

Inspection of Heatherbrook Primary Academy

Astill Lodge Road, Beaumont Leys, Leicester, Leicestershire LE4 1BE

Inspection dates: 28–29 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early Years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that this school is getting much better. They explain that behaviour is now much better than in the past. The principal has made sure that all staff use the school's approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Pupils like how staff notice whenever they behave well. Bullying is now rare, and staff deal with it quickly. Leaders do all they can to keep pupils safe. Pupils say they feel safe in school.

Everyone is part of 'the Heatherbrook team'. Pupils get on well. They shake warmly the hands of visitors to welcome them to the school. Attendance is rising, with rewards such as the 'fabulous Friday' breakfast helping to motivate pupils.

The principal wants all pupils to have a good education. Though she is bringing about improvements to this, it is not yet good enough. Too many pupils do not learn to read confidently. Teachers do not give help quickly to those who need to catch up. The books which these pupils read are too hard for them. This puts them off reading for pleasure.

In some subjects, such as science, the curriculum is not well planned. Teachers do not build up pupils' knowledge well enough. Not all pupils remember enough of the things they have been taught.

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

This school is on the up, but staff have more to do. Even so, the principal is determined for it to become a good school as rapidly as possible. Parents told us of the many important improvements she is bringing to Heatherbrook. There have been many changes of teachers over time, which has led to an inconsistency in the quality of provision. This has affected pupils' achievement. The principal has now secured a stable team and is getting them to work in a shared way. Teachers are being given training to help them develop their skills. Leaders are mindful of staff's workload and staff morale is much better.

Pupils' behaviour is now good. Pupils explain how staff are fair and consistent in how they apply the school rules. Pupils know where they stand. Lessons can take place without disruption. Pupils say that staff model well the values of the school to them. Classrooms are calm places where pupils listen and work hard. Staff across the school are kind to pupils. Those in the early years get to know new children and their families quickly.

The quality of education pupils receive is getting better, but it is not good enough. Too many young pupils, from children in the Reception Year onwards, are not taught to read quickly enough. This holds them back. Teachers do not notice straight away if a pupil does not know a sound and then take quick action to teach it to them. They give the weakest readers books that they struggle to read. Too many become reluctant to read. Leaders have bought more suitable books for them.

In some subjects, such as science, leaders know that pupils cannot remember enough of the things they have been taught. Leaders are currently writing new plans for these subjects. These will make clear what pupils need to know at the end of each unit of work. Teachers aim to deliver sequences of lessons that will build up pupils' knowledge well over time. They then plan to agree a simple system to check that each pupil has remembered what they need to.

Leaders are bringing about improvements in mathematics. Teachers now give pupils ample opportunities to solve problems and to explain their answers. They teach pupils correct vocabulary. Pupils could describe to us the degrees in scalene triangles and quadrilaterals. Across different subjects, lessons are adapted increasingly well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils showed us how the support they are getting is helping them to learn.

Staff give pupils good opportunities to become independent and take responsibilities. Pupils assist in the school office and help children in the early years to play at lunchtimes. They become school councillors. Pupils like taking part in the many sporting competitions against other schools. They walk the 'daily mile'. They learn about and celebrate each other's faiths and cultures. Staff take pupils to caves and national parks, to experience camping and toasting marshmallows over fires. In assembly, older pupils learn about The Holocaust. Pupils at Heatherbrook are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The principal ensures that all staff are trained in safeguarding, so they can identify the warning signs that a pupil could be being harmed. They know the procedure to report any concerns and that they must do so immediately. Leaders keep detailed records and act quickly to support vulnerable pupils.

Pupils say they feel safe in school. Teachers tell them about how to protect themselves when using the internet, and about the potential dangers of strangers and roads. We saw how pupils in Year 6 were learning about the dangers of gang culture and crime.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not identify quickly enough when a pupil does not know a sound, and is therefore at risk of falling behind. Pupils are not given the immediate assistance they need. Leaders should ensure that teachers have a precise and up-to-date knowledge of the sounds that every pupil does not know. They should make sure that any pupil who needs to catch up is given prompt and high-quality support.

- The books that the weakest readers receive to practise their skills are too difficult for them. Too many of these pupils become disheartened because these books contain many words they cannot read fluently. Leaders should check that these pupils are given books that consistently and precisely match to the sounds each pupil already knows, so that these pupils' confidence grows, and they can become keen readers.
- A number of foundation subjects are not planned in sequences that build up sufficiently pupils' knowledge and skills over time. This results in pupils not having consistently accurate recall of the things they have been taught. Teachers should identify the precise knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn, and plan series of lessons that ensure pupils know and remember more.
- Teachers have not yet agreed school-wide systems to assess pupils' achievement across a number of subjects, such as science and history. They do not know as much as they need to about what each pupil has learned. Leaders should ensure that they devise an assessment system that is both manageable for teachers to use and which provides them with information about the impact of the curriculum they are implementing.

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 are the school and you are 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

Unique reference number	143607
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10121184
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Miranda Cannon
Principal	Jennifer Mitchell
Website	www.heatherbrook.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Heatherbrook Primary Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 April 2017. When its predecessor school, Heatherbrook Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The school is part of the Learning Without Limits multi-academy trust.

Information about this inspection

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

- In order to judge the quality of education, we focused the inspection on specific subjects of the curriculum. We did deep dives in reading, mathematics, science, and history. This involved meeting with senior and subject leaders, scrutinising curriculum planning, and visiting lessons where pupils were learning these subjects. We met pupils from the lessons and looked at their work in these and in other subjects. We met with teachers about the curriculum they were delivering.
- We met with representatives of the local governing body, the chief executive officer of the Learning Without Limits multi-academy trust, and the coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND. We read a wide variety of school documents, including the school development plan. We also spoke with other members of

staff, such as lunchtime supervisors. We checked whether pupils were safe and happy at the school's breakfast club.

- We took note of the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, met with parents at the start of the school day, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire.
- In order to judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, we read the school's relevant policies, scrutinised the single central record, checked the school's procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and interviewed the designated lead for safeguarding. We also spoke with staff to check details of their safeguarding knowledge and training, that they understood the importance of their responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns without delay, and if they knew the procedure to do this. We checked samples of safeguarding records, spoke with parents about their children's safety at the school, and read responses from Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Roary Pownall, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Damien Turrell

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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