

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Heartsease Primary Academy

Rider Haggard Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR7 9UE

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Inspection dates:

5 and 6 May 2022

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

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

Pupils learn and play well together. Pupil leaders do a great job on the playground organising games activities during breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupil ambassadors help staff with a range of duties. They wear their special blazers with pride. Pupils enjoy school. They enthuse about the after-school clubs in drama, music, karate and bushcraft provided for them.

Most pupils 'make the right choices' and behave well in class and when playing outside. They feel safe and free from bullying. Pupils celebrate each other's achievements in weekly assemblies. Staff provide good pastoral care for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those with complex behavioural needs. Educational provision for other pupils with SEND is less effective. Teachers do not identify precisely what they will do to help support the learning in lessons for all pupils with SEND.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders prioritised providing pupils with remote learning and overseeing their safety and welfare. They paid less attention to developing the curriculum further. The teaching of reading is currently under review to ensure a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Leaders have put coherent curriculum plans in place in most but not all subjects. The impact of this work is not rigorously monitored.

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

Leaders recognise that the school has declined since the previous inspection. Changes in leadership and staffing have slowed the development of the wider curriculum. Leaders have put in place suitable plans to improve this.

Staff do not teach early reading systematically. Currently, they use a range of different

resources to teach phonics. Leaders have chosen a new approach to the teaching of reading to ensure consistency in teaching children to read from the time they start school.

Pupils recognise letters and sounds and blend them together. However, not all pupils read fluently or with confidence. Books are not always suitably matched to their reading ability. Leaders are aware that some older pupils have returned to school with gaps in their reading skills. However, the teaching of phonics does not extend fully into key stage 2, so some pupils are not catching up quickly. Pupils enjoy reading for pleasure and do so readily at home as well as in school.

In mathematics, pupils build on what they have learned previously and develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Teachers know what pupils should learn by the end of each year to be well prepared for the next. Staff identify where the gaps in pupils' learning lie, adapting their plans well to make sure they are helped to catch up. Pupils use a good range of practical resources to help them when needed. Nursery and Reception class staff develop creative, fun activities to promote children's use of number and early counting skills.

Planning in other subjects is less well developed. Leaders do not monitor routinely how effectively teachers teach the wider curriculum so pupils know and remember more.

Pupils with speech and language difficulties receive good support in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) funded by the local authority. The school's 'moonstone provision' enables key stage 1 pupils with complex special educational needs to remain interested in learning. These pupils gain significantly from the nurture, care and support provided by staff. A small proportion of pupils in key stage 2 gain from attending a similar unit based at another school within the trust. However, personalised learning plans for pupils with SEND lack precision. Pupils' needs are known well, but teachers do not identify exactly what they will do to help these pupils to learn. Too often, pupils with SEND and others who are less able do not get the support or adaptations they need in lessons.

Pupils behave well. Leaders' records show bullying is rare. Suspension is only used when all other strategies have not worked. Leaders provide a wide range of additional enrichment activities to promote pupils' engagement and positive attitudes.

Staff have no concerns about workload. They feel well supported by leaders.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that improving the curriculum, including early reading, enabling pupils with SEND to learn as well as others do and monitoring systematically the impact these improvements have on pupils' learning and progress may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. There are systematic, electronic procedures in

place for raising concerns about pupils. Staff are well trained and know what to do. Records show that all concerns are followed up in a timely way. School and trust leaders work together to oversee the actions taken to keep pupils safe. Links with local support agencies are well established. Each classroom has a 'worry-box' for pupils to use if they have concerns. Leaders have reminded pupils and their parents about the school's 'tell someone' approach to bullying. Access to the school site and buildings is carefully controlled.

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

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

- Reading is underdeveloped. Currently, there is no consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. The teaching of early reading does not extend into key stage 2. Leaders should prioritise training for all staff in using newly purchased resources for teaching phonics systematically. They should monitor routinely how effectively these resources are used to teach all pupils to read fluently.
- Not all subjects have coherent curriculum planning in place. Leaders should further design their overall curriculum to enable staff to teach all subjects effectively. They should provide staff with training to use this information to plan suitably sequenced learning. Leaders should monitor the impact this has on pupils knowing and remembering more.
- Teachers do not identify precisely how they will support pupils who need help with their learning. The strategies to support pupils with SEND listed in their individual plans lack precision. Leaders should provide staff with training in supporting the learning of these pupils in lessons. They should monitor how effectively staff do this consistently.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 school to be outstanding in May 2016.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139491
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211946
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	454
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Julie Winyard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Neil Campbell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.heartseaseprimary.co.uk/">www.heartseaseprimary.co.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	24 and 25 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-size primary academy serving pupils in north Norwich.
- The school converted to an academy in April 2013. It is the lead school for the Heart Education Trust.
- The school has nursery provision and a specially resourced provision for speech and language.
- The school has nurture provision on site for up to 14 children of Reception and key stage 1 ages from this and other schools in the trust. They attend the class from Monday to Thursday, returning to their mainstream ('home') schools every Friday.
- A few pupils attend the trust's key stage 2 nurture provision based on one of its other school sites.
- Most pupils are white British. Very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The proportion of pupils with SEND, mostly speech and language difficulties, other moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and mental health needs is

average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is broadly average

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and deputy headteachers, a range of middle leaders, teachers and support staff and a group of pupils.
- He met with the chief executive officer and the chief operating officer of the Heart Education Trust and two trustees, including the chair of trustees.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics and science during the inspection. This included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, meetings with staff and pupils and scrutinising pupils' books.
- The inspector focused on four other aspects of the school's work: safeguarding, pupils' wider development, staff's workload and gaming and off-rolling.
- The inspector considered 83 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey, 26 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 21 responses to the free-text comments in the parent questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.

## Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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