

# Inspection of Heyford Park Free School

74 Camp Road, Heyford Park, Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire OX25 5HD

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Inspection dates: 26–27 November 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Early years provision

**Good**

Sixth-form provision

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Some groups of pupils do not fare well at this school and the learning environment for many is not a happy one. Many teachers' expectations are too low. Senior leaders have recently improved their vision for the curriculum. However, what pupils are getting now is not good enough and pupils do not learn well across the full range of subjects. Achievement across the different ages and subjects is variable.

Too often, pupils' behaviour is boisterous and disruptive. Some pupils and sixth formers report bad behaviour being challenged by staff, and having respect for some of their teachers. However, staffing changes and ineffective training mean that not all staff offer effective support for all the pupils in their classes. In the past, the attendance of some groups of pupils has been poor but there are signs of recent improvement.

Some pupils report that they do not feel safe at school. Although many feel there are trusted staff to report any concerns to, too many do not. Parents, carers and pupils are concerned that leaders do not recognise and deal with bullying effectively.

Some pupils are involved in extra-curricular activities such as sporting clubs but there is a limited range on offer.

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

This is a school where the provision for vulnerable pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is far from good enough. Senior leaders and trustees have failed in their statutory duty to ensure that the school provides an inclusive education. They have not made the necessary reasonable adjustments to ensure that provision meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. Senior leaders have engaged in taking some pupils off the register by encouraging some parents to home-educate or to seek different schools for their children.

The quality of education on offer is inadequate. Recently, new curriculum plans have been introduced in most subjects. However, this work is in its early stages and these plans are not being delivered effectively. In some subjects, such as religious education (RE) and personal, social and health education (PSHE), the curriculum is not appropriately sequenced. Provision for pupils' personal development is poor. In the secondary years, there is no provision of design and technology.

Pupils' chances of success are hampered by previous and ongoing weak teaching. Frequently, teachers require pupils to complete activities in class without having sufficient knowledge to engage in the task set. Teaching staff do not have sufficient information, or the training, to be able to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils or those with SEND. Although there have been recent improvements to writing and improving outcomes at GCSE, particularly in English, current standards in other subjects across key stages 1 to 4 are too low.

Leadership in the early years and the sixth form is stronger. Here, teachers have ensured that the curriculum is sequenced appropriately. Staff make careful choices over the selection and deployment of resources to enable effective learning. In these years, pupils' outcomes, including for those with SEND, are stronger.

The first cohort within the small new sixth form has yet to take A-level or BTEC National Diploma examinations. Most teachers are suitably skilled in their specialist subjects. They challenge students and exemplify how to refine and improve their work well. However, students expressed concerns about the quality of teaching they receive in some subjects. Leaders ensure that students receive appropriate support and independent careers advice. Most students feel well prepared for their next steps. There is too little enrichment outside of the taught subjects. There are no clubs and there are limited opportunities for students to take on responsibility and develop leadership skills.

Children in the early years benefit from strong relationships with adults. From the beginning, the school is proactive in forging positive relationships with families. A programme of home visits aids children's smooth transition into school. Children enjoy the wide range of activities on offer. For instance, in the Reception Year, children demonstrate high levels of curiosity and concentration when sharing books with one another. Most children achieve well and are well prepared for the challenges that lie ahead.

The leadership of reading is weak, and staff are not clear enough about how pupils' reading progresses over time. Staff are implementing a variety of approaches to both teaching and learning and assessment. Some teaching does not meet the needs of pupils well enough, including pupils with SEND. Pupils are not moved on quickly enough to learning that challenges them. Pupils say they do not read often to adults. It is unclear how those that need to catch up, including the disadvantaged pupils, are supported. Pupils' love of reading is underdeveloped. Although younger pupils' reading books tend to be well matched to their understanding of phonics, some have been on the same book for some time. Pupils across the school make limited use of the school's library.

Leaders have failed to promote good behaviour across the school. While many pupils show respect, disruption and poor behaviour are all too common. This is especially the case when teaching fails to meet pupils' needs. Frequently, pupils are sent out of class and several spend long periods in corridors or other rooms. Last year, there were large gaps between the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and their peers. Leaders' actions this year have yielded some improvements but there remains more to do.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders do not always respond urgently enough to reported concerns. Appropriate pathways to gain support are not followed consistently. In addition, leaders' actions

to deal with reported concerns are not always logged.

Leaders have considered how to keep pupils safe when walking from one site to another. However, leaders' own risk assessments, including ensuring adult supervision for Year 6 pupils, are not adhered to. Some pupils say that they feel vulnerable at these times.

There is some stronger practice. For instance, leaders ensure that all adults who work with children are checked appropriately. The school's record-keeping in this aspect is very thorough.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Safeguarding systems are not sufficiently robust and risk assessments are not always followed. Senior leaders and trustees should take immediate action to ensure that this is addressed.
- The school has had a period of very high mobility among pupils, and leaders have encouraged some parents to find alternative provision for their child. Trustees need to ensure that the school provides an inclusive education for all pupils. They need to hold leaders accountable for the progress of all groups of pupils and eliminate the practice of off-rolling.
- Senior leaders' recent review of the curriculum paid insufficient attention to the coverage and sequencing within PSHE and RE. Further work is needed to ensure that the curriculum provides suitable opportunities for pupils' personal development. Similarly, the school should ensure that design and technology is offered during the secondary years.
- Senior leaders' vision for the curriculum has encouraged several subject leads to consider longer-term planning of big ideas and concepts within their subject across the different phases. This work is in its early stages and there has been a lack of external training and moderation. Subject leads need support to improve their planning and to ensure effective quality assurance within their subject.
- Trustees and senior leaders should overhaul the school's provision for pupils with SEND to ensure that their needs are met across the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is poor and many spend too much time out of classrooms. Leaders should ensure that staff are supported to manage pupils' behaviour and reduce the number of behavioural incidents.
- There are early signs of improvement to the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders should build on their actions to ensure that these improvements continue. Any gaps between the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and their peers, or pupils with SEND and their peers, should continue to be reduced.
- Trustees should be clear about their responsibilities and ensure that they monitor, challenge and support senior leaders to make the improvements required to the quality of education and the curriculum on offer.

- It is recommended that the school does not appoint newly qualified teachers.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139998
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111156
<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	630
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	36
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of the trust</b>	Simon Morrell and Steve Maltby (co-chairs)
<b>Principal</b>	Karen Healey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://heyfordparkfreeschool.org/">http://heyfordparkfreeschool.org/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 November 2018

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the chair of trustees has stepped down and the role has been taken up by two co-chairs.

## Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- The principal, the head of sixth form and the director of learning for mathematics were absent from school and so did not participate in this inspection.
- We met with the executive principal, the associate principal and senior leaders. A variety of meetings were conducted with other leaders, including those responsible for pupils with SEND and attendance, and heads of departments.
- A meeting was held with two trustees, including one of the co-chairs.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements were reviewed. We met with the school's designated safeguarding leads, scrutinised the school's single central record and talked to pupils and some parents about safety. We also considered how well adults in the school act on emerging concerns about pupils' welfare.
- During the inspection, survey responses from 57 members of staff and 120 parents were considered. We met a small number of parents at the beginning of each day. Pupils and sixth formers also met with us to share their views.
- We did deep dives into these subjects: reading, English, mathematics, science and modern foreign languages. Within each subject, we met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils about their work and met with teaching staff to discuss the school's approach to curriculum delivery. We also held separate meetings with leaders of two other subjects to discuss their curriculum plans.

## Inspection team

Matthew Newberry, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Elizabeth Farr	Her Majesty's Inspector
Aimee Floyd	Her Majesty's Inspector
Becky Greenhalgh	Ofsted Inspector

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