

# Inspection of a good school: Heron Hill Primary School

Hayfell Avenue, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 7JH

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Inspection dates:

4 and 5 October 2022

## Outcome

Heron Hill Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Heron Hill is a happy school where pupils learn, grow and play together. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils in the school. These start from the very beginning of the pupils' school life. Children in Nursery learn to concentrate on their learning. This continues as pupils move through school.

Leaders have ensured that staff and pupils understand the behaviour rules. For example, children in the early years follow the routines that their teachers set. Older pupils behave well in lessons and around school. Pupils play and learn together well. All pupils know that they need to be respectful of each other. Pupils talk about the way everyone is included, with one pupil saying, 'It doesn't matter who you are, you are welcome here'.

Leaders address incidents of bullying swiftly and effectively on the rare occasions when they occur. Pupils know who to go to if they have any worries. This helps them to feel safe in school.

Staff share leaders' high expectations. They support pupils to take on important responsibilities, including as school councillors. Pupils have opportunities to support the local community, such as providing a picnic for local volunteers.

Pupils, parents and carers appreciate the wide range of clubs on offer, including beekeeping, den building, yoga, construction, squash and dance. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), take an active role in school life. Parents value the way in which their children are supported.

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

Leaders and governors know the school and community well. Leaders and staff are determined to give pupils the best possible start to their education. This includes pupils with SEND and children in the early years.

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. They have organised learning so that pupils build on what they already know, from the early years to Year 6. In most subjects, leaders have ensured that the curriculum contains all of the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Adults regularly check that pupils learn and remember this knowledge over time. However, in a small number of subjects, there is less information for adults about this key knowledge. This makes it more difficult for teachers to make sure that pupils learn everything they need to know in readiness for future learning.

Staff use assessment information well to identify what pupils know and remember. This helps them to build securely on what pupils have already learned. In lessons, teachers check regularly to make sure that pupils understand. Where pupils need extra support, they receive this immediately. This allows pupils to keep up with the curriculum.

Leaders are skilled in identifying pupils with SEND. They work with staff to make careful adaptations so that pupils with SEND can learn the curriculum alongside their classmates.

Leaders know how important it is that pupils learn to read well. They have ensured that staff have been trained to support pupils with their reading. Teachers and teaching assistants know how to match the books that pupils read to the sounds that they have learned in phonics. This enables pupils to experience success in their early reading.

Children in the early years love stories. Leaders have carefully chosen the stories that they want children to know and remember. Teachers read these books over and over again. However, leaders have not thought as carefully about the key texts and authors which are important for older pupils to experience. Less confident readers have a limited choice of books from which to choose. Pupils' love of reading is hampered by this lack of choice.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They pay attention to their teacher. Sometimes pupils fidget or become distracted in lessons. This happens where teachers have not selected activities that help pupils to learn well.

Governors know the school well. They ask leaders questions about their work to improve the school, for example ensuring that the curriculum is meeting the needs of the pupils. Governors make sure that pupils are kept safe.

Staff feel supported and valued by leaders. They are proud to work at Heron Hill Primary School. Leaders and governors take staff workload and their well-being into account in the decisions that they make about the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have put clear procedures in place to help keep pupils safe in school. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They know what action to take if they are worried about a pupil's welfare. Leaders work effectively with a range of external agencies, such

as the local authority safeguarding hub. This helps them to secure help for pupils and families if it is needed.

In lessons and assemblies, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

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

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

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not made clear all of the knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which they need to learn it. This hampers teachers' ability to provide learning for pupils that builds up their knowledge securely and in a logical order. Leaders should make sure that in all subjects, the curriculum is clearly organised for staff so that pupils are able to learn and remember the knowledge that they need from the early years to Year 6.
- The range of books that leaders have provided for older pupils is limited and does not appeal to some pupils. This restricts pupils' choice and enjoyment in reading. Leaders must ensure that pupils have as wide a range as possible of appropriate texts to choose from, so that they develop a strong love of reading.

## **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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 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.

## 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>	112190
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	10256213
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	432
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jacqui Cottam
<b>Headteacher</b>	Patricia Merritt
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.heronhill.cumbria.sch.uk">www.heronhill.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

## 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 her evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. The inspector also spoke with the headteacher and members of the leadership team.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. The inspector also spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe. The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and

looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to some pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects. She also spoke to pupils about their learning and about their experiences at the school.
- The inspector considered the response to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. This included the free-text comments. She also spoke with parents at the end of the school day. The inspector reviewed the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Tanya Hughes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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