

The Heights Primary School

82 Gosbrook Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire RG4 8BH

Inspection dates

23–24 May 2017

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	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Pupils love learning and say that school is never boring.
- Governors and trustees are extremely ambitious for the children in this new school. Every aspect of the early development of the school has been carefully planned and successfully carried out. This has resulted in a school to be proud of.
- The headteacher is inspirational and tireless in her commitment to deliver the highest quality of care and education.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of this new school. Many feel proud that their children attend the school.
- Leaders, governors and staff demonstrate a deep commitment to the care and well-being of the pupils. They go the extra mile.
- The curriculum is exceptional. It makes a significant contribution to the excellent progress pupils make in all classes and all subjects.
- Provision in the early years is exemplary. Children have an exciting time and make great progress. They are happy and well cared for.
- The personal development, welfare and behaviour of pupils are extremely well managed. As a result, the behaviour of pupils is excellent. This is highly valued by parents.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers make sure that pupils have the skills and confidence they need to make excellent progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as other pupils nationally with the same starting points in their learning. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make excellent progress, as do pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- As the school continues to grow, the governing body should seek objective external evaluation of the school to ensure that its high expectations continue to be met.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders and governors of this new school are uncompromising in their ambition. They have carefully developed and closely monitored every aspect of the school's work. As a result, this is an extremely effective school.
- The inspirational and energetic leadership of the headteacher is successfully delivering the trust's vision of a highly successful, caring school. Pupils believe that the headteacher does her best for them.
- The school has consistently high expectations of staff. The training and support that staff receive are extremely effective. The support for newly qualified teachers is excellent. Performance management systems reward hard work and set challenging targets for development. Staff feel well supported and agree that they are encouraged to take risks and innovate. As a result, pupils receive individual attention from highly skilled teachers and teaching assistants.
- Middle leadership roles are being introduced as the school grows. The excellent training and support these leaders receive is part of the planned development of the school. Middle leaders feel that senior leaders listen to them and trust them. They are beginning to contribute to the success of the school.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching effectively. Teachers value the feedback they are given. Teachers are encouraged to learn from each other and from other schools. Consequently, the actions of leaders ensure that the quality of teaching is continually improving.
- Governors and leaders accurately identify aspects of the school that could improve further. They act swiftly and take effective action. Staff work together as a team to constantly improve and refine their approach. For example, governors identified that some pupils were not making the same rapid progress in spelling that they achieved in other areas of writing. Leaders investigated the concerns and identified the changes that were needed. These changes were delivered by teachers and teaching assistants and the impact evaluated. As a result, the most able pupils are now making increased progress in spelling.
- The physical education and sport premium funding is used exceptionally well. It is part of the school's commitment to raise the bar for sports provision. Improvements to the quality of teaching, extending teachers' subject knowledge and increasing the range of sporting activities are part of an increasingly rich curriculum.
- The curriculum is exceptional. Pupils' attention is grabbed by the broad range of subjects and extra-curricular activities on offer. Leaders ensure that the curriculum expertly teaches a wide range of subjects and meticulously supports learning in English and mathematics. For example, pupils thoroughly enjoyed a music lesson where they learned the technical skills of composing sea shanties and practised the English skills of poetry.
- The school believes that pupils' personal development is as important as their academic success. Pupils demonstrate the school's values every day and leaders encourage them to think of new ways to make the school even better. As a result, pupils are keen to

help each other and make an excellent contribution to the development of the school.

- The curriculum provides excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of themselves and the world they are growing up in. For example, pupils have recently been finding out about the people and events that have shaped British society. Consequently, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills and understanding are exceptionally well developed, and they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is highly effective. The trustees of the school are clear that the job of the governing body is to make sure that the school delivers excellent education. The trustees of the school focus on securing the long-term success of the school.
- Governors are extremely knowledgeable about the performance of the school. They have very high expectations and rigorously hold leaders to account. Governors' effective scrutiny and challenge ensure that the school continually improves.
- Governors have highly effective systems to check the day-to-day work of the school and rigorously monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding.
- Governors diligently monitor the progress pupils make, particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or are disadvantaged. They rigorously hold the headteacher to account to ensure that additional pupil premium money and funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is exceptionally well used.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are highly effective.
- Leaders are vigilant in their approach to keeping pupils safe and go out of their way to make sure they are well cared for. Staff share a commitment to the well-being of all pupils and there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. The school's systems to keep pupils safe are highly effective. Staff, governors and volunteers are well trained, ensuring that they understand how to deal with any new issues that may arise. All parents who responded to the online survey said that they felt their children were safe. Pupils in the school said they feel safe.
- The school takes exceptionally good care of pupils, particularly those with medical needs and special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders go to great lengths to ensure that these pupils, and their parents, get the support they need with any difficulties they may face.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding because teachers make sure that pupils have the knowledge and skills they need to be successful learners. Regular opportunities to tackle difficult tasks make sure that pupils learn to keep going, even when tasks are tricky. As a result, pupils are very confident and they have extremely positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils are extremely enthusiastic and highly motivated by their lessons. Teachers make

sure that pupils quickly learn the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers then make sure that pupils are given a huge number of opportunities to practise these skills. Pupils quickly become confident, successful learners with a thirst for knowledge. For example, pupils in Year 1 writing animal fact sheets were keen to share their knowledge and enjoyment.

- Teachers make sure that pupils understand what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. Even the youngest children are given meaningful feedback that helps them learn. This helps pupils to quickly improve their work. They are encouraged to learn from their mistakes and to look for ways to improve their own and others' work. This contributes to the very positive attitudes to learning that pupils display.
- Teachers are skilled at questioning so that pupils explain what they know and understand. As a result, any misunderstandings that pupils may have are quickly identified and tackled.
- The curriculum is designed to enthuse pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong in all areas of the curriculum. Activities provide opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in reading, writing and mathematics in almost every subject.
- Teaching assistants play an important part in the success of the school. They make very good use of the training they have had and provide appropriate support to help pupils work things out for themselves. They are well deployed by teachers and consistently reinforce high expectations.
- Teachers' assessment of what pupils know and can do is extremely accurate. Staff work together to check all assessment information and make sure that gaps in pupils' learning are quickly identified. Teachers use this information successfully to ensure that work is closely matched to pupils' needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Parents are confident that their children are safe. Pupils feel safe and they understand how to look after themselves in a broad range of situations, including on the internet and in the park.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of bullying and are confident that, if it were to happen in the school, staff would sort it out. They understand and can talk about the consequences of bad behaviour. Pupils recognise that they behave very well and that incidents of bad behaviour are almost unheard of.
- Parents greatly appreciate that the personal development of pupils is given a high priority in the school. The school's values are constantly present around the school and the impact of them can be seen in pupils' behaviour. Pupils respect each other, listen intently to others and develop resilience.
- Pupils have a pride in their community and are keen to contribute to it. Some pupils go out of their way to keep others safe at playtime. Others are keen to keep the surrounding area litter-free for their neighbours.

- The school provides exemplary care for pupils with medical needs and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils understand that some people are different and need their support.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are expected to behave well at all times. Pupils, parents and staff all agree that behaviour is excellent.
- In lessons and around the school, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are respectful of each other, polite and kind. When working, they listen carefully to each other, give tasks their full attention and use feedback from teachers to improve their work. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils make a significant contribution to the excellent progress they make.
- Teachers have high expectations of the quality and quantity of work. Teachers plan work that will interest and inspire pupils. Pupils say that teachers make learning fun and that learning is never boring.
- The school has high expectations of pupil attendance. Consequently, levels of attendance are higher than the national average and make a strong contribution to pupils' progress. Leaders act quickly to identify and tackle any absences. The school provides excellent support to pupils whose attendance affects their learning.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Outcomes for pupils are high compared with national figures. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is well above the national average. By the end of Year 1, the majority of pupils achieve the expected level in phonics. In Year 2, pupils, including the most able, achieve results that are higher than national averages in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Pupils make substantial and sustained progress from their starting points. The school sets challenging targets for each pupil and almost all reach them. Leaders and teachers closely monitor the progress of all pupils to make sure they make strong progress in all subjects. The most able pupils are given additional opportunities to further develop. For example, extra reading activities for some most able pupils allow them to stretch their skills and take their learning further.
- The basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are expertly taught. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to ensure that mistakes and misconceptions are quickly addressed. The combination of well-taught skills and high levels of challenge lead to excellent outcomes.
- Expectations are consistently high for all pupils. Pupils with additional needs are extremely well supported because they receive individual help that closely matches their needs. This precise intervention is the result of teachers' meticulous assessment. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make very good progress from their starting points. Disadvantaged pupils are able to make excellent progress in all subjects.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children make exceptional progress in the early years. They enter the Reception Year with skills that are broadly typical for their age and make exceptional progress from their starting points. Outcomes by the end of the year are significantly higher than national averages.
- Exceptional leadership is leading to even better outcomes for children. Early information about what children know and can do is used to adapt the curriculum so that any potential obstacles to learning are anticipated and removed. This is leading to outstanding progress.
- Parents know that their children are very well looked after. They are very happy with the support and information they receive. Parents value the contribution they can make to the ongoing assessment of their children's development.
- Staff make sure that children quickly acquire the basic skills they need. Reading, writing and mathematics are well taught, with a clear focus on accuracy. At the same time, staff make sure that children develop the positive behaviours and attitudes that will enable them to flourish in school. As a result, children quickly become confident, happy learners who are not scared of 'having a go'.
- Children are wrapped up in all aspects of their learning and there is a palpable excitement in the classroom. Children's natural curiosity is fostered and developed through the wide range of well-planned experiences on offer. Both inside and outside the classroom, children can access a variety of exciting and challenging activities. For example, the superhero work requiring children to slow the defrosting of frozen peas resulted in impressive learning and enormous excitement.
- Adults have excellent relationships with the children and know them very well. They skilfully develop children's learning and understanding through the high quality of their interactions.
- Disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive excellent, personalised support. Teachers understand their individual needs thoroughly. Staff track the progress of these children carefully and use highly effective strategies to enable them to catch up. As a result, these children make progress that is equal to or better than other pupils starting from the same stage of development.

School details

Unique reference number	139972
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10032820

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	167
Appropriate authority	The Academy trust
Chair	Nick Walden
Headteacher	Karen Edwards
Telephone number	01183 570123
Website	www.theheightsprimary.co.uk
Email address	info@theheightsprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The Heights Primary School is a new academy free school. The school opened in September 2014 with two Reception classes and a single Year 1 class. Two new Reception classes have joined each year. There are currently pupils in Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3.
- The school is located on a temporary site. The building was expanded in November 2015.
- The Heights Primary School is the only school in The Heights Primary Trust. The trust has delegated the operational and strategic direction of the school to the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors took into account 155 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 20 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A range of documents were considered, including records of pupils' attendance, behaviour and safety and the school's information about pupils' achievement.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons and parts of lessons. Most visits to classrooms were carried out jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, pupils and four members of the governing body.

Inspection team

Phil Minns, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Krista Dawkins	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Phillips	Ofsted Inspector

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