

Inspection of Heather Ridge Infant School

Martindale Avenue, Heatherside Estate, Camberley, Surrey GU15 1AY

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish in this caring and nurturing school. They feel safe because they trust all staff to help them if they need it. Pupils show great kindness to their friends, striving to demonstrate the school values of respect and friendship. As a result, bullying is very rare. Pupils know that staff will quickly help resolve any upsets among friends. Assemblies help pupils understand how to model the school values and be a good citizen. They eagerly raise money for local charities and take pride in helping their community.

Staff provide pupils with the supportive help that they need to be inquisitive learners. Pupils know that they are expected to think hard and celebrate when they learn through making mistakes. They enjoy learning because teachers carefully plan interesting lessons to enthuse them about the world. Pupils learn the language they need to speak confidently about the topics they are learning. Quite rightly, they are proud of their achievements.

A range of clubs and trips enrich pupils' interests and many talents. Clubs like 'comic with computing' help develop pupils' creativity and literacy while enhancing their learning about technology. Additional opportunities, such as being a playground pal, bistro buddy or joining the new school council, promote pupils' sense of leadership and responsibility.

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

In most subjects, leaders have carefully considered the important knowledge that pupils need to know to learn successfully in the future. They have ordered this knowledge in a way that builds progressively over time. However, in subjects such as science and geography, learning is not as precisely identified. This means pupils do not always securely learn the smaller blocks of knowledge to help them see the bigger ideas. As a result, some pupils struggle to remember learning as well as they should, and can develop gaps in knowledge.

In subjects where the important knowledge has not been identified precisely, teachers also do not consistently check what pupils have learned. This is because there is a lack of clarity around what specifically pupils need to know. As a result, teachers cannot check that all pupils learn as much as they can across the full curriculum.

A love of reading builds swiftly from the moment children join Reception. Leaders select exciting books that correspond to the topics pupils are learning. Pupils in school are supported to learn to read quickly. Teachers and teaching assistants receive effective training so they can expertly help pupils to learn the letters and sounds they need to read confidently. Regular opportunities to read to adults mean

that staff quickly identify gaps in knowledge. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind catch up quickly because they are given targeted help.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make strong progress because teachers know them well. They are well supported in class and in one-to-one sessions. Techniques to help pupils with SEND, such as pictures to help with communication and the understanding of routines, benefit other pupils in the class too. Teachers receive appropriate training so they know how to adapt the curriculum to meet the specific needs of pupils.

Adults insist on consistent routines and expectations so that pupils learn to take responsibility for their own learning. Children are sensitively supported in developing their understanding of turn taking, helping them to be confident and show kindness towards each other. Pupils play together kindly and develop strong friendships from a very early age.

In Reception, staff quickly get to know the children well, so learning can be adapted to meet their needs. Teachers prioritise the learning of important communication skills. They help children to use a range of pictograms and signs during class work. This helps all children to feel included. The wide range of early years activities means that children can choose activities to develop their own interests and learning. This helps to ensure all are well prepared for future learning.

Pupils understand why it is important to respect people's differences. Regular theme weeks and assemblies reinforce pupils' understanding of the school values. Pupils talk with pride about how friendly the school is. They know how to keep safe and have an appropriate understanding of online safety. Leaders are developing a wide range of after-school clubs and trips. They ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to attend.

School leaders are determined to make sure that every pupil does as well as possible. Where pupils need extra support, leaders prioritise this. Governors understand the school well and work closely with leaders. Leaders understand the range of demands on their staff and consider the workload of staff in planning priorities. Teachers appreciate leaders' clear purpose and high ambition for all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and teachers know pupils extremely well. Any pupils who may be at risk of harm are quickly identified. Leaders make sure that all staff receive up-to-date training to report concerns. This means that safeguarding issues are quickly raised and acted upon. Safeguarding records are clear and thorough, showing referrals are made to other agencies where necessary.

Governors ensure that leaders regularly check their own safeguarding processes and record-keeping is effective. Leaders complete robust checks when recruiting new staff to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not ordered the knowledge that pupils need to know in a sequential way. This means that pupils struggle to connect learning and form a secure foundation for future learning. Leaders should ensure that sufficiently detailed and sequenced plans are in place in all subjects to enable precise planning for knowledge acquisition.
- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers sufficiently check that pupils have learned what they need before moving on to new learning. This means that pupils are not always learning as much as they could. Leaders must develop teachers' expertise to enable them to explore what pupils know and remember and to identify any gaps in knowledge and skills that need to be remedied.

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

Unique reference number	125017
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10242314
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Adrian Jackson
Headteacher	Sarah Elliott-Hammond
Website	www.heather-ridge.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 January 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- All of the school's leadership team are new in post since the previous inspection.
- The school currently does not use any alternative providers of education.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff, pupils and representatives of the governing body, including the chair. An inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and science. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum

with subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed other subjects with leaders and look at curriculum planning and resources. The lead inspector also heard pupils read.

- Inspectors considered the 78 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including 41 free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey as well as the views of pupils that were gathered throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors viewed the school's website and policies, met with the designated safeguarding leader, spoke with pupils and staff, checked school records of safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school and spoke with governors.

Inspection team

Ed Mather, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Deirdre Crutchley

Ofsted Inspector

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