

# Inspection of a good school: Heathside School

Brooklands Lane, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 8UZ

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Inspection dates:

14 and 15 November 2023

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The head of school for this school is Gareth Lewis. This school is part of ElmWey Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the executive principal, Anne Cullum, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Francis Nicholas.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The school is highly ambitious for pupils' achievement. The sustained efforts of staff and pupils ensure that these ambitions become a reality. Pupils achieve strongly in public examinations and throughout the school.

The school takes a consistent and proactive approach to behaviour. As a result, pupils display high standards of conduct and are motivated to learn. They feel that the house point system rewards them for living up to the school's values. When pupils' behaviour needs correcting, the school supports this effectively.

Pupils and staff work together effectively across a range of areas. The 'student impact team' helps to shape the school's practice, such as the approach to well-being and mental health. Students in the sixth form are positive about the help and guidance that they receive. They develop leadership skills from mentoring younger pupils, for example supporting them with reading.

Pupils enjoy their lessons and the extensive array of opportunities the school provides. If pupils want to set up new clubs, then leaders assist them to do so. Every aspect of the school's provision helps to foster pupils' independence and resilience. Leaders make sure that all pupils benefit from what the school has to offer, regardless of background.

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

Pupils achieve very highly across all areas of the curriculum. This reflects the school's curriculum and the emphasis on high-value qualifications. Leaders make sure that pupils' learning goes beyond the national curriculum. By ensuring that all pupils access the same wealth of knowledge, the school caters strongly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. Pupils gain an increasingly refined and complex understanding in each subject as they progress through the school.

The school supports teachers to be experts in their subjects. Teachers give detailed and clear explanations that are rich in technical language. As a result, pupils' knowledge develops strongly. Pupils use their learning to analyse and make predictions accurately, for example during practical work in science. Skilful checking and questioning enable teachers to pick up on gaps in pupils' understanding. As a result, teaching is highly responsive and misconceptions are addressed swiftly. Leaders use assessment information to direct extra support for pupils who may need it.

Leaders have recently reviewed the school's provision for pupils with SEND. This enables the school to take a systematic approach to identifying needs. Staff receive additional training to help ensure that they use effective strategies to meet pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND produce high-quality work and achieve strongly. The school extends pupils' vocabulary and enhances their reading. Literacy lessons are supplemented by help with reading for pupils who need it. This enables those who are at an early stage of learning English to become fluent in reading. In the sixth form, students are taught effective study skills and subject-specific literacy. Across the curriculum, pupils develop their mathematical learning to an exceptional standard.

The school ensures that pupils conduct themselves purposefully and positively. Staff use the school's system of rewards and consequences effectively. Leaders support pupils to manage their behaviour well, such as through mentoring programmes. 'Keeping in mind' meetings enable staff to coordinate extra help where pupils need it. This contributes to pupils' strong attendance at school.

The programme for wider development is as ambitious as the school's academic curriculum. Leaders have designed this to broaden pupils' life experiences regardless of background. Cultural opportunities, such as theatre trips, enrich pupils' learning in English. The school ensures that these opportunities are accessible to all pupils.

Pupils explore spiritual and moral questions through assemblies, religious education and ethics lessons. They are taught about social norms and self-regulation. Leaders incorporate emerging safeguarding issues into the programme of learning. This supports pupils to learn how to stay safe. The careers programme is extensive and makes effective use of connections with the local community. Pupils of all ages gain exposure to employers through careers fairs and interview days. Leaders make sure that pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged benefit strongly from this. In the sixth form, students broaden their understanding of potential career routes, including through work experience.

Leaders are alert to potential workload pressures on staff. They have used feedback from staff surveys to ensure that training and meetings are balanced appropriately. Leaders also seek to engage positively with parents, such as through information evenings at the start of each academic year. Governors and trustees exercise effective oversight of leaders' actions. They ensure that, despite resource constraints, pupils continue to benefit from education of a very high standard.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## 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 predecessor school, also called Heathside School, to be good in October 2013.

## 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142314
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288062
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,261
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	193
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Francis Nicholas
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Anne Cullum (Executive Principal)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gareth Lewis (Head of School)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.heathside.surrey.sch.uk">www.heathside.surrey.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	23 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Heathside School is part of the ElmWey Learning Trust.
- The school currently uses two registered alternative providers and one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, including the head of school, vice-principals, and other senior and middle leaders. The inspectors also met representatives from the local governing board and from the trust, including trustees and the executive headteacher.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, mathematics, design technology and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about 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 inspectors also discussed the curriculum and provision for pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, governors, trustees, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts the pupils' interests first.

### **Inspection team**

Daniel Botting, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Ellison

His Majesty's Inspector

Wendy Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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