

Inspection of Heycroft Primary School

Benvenue Avenue, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 5SJ

Inspection dates:

9 and 10 February 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have not received an acceptable quality of education. While pupils appreciate teachers' efforts to make lessons fun, they do not always understand the point of tasks they have been given nor complete them well. Teachers are not clear about their expectations for all pupils to succeed. Pupils do not get sufficient practise with new vocabulary or ideas. They do not remember the most important subject knowledge, so they do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils feel safe and are safe at this school. However, behaviour is not consistently good. While most pupils behave well, some do not. Pupils are not clear about the rules and expectations in place. When bullying happens, pupils are confident to tell adults, but their concerns are not always dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities available to them. There are plenty of clubs, such as choir and drama, where pupils can try out new things or develop their interests. Pupils who enjoy sport can join teams, including tag rugby and dragon ball. Everyone can learn to swim in the onsite pool in the summer.

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

Until recently, leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is consistently well developed or implemented. In many subjects the key knowledge for pupils to learn is not clearly identified or broken into small steps. Leaders leave too much for individual teachers to decide about what is to be taught and how. Pupils develop gaps in their knowledge because what they learn over time is inconsistent.

While some teachers check on pupils' understanding before moving on to new learning, many do not. Teachers do not routinely plan activities that build on what pupils already know and can do. This means that pupils find the work and activities provided too hard or too easy. They do not systematically develop their understanding. Consequently, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Leaders have created well-thought-through plans for the teaching of reading. However, these are not implemented consistently well. Some teachers do not plan activities that enable pupils to develop their reading and phonics knowledge. While some pupils read books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge, others do not. This means that pupils' ability to read fluently and accurately is too patchy. Older pupils who have fallen behind in reading are not supported to catch up quickly enough. Too many pupils do not have the knowledge and skills they need to read well by the end of Year 6.

Leaders identify accurately pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with the highest levels of need get tailored support from skilled adults. However, other pupils with SEND do not get the support they need to succeed. Teachers have not had the training they need to adapt their teaching so that they help pupils with SEND with their learning.

In the early years, children form good relationships. They settle quickly into routines and develop positive behaviours and attitudes to learning. Adults plan effective activities to support children's learning in reading, writing and mathematics. Children learn the skills and knowledge that help prepare them for learning in English and mathematics in Year 1. Leaders have not organised learning across the rest of the early years curriculum as clearly. Adults do not support children with other areas of learning as well as they do in reading, writing and mathematics.

Behaviour around the school is not consistently good. Teachers' expectations of behaviour are not high enough. Leaders know that neither the behaviour nor anti-bullying policies are widely understood or implemented consistently. They are addressing this and developing a coherent approach to promoting good behaviour.

There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to learn about staying healthy and safe. This starts in the early years, where children name and explore their feelings. Older pupils take on responsibilities around school. Pupils are welcoming and tolerant of others.

Until recently, leaders have not had an accurate understanding of the challenges facing the school or put in place the actions needed to address these. Leaders and staff have not been held to account for the quality of education provided. The local authority has identified and acted on concerns. They have commissioned support for the school from a multi-academy trust to implement rapid improvement measures from January 2023. Current leaders are making much-needed, positive, changes. Staff workload has recently increased but staff recognise the changes being made are to improve things for pupils. Staff feel supported to manage their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are rapidly strengthening systems and staff expertise to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. They have established a consistent approach to recording and reporting concerns. Leaders swiftly spot where extra help for pupils or their families is needed. They work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe. Leaders ensure that staff are safe to work with pupils.

Pupils learn how to recognise risks, including online safety and cyber-bullying. They have adults to whom they can report concerns.

Leaders' checks on how well processes and procedures to keep children safe work require further development.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Over time, leaders have not ensured that the curriculum specifies clearly enough the key knowledge pupils should learn or the order in which they should learn it. As a result, teachers do not always focus on the important subject knowledge that pupils must learn. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum clearly specifies what knowledge pupils should know and the order in which this should be taught.
- Pupils with SEND do not get the support they need to achieve well across the curriculum. Teachers do not have the knowledge or expertise needed to support all pupils with SEND effectively. Leaders should ensure that all teachers have the expertise and guidance they need to adapt the curriculum and their teaching so that all pupils with SEND access the curriculum effectively, consolidate new learning and achieve well.
- Teachers do not consistently plan activities that build on what pupils already know and can do. They do not routinely check on pupils' understanding and use this to inform their planning. This means pupils do not get sufficient practise in using important subject knowledge, so they are not secure in their understanding. Leaders must ensure that all teachers routinely check on pupils' understanding and use these checks to plan activities that are effective in helping pupils learn and remember important subject knowledge.
- Policies and processes to promote good behaviour are not widely understood or implemented consistently. As a result, teachers' expectations for standards of behaviour are not consistently high. They do not ensure that all pupils behave well. Leaders must ensure that agreed policies and approaches for managing behaviour are well understood by staff and pupils. They should ensure that all staff implement the school's behaviour policy consistently so that pupils behave well.
- Some curriculum leaders do not have the skills or experience to evaluate the effectiveness of their subjects. Until recently, there have not been effective means of holding leaders and staff to account for the quality of education. Leaders should ensure that middle leaders have the necessary guidance to lead and evaluate the effectiveness of their areas of responsibility and ensure that there are clear lines of accountability at every level.

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	114789
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	10275542
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	397
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	George Hayes
Headteacher	Glenn Moore
Website	www.heycroftschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 July 2017 under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- School leaders do not currently use any off-site providers of alternative education.
- At the time of inspection, no governing body was in place following a warning notice issued by the local authority. An interim executive board was in the process of being established by the local authority.
- At the previous ungraded inspection, the school was judged to continue to be good.
- Leaders provide before- and after-school care on site.
- At the time of inspection, the current school leadership team had been in place for just over one month.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement,

because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- This was the first routine on-site 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors met with school leaders, the chair of the interim executive board and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and other staff to discuss safeguarding.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation during the inspection, including rapid improvement plans drawn up by recently appointed leaders, safeguarding and behaviour records.
- The inspectors considered 68 responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including 46 free-text comments. They also considered 35 responses to the staff survey and 75 responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil at this school. They also observed the behaviour of pupils at breaktimes and around the school.

Inspection team

Lynne Williams, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Tracy Walker	Ofsted Inspector
Isabel Davis	His Majesty's Inspector

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