

Inspection of Heptonstall Junior Infant and Nursery School

Smithwell Lane, Heptonstall, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 7NX

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 June 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	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy coming to school and they attend regularly. Pupils and staff see the school as one big family and support each other happily. Adults have high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils are confident, polite and respectful when speaking to adults.

Adults in school are positive role models for pupils. Pupils say that they know how to behave well because 'the adults teach us how to do it'. Pupils understand the system for rewarding good behaviour. This helps them to behave well. Pupils say that bullying is rare. They know what bullying is. If it did happen, they are confident that adults would deal with it.

Pupils enjoy the choice of clubs on offer. They talk enthusiastically about the range of trips, including the whole-school trip to the zoo and the Year 6 residential visit to Wales. Older pupils enjoy taking on the responsibility of supporting the younger pupils at lunchtime.

Pupils are safe. They know that 'trusted adults' will always help them if they have a worry. Pupils said: 'This can be any adult in school, not just our class teacher.' Parents and carers are positive about the school. One parent commented: 'A wonderful and welcoming school that encourages and develops children both academically and socially.'

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

Leaders have adopted a commercial scheme which they use as their curriculum for foundation subjects. They have chosen a curriculum that is ambitious and aims to give pupils the knowledge and skills that they need for the future. Subject leaders have carefully considered the most important knowledge that pupils should learn. Curriculum plans are in place across all subjects. However, the knowledge that pupils learn in each year group is not precise enough. It is not clear how the curriculum builds pupils' knowledge over time. Leaders are in the process of adapting the curriculum to take account of the school's mixed-age classes.

Teachers are delivering the foundation subjects well. They check what pupils have learned and use this information to adapt future lessons. This helps pupils to learn well. In reading and mathematics, this model is less strong. Teachers do not consistently provide enough challenge in these lessons.

Leaders have prioritised early reading. The school's phonics programme is delivered consistently well. Pupils are familiar with established routines. This supports them to develop an accurate knowledge of more sounds. Individual reading books are chosen well to match with the sounds pupils know well. Pupils read increasingly complex texts accurately and confidently. In whole-class reading lessons, older pupils focus on developing fluency and comprehension.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn effectively. Leaders are experienced and knowledgeable. They make sure that pupils with SEND are identified quickly. Leaders work closely with parents and external agencies to make sure that pupils with SEND get the support that they need. Leaders support teachers in adapting the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND. This ensures that all pupils access the same curriculum and achieve well.

Staff in the early years have developed a strong curriculum. They support children to learn in a well-planned and resourced environment. Resources are carefully selected and adapted to cover all areas of learning. Children are familiar with the well-established routines. They make independent choices and demonstrate positive attitudes. Children are polite and resilient and manage their own feelings. Adults interact well with children. Teachers regularly check what children know and can do. This helps them to carefully target the learning support for each child. This prepares children well for Year 1 and beyond.

High expectations for behaviour are built on mutual respect and strong relationships. Both staff and pupils set these high expectations. This can be seen in the positive behaviours seen in lessons and around school. Pupils are actively involved in their learning. They talk confidently and ask questions in lessons.

Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education. There is a well-planned programme for the personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. Pupils can talk confidently about how to keep themselves healthy and what a healthy relationship is. They have a good understanding of equality and difference and know that everyone should be treated equally. Pupils enjoy being part of the school council and the responsibility that it brings.

The development of the school's curriculum has been a big undertaking for the small number of staff in school. This has impacted on staff workload. However, staff remain positive about the support that they receive from leaders. They feel their well-being is important to leaders. Governors know the school well. They are committed and passionate about being an active part of the school's continued journey. Governors have plans in place to ensure that the school continues to move forward.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All recruitment processes are clear. Recruitment checks are completed in a timely manner. Staff receive regular training and they know how to report concerns. Staff know pupils well and they are aware of the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. They alert leaders to these concerns. Leaders take sufficient action to manage these concerns and make sure that pupils are safe. However, leaders' recording and reporting of low-level concerns is not as robust as it should be. Governors know their safeguarding responsibilities. The safeguarding governor makes regular checks with staff and pupils to be assured that pupils are safe in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes. However, leaders have not clearly specified the knowledge that they want pupils to learn in each year group. Pupils are not building their knowledge over time. Leaders need to continue to refine and adapt the curriculum to ensure that the knowledge that they want pupils to learn in each year group is made clear.
- In reading and mathematics, pupils are not being sufficiently challenged in lessons. Opportunities to extend pupils' learning in these subjects are being missed. Subject leaders should ensure that staff are using the most effective strategies to assess what pupils know and then ensure that they understand how to build on this effectively in order to extend pupils' knowledge further.
- Occasionally, leaders' actions in response to recording low-level concerns about pupils' behaviour or welfare are not as strong as they should be. This means that leaders miss opportunities to identify patterns in behaviour or safeguarding. Leaders should review the processes in place for recording, and responding to, any low-level concerns about pupils' welfare.

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	107511
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10240326
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tim Machin
Headteacher	David Perrin
Website	www.heptonstallschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 November 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The headteacher was in post at the last inspection.
- The school previously had a nursery. The nursery was closed at the start of September 2022.
- The school reduced its number of classes from four to three in September 2022.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and two curriculum leaders, one of whom is the special educational needs coordinator.

- The lead inspector met with representatives from the local governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into reading, mathematics, art and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, conducted joint lesson visits with leaders, had discussions with teachers, spoke to pupils about their work and looked at pupils' books and samples of their work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, around the school and at playtime and lunchtime. They spoke with pupils about their views of the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- During the inspection, a range of safeguarding information was scrutinised, including the school's policies and records. Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed relationships between pupils and pupils and pupils and adults. The lead inspector also met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and pupils and Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. This included comments received via the free-text facility. They also talked to some parents in the school playground.

Inspection team

Nicola Beaumont, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Vicky Oddy

Ofsted Inspector

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