barriers to their learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct is exemplary. They are extremely courteous, polite and helpful. They display excellent behaviour in lessons and around the school. They play together harmoniously during their break and lunchtimes. They look after those who are younger to ensure that no one feels excluded or is left out.
- Pupils feel that the behaviour system helps them to be thoughtful about how they can improve their own behaviour management. On the very rare occasions when pupils do not behave appropriately, there is a clear system in place which gives pupils time-out to rethink their behaviour. This allows pupils to retain their dignity, while also giving them support to address the issues that are causing them difficulties.



- Pupils work together to promote and role model positive behaviours. The school's strategy involves all pupils working together to model the behaviour identified for the week. Through excellent teaching, pupils understand what bullying is, but say it does not happen in their school. These behaviours allow pupils to become excellent learners and caring young people, preparing them well for their next stages in education.
- Pupils value their education and attend well. They talk enthusiastically about the 'attendance cup' and the importance of being at school and its links to achievement. The school's successful work, especially that of the pastoral support manager with the community, has helped boost pupils' attendance so that it is now high. The school is not afraid to seek advice and act swiftly where attendance is not good enough for some pupils. It has dealt effectively with the rare instances of persistent absence.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Due to the sustained strong leadership, outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics have improved continually over the past three years. Children enter the early years with starting points lower than typical for their age and in 2015 attained results by the end of key stage 2 at least in line with national averages. This represented good progress from their starting points and reflects the impact of the work done to bridge gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Current school assessment information and the work seen in lessons and in pupils' books shows that pupils in all year groups are making even more rapid progress. A significant proportion of pupils are now making better than expected progress, and the level of challenge in lessons is continually rising to increase this further.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stages in their education. Pupils acquire relevant skills and knowledge through high-quality teaching and assessment. They develop good communication skills, are supported in lessons to achieve the high expectations set for them and are thoroughly inducted to the next key stage. Pupils are confident to learn from their mistakes, never being put off when things may go wrong the first time; they are skilled, resilient and capable.
- At key stage 2, progress and attainment in writing is significantly above the national average. Leaders rightly identified that achievement in mathematics and reading is not yet as strong. However, achievement in mathematics and reading is rapidly increasing to the same standards achieved in writing, across the whole school.
- The school's exciting curriculum enthuses and engages pupils to study hard and achieve well in all subjects. Subject specialist support is used to exemplify learning where needed and pupils use their reading and writing skills very effectively to develop their understanding of other subjects.
- All subjects are monitored using the school's tried and tested pupil information system. This ensures that pupils who are excelling are identified and challenged, and those falling behind are helped to catch up.
- At key stage 1 in 2015, pupils' progress had improved to equal the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' current work and assessment information shows that this progress is improving rapidly and a well above average proportion of pupils in Year 2 are on track, from low starting points, to achieve outcomes that, for some, are outstanding. Inspection evidence confirms this improvement.
- In 2015 in Year 1, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening test was above the national average. Successful actions have improved the quality of teaching so pupils are currently on track to achieve similar standards.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well at Heartsease. In 2015 they made good progress, but there remained a gap between their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics and that of all pupils nationally. Determined action by leaders and bespoke teaching has rapidly accelerated progress so that the work in books demonstrates that the gap is narrowing rapidly. Effective use of the additional funding that the school receives has made a significant difference in bridging the gaps for these pupils, in all year groups currently in the school.
- School assessment information shows that the most able pupils make good progress year on year with more of them achieving better than expected progress, particularly in mathematics. Teaching provides constant challenge, to which pupils respond with enthusiasm and zeal. Staff have targeted resources carefully to meet these pupils' personal and academic needs and so the most able achieve well.
- Outcomes for pupils with special educational needs or disability were lower than expected in 2015, but were affected by pupils joining from other schools, sometimes for short periods of time. In the main school, pupils with particular needs are provided with individualised support and resources which means that they develop independence and make good progress from their varied starting points.
- Pupils in the specialist resource-based provision make very rapid progress from their starting points. This



is a result of the high-quality baseline assessment, accurate pinpointing of what they need to achieve well, outstanding teaching and thorough school-to-school support to acquire specialist resources when necessary.

Early years provision

is good

- Since September 2015, the school has admitted two-year-olds into the Nursery setting. There is a calm, 'busy' environment where the youngest children are taught to play together harmoniously, share, and take turns. The shared work that the school does between Nursery and Reception ensures that the youngest children are provided with a good start to their school life.
- In 2015, children entered the Reception Year with starting points that were lower than is typical for their age. However, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was in line with national averages. This represents good progress for almost all pupils and was a significant improvement on previous early years outcomes.
- The leader of the early years is insightful in her understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. She sets ambitious but realistic expectations based on a thorough knowledge of each child in her care. Leaders have been unequivocal in establishing a 'no excuses' culture to ensure children catch up with age-related expectations and exceed them when they can. Programmes of support are carefully thought out, reviewed routinely and have significant impact on enhancing children's development from their starting points on entry.
- Children receive good teaching, which is enabling them to make good progress. Teachers use prior assessment information accurately to plan effective learning activities that help children overcome any gaps in their development. Outdoor areas are used to promote basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics as well as develop children's understanding of the world and their creative skills. Adults plan for a range of different activities which cover a broad curriculum and ensure that all pupils can access and thrive in different learning environments. However, leaders rightly recognise that on occasion children need further opportunity to show that they can apply the new skills they have learned without guidance.
- Children are supported well for the next stage in their learning. The transitions between Nursery, Reception and Year 1 are handled skilfully by the staff through excellent communication and liaison so that the pace of children's learning does not stall when they move into the next year group.
- Children are confident, eager and well mannered. All children are kept safe and secure in the setting, and their behaviour is excellent. During the inspection, children worked happily and cooperatively together. There are highly positive relationships between staff, children and parents. Parents are generally very satisfied and leaders are involving them in their children's learning with increasing effectiveness. This is helping children to become confident learners and have a positive attitude to school.
- In previous years, outcomes at the end of the early years have been too low because expectations have not been consistently high enough and children's learning has not been carefully and accurately tracked. In 2015, outcomes improved to be in line with the national average. Leadership has significantly improved this provision and as a result of good teaching and a vibrant and safe learning environment, children now make good and better progress from their lower than typical starting points. Assessment information, well evidenced by examples of children's learning, shows that more children than nationally are on track for a good level of development in 2016.
- The school's secure baseline when they start school enables senior leaders and teachers to carefully check the progress of every child, including those with special educational needs or disability. The highly effective support that this group receives ensures that they do not get left behind and as a result these pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- The large proportion of disadvantaged children are making progress in line with their classmates. The funding that the school receives for these children is being used well to ensure that they develop good language skills and have a strong foundation for their future education.



School details

Unique reference number139491Local authorityNorfolkInspection number10010939

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

Type of school Primary

School category Academy converter

Age range of pupils 3–11

Gender of pupils Mixed

Number of pupils on the school roll 526

Appropriate authority The HEART Education Trust

Executive headteacher Christina Kenna

Headteacher Sue Wilcock

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Date of previous inspection Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Heartsease Primary School converted to academy status on 1 April 2013 and is the lead school for the Heart Education Trust.
- This is an above-average-sized primary school, including a Nursery setting. On 2 September 2015, the school changed the age range and now provides two-year-old provision.
- The school has a specialist resource base for speech and language. Pupils from neighbouring schools attend the specialist resource base.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and of those pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and are eligible to be supported through the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability and receive support is lower than the national average. However, the proportion with education, health and care plans or statements of special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school's website complies with statutory requirements.



Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons in all classes, including the school's specialist resource base for speech and language. Many of these lessons were observed jointly with the executive headteacher and the headteacher. They observed support in and out of class for pupils who need additional help with their learning.
- Inspectors listened to younger and older pupils read and attended school class assemblies.
- The inspection team looked closely at pupils' books in every class and spoke with pupils about their work.
- Inspectors spoke informally with parents at the start of the second day and took note of their views through the 15 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, 11 parent text responses and through the school's own annual parent survey of approximately 200 responses.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils around the school and met with groups of younger and older pupils.
- The lead inspector met with directors and members of the local academy board.
- Inspectors held discussions with the pastoral support manager and the positive play leader about their work.
- Meetings were held with school leaders responsible for English, mathematics, science, early years, assessment, and for coordinating special educational needs or disability.
- An inspector spoke with the creative curriculum team about their work in other subjects aside from English and mathematics.
- Inspectors checked school documentation on attendance and behaviour and looked closely at records of assessment of pupils' progress and those relating to monitoring of safeguarding. They looked at records of local academy board meetings, checks on the quality of teaching and learning and the school's review of its own performance.

Inspection team

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Olive Millington	Ofsted Inspector
Jeremy Rowe	Ofsted Inspector
Joanna Rand	Ofsted Inspector
Edwin Powell	Ofsted Inspector

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