

# Inspection of Heron Way Primary School

Heron Way, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 6DJ

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Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at this school relish learning and rightly take pride in their achievements. Adults have a deep understanding of how to meet pupils' emotional and physical needs. This creates an inclusive atmosphere where both pupils and adults feel supported to try out new experiences, make mistakes and grow personally. As a result, staff are experts in the subjects they teach, and all pupils achieve highly.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. Staff lead by example, showing high expectations that everyone will treat each other with kindness and respect. As one parent put it, 'children are friendly, confident, and inclusive with one another and a direct representation of how the school is run'. Older pupils act as role models for younger ones through responsibilities, such as reading buddies and librarians. They learn to have positive attitudes, saying it's better to be 'glass half full' people.

Teachers make the curriculum so fascinating that pupils cannot wait to find out more about it. They love the interesting activities their teachers design for them. They are not afraid to challenge themselves, knowing that if they get stuck, their teachers will help them get back on track. Pupils quickly develop resilience, determination, and admirable attitudes to learning.

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

Leaders are excellent at developing their staff. They coach one another to become experts in curriculum design, subject knowledge, and early childhood development. Staff use this knowledge skilfully, alongside their astute understanding of each pupil's pastoral needs, to adapt their teaching. This enables all pupils to achieve highly.

Teachers are skilful in their use of assessment. They begin to build a picture of what children can do on transition to the Reception Year. Teachers use questioning really well to determine gaps in pupils' understanding, which they then address straight away. Staff use resources that aid individual pupil's understanding of the curriculum. If any fall behind, they are helped to catch up quickly. This means that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), keep up with their learning. Teachers give pupils frequent opportunities to revisit what they learned before. This helps them to commit knowledge to their long-term memory and make connections across the curriculum. For example, pupils talk knowledgeably about Viking longboats and how their design helped the Vikings to invade. They appreciate the challenges faced by the World War 11 evacuees and can relate this to their later learning about the Windrush generation.

The school has designed a curriculum which intrigues pupils. They learn each subject in a logical order, so their understanding of the ideas and knowledge build securely. Children have an excellent start to their education in the Reception Year. Developing language is a focus. Children talk about their learning confidently and use a wide bank of vocabulary. For example, they discuss how whole numbers are

made of different parts, the texture of different vegetables, which continent they came from and how to stick, cut and tear materials. Adults support children's learning through play, using their interests to teach the curriculum. By the end of Reception, children are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school's huge library pays tribute to the importance given to reading. Teachers share their enthusiasm for books at every opportunity. Older pupils read to younger ones, sharing their love of stories. Any children at risk of struggling to read are identified before starting school. Teachers plan specific help, so these children keep up with their peers. Staff have high expectations that all pupils will learn to read quickly. They keep meticulous track of pupils' learning, making sure the books they read match the sounds they need to practise. Pupils love the 'reading gnomes' who regularly bring new books to their classes.

The school designs bespoke opportunities for pupils to build character and experience opportunities beyond the curriculum, according to their individual needs. Trips to the river Arun, Brighton and the Isle of Wight enhance the curriculum successfully. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe on the internet. They learn how to look after their physical and emotional health, saying that 'a problem shared is a problem halved'. Pupils are taught that everyone is valued, and that difference is a strength.

The governing body works highly effectively with the school. Together, they have a strong moral imperative to pursue excellence in everything they do. Governors understand the challenges pupils and their families face. They support and challenge the school's work through a well-considered strategy. They keep a watchful eye on safeguarding trends, supporting the school in its strong advocacy for pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 125887   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | West Sussex  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10296323   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 412  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Patrick Donovan  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | James Crump  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.heronway.w-sussex.sch.uk/">www.heronway.w-sussex.sch.uk/</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 18 October 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005                       |

## Information about this school

- There has been a new chair of governors since the last inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## 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 the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspections are a point-in-time about the quality of a school's education provision.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, geography, history and science. For each deep dive, they 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.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of local governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes. They spoke with pupils about bullying, behaviour, and leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour.

### **Inspection team**

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andy Platt

Ofsted Inspector

Vickie Farrow

Ofsted Inspector

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