

# Inspection of a good school: Little Heath School

Hainault Road, Little Heath, Romford, Essex, RM6 5RX

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Inspection dates:

27 and 28 February 2024

## Outcome

Little Heath School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Little Heath School is a place where pupils flourish and feel safe. The school sets high standards, and this helps pupils become lively individuals who love learning. Pupils are always shown respect and compassion. Staff collaborate with parents and carers and other professionals long before pupils join the school so that they can succeed from day one. This is especially important as many have previously had difficult experiences of education.

The school has a peaceful atmosphere. This is because pupils learn to use strategies that help them feel calm and be ready to learn. Pupils are respectful and tolerant. They show these qualities in the considerate and kind way that they act towards others. Staff members know that pupils' behaviour reflects their needs. They realise that pupils' actions are not meant to be harmful towards others, and as a result, bullying is not a problem.

Pupils' hobbies and ambitions are enhanced by a remarkable variety of activities that support pupils' social and cultural development. The school emphasises the importance of engaging pupils with the community. This helps them learn about the world around them and their role in it. Pupils especially enjoy having a farm on-site, which includes a python and a gecko.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum with three different routes that suit the diverse needs of pupils. Each route covers a broad range of national curriculum subjects.

The school prioritises reading. An effective phonics programme is in place to help pupils to become confident and fluent readers. Reading for pleasure is valued in the school. Pupils clearly enjoy the books that have been thoughtfully selected for them to read in class and at home. Pupils' communication and language development is highly personalised. This is a strength of the school. Adults effectively demonstrate the language

they want pupils to learn. They skilfully use visual images and objects to reinforce learning. As a result, pupils develop their communication skills exceptionally well. However, in some subjects, the school has not considered precisely enough what pupils should learn and by when. This prevents teachers from accurately identifying and building on what pupils know and remember.

Staff check that pupils are making progress towards their education, health and care (EHC) plan targets and use this information to overcome obstacles created by the pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Students in the sixth form value the guidance they get from their teachers about their next steps. Leaders make sure that the careers guidance programme is embedded throughout the school. This means that nobody loses sight of the importance of preparing pupils for adulthood. All gain places in education, employment, or training when they leave. The annual careers fair has become particularly successful, with other special schools now wanting to join.

Tolerance and respect for individual differences are routinely promoted through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. Pupils spoke positively about how these lessons develop their confidence to speak out and express themselves.

Adults are good at preventing potential incidents and are always there to restore calm when needed. Many pupils have learned to notice when they are feeling restless and are often able to control their own behaviour effectively, ensuring that learning time is seldom interrupted.

The school works well with parents to promote good attendance. Where required, support and guidance are given. As a result, pupils' attendance continues to improve.

Parents have a high level of confidence in school staff and know that if they raise concerns they will always be dealt with satisfactorily. The parents and pupils who spoke to inspectors all agreed that Little Heath School is 'amazing'.

Staff report that leaders are responsive and open to listening to their views. Recent improvements to workload have helped improve staff wellbeing. The wellbeing team offers space for staff to discuss challenges, and specialist services are brought in where necessary. This reinforces the school's positive culture and fosters empathy and approachability among colleagues.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum does not set out what pupils need to know in sufficient detail. This means that, on occasion, pupils are not taught concepts in a logical order to help build their knowledge and understanding over time. The school should clarify the knowledge and vocabulary that pupils should learn in these subjects and the order that this should be taught.

## 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 school to be good in February 2014.

## 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>	102878
<b>Local authority</b>	Redbridge
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296712
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19
<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>	213
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	55
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing</b>	Ramesh Muthyala
<b>Headteacher</b>	Fawzia Govender
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lheath.net">www.lheath.net</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	13 and 14 July 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a special school for pupils between the ages of 11 and 19 years.
- All pupils have SEND and an EHC plan.
- The school caters for pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties. Many have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.
- Two sixth form classes are located offsite at New City College.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other leaders, including curriculum and pastoral leaders.
- Inspectors held discussions with teachers, teaching assistants and governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English (including early reading), personal development, and art. For each of these subjects, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with members of staff individually and in groups and spoke to pupils at various points during the inspection. Inspectors took account of responses to pupil, parent and staff surveys.
- Inspectors looked at records relating to behaviour, bullying, attendance, and safeguarding.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector/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.

### **Inspection team**

Francis Gonzalez, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lorraine Slee

Ofsted Inspector

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