

Inspection of a good school: Heatherlands Primary School

Library Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH12 2BG

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 March 2022

Outcome

Heatherlands Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Right from the early years, staff ensure that children understand why routines and being kind and polite are important. This continues throughout the school. Staff know all pupils well. They encourage and guide pupils to grow into responsible and caring young people. The school is inclusive. Everyone is welcome.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and try hard in lessons. They study a broad curriculum and gain a lot of knowledge. Pupils learn about current world issues. For example, they learn about the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) and the recent events in Ukraine.

Staff have a sharp focus on pupils' physical and mental fitness. Sport is for all. 'The Valley' provides an interesting space for pupils to learn outside. Pupils say that lunchtimes are fun. There are lots of physical and creative games to play. A highlight for some is relaxing in the 'writing shack' or enjoying the story times led by adults. If bullying happens, pupils say that staff sort it out quickly. There are many extra-curricular activities to enjoy.

Parents and carers are highly positive about their child's experience of school.

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

Leaders, including trust staff, have a strong understanding of the school's many strengths and those aspects that need sharpening. Governors are knowledgeable and hold leaders to account. Central trust staff provide training and evaluate leaders' work. School leaders use this information to ensure that the school is continuously improving.

Leaders ensure that staff make necessary changes to the curriculum as the need arises. As a result, pupils who have gaps in knowledge caused by COVID-19 are catching up well. For example, an increased focus on physical development in Reception is enabling children who did not attend Nursery to catch up. Also, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are cementing their mathematical knowledge well.

Extensive work to prioritise reading over the last two years is paying off. Across the school, there is a precise focus on pupils understanding what they read. Many pupils are avid readers and enjoy talking about key themes and events in stories. The teaching of phonics in Reception and Year 1 is enabling pupils to keep up with the phonics programme. The books that pupils read match the sounds they know. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 get lots of opportunities to practise reading. This is helping pupils to read with accuracy and fluency. However, some assessment practices are not consistently strong. For example, teaching is not ensuring that a minority of pupils in Year 3 use their phonics to help them spell accurately.

The curriculum is well thought out in many subjects. The curriculum that leaders expect staff to deliver builds clearly year-on-year and is usually ambitious. Subject leaders identify the essential concepts that pupils need to know and when they need to know them. Most pupils learn a lot across the curriculum. Nonetheless, on occasions, some teaching is not adjusted astutely. A small proportion of pupils do not get the precise support they need as they move through some sequences of work. This slows a minority of pupils' learning down.

Leaders have put systems in place to check the quality of education pupils receive. However, at times, leaders do not act swiftly enough when they identify that a sequence of work does not consistently deepen pupils' understanding.

Leaders ensure that staff identify pupils' needs accurately. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn well. Recent training and support to further improve teachers' understanding of pupils with SEND is making a positive difference.

The curriculum prioritises pupils' understanding of equalities. A holistic approach to the delivery of personal, social and health education ensures that pupils learn widely. This prepares pupils well for their next stage. For example, pupils talk with maturity about growing up, fairness, protected characteristics and the importance of drug education.

Staff feel supported in their workload. They say that leaders take time to listen and support them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The culture of safeguarding in the school is strong. Staff use their ongoing training to ensure that they act when they suspect that pupils are at risk of harm. Senior leaders ensure that all staff have a solid understanding of contextual safeguarding risks. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that families and pupils get the right support quickly and consistently. The curriculum teaches pupils a great deal about how to keep safe, including from peer-on-peer abuse, and in the locality and online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, teaching is not adapted astutely to prioritise the most important knowledge pupils need to know next. A minority of pupils do not receive work that builds firmly on what they already know. Leaders must ensure that teaching includes all the building blocks of knowledge that pupils need to achieve well.
- Leaders' checks do not consistently assure themselves of curriculum quality well enough. Leaders do not always identify when pupils do not gain the depth of knowledge they could. Leaders must ensure that their checks identify any relative weaknesses in curriculum quality, and that any weaknesses are acted on swiftly.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Heatherlands Primary School, good in November 2014.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	145212
Local authority	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
Inspection number	10227697
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	617
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rev Louise Ellis
Headteacher	Julian Churchill
Website	www.heatherlands.poole.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school became an academy in 2017. The school has been part of The Coastal Learning Partnership since its formation in 2020 when the Harbourside Learning Partnership, Ocean Learning Trust and Saturn Education Trust merged. There are 16 local schools in the trust.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and other staff members, the chief executive officer of the trust, the local governing body and the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work. An inspector listened to pupils, who are at the early stages of reading, read.

- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects, including personal, social and health education.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation. They met with the school's designated safeguarding leaders. They considered how well the safeguarding leaders act on concerns about pupils' welfare and safety. Inspectors talked to pupils and staff about safe working practices.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jo Walker

Ofsted Inspector

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