

Inspection of Heather Primary School

Main Street, Heather, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 2QP

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2024

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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

In this small school, every child is known and cared for. They know the school values of resilience, respect and reflection and demonstrate them in the way they conduct themselves. The school is a happy and harmonious community.

Since the last inspection, the school has shown a determination to improve. The staff have taken swift action to address weaknesses, especially in reading and mathematics. They have reviewed and developed the curriculum. Parents and carers have confidence that their children will do well.

Pupils feel safe. They know that if they have any worries, the adults are there to help. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Staff are well trained and vigilant.

Pupils are proud of their school. They work hard and take part well in lessons. They like the way that staff make learning interesting and fun. Staff encourage pupils to aim high.

The school council gives pupils the opportunity to influence decisions taken by the school. The school provides lots of opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular clubs and activities. Pupils enjoy these clubs, where they can learn to garden, dance and sing. They say that they are well prepared for the move to secondary school.

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

The school has put a curriculum in place that is ambitious. It sets out the topics and key knowledge that pupils will cover in most subjects. Teachers have thought carefully about the way they organise the curriculum so that all pupils, including those in mixed-age classes, can build their knowledge.

Staff have worked hard to develop the mathematics curriculum. Teachers give clear explanations and model for pupils what effective mathematical thinking involves. They give pupils lots of opportunities to practise key skills. As a result, pupils fluently complete calculations. They know about different methods for solving problems. Pupils select the most appropriate method to address the problem they are working on.

In a small number of subjects, the curriculum has been developed recently and is being taught for the first time. In these subjects, pupils' knowledge is less secure, and there are some gaps where topics have not been taught effectively in the past. Teachers' planning is now being amended to fill these knowledge gaps.

Teachers adapt how they teach the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils in their class, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

(SEND). These pupils receive effective support from teachers and teaching assistants. The school is quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan activities that are engaging and that spark pupils' interest and enthusiasm. For example, in a science lesson, pupils designed and carried out their own experiments. Teachers encourage pupils to think carefully, through skilful questioning and discussion.

Since the last inspection, the school has adopted a phonics scheme that allows pupils to build their reading knowledge systematically. The school ensures that staff are well trained so that they deliver the reading curriculum consistently well. Pupils gain the knowledge they need at the right time. Staff give extra help to pupils who need it. As a result, pupils develop into fluent and confident readers.

Children in the early years follow a stimulating curriculum, which prepares them well for later years. They develop a love of learning. Staff plan in detail what children need to learn. They ensure that there is a careful balance between independent and staff-led activity. Children develop their language skills, both spoken and written. They are confident and eager to talk about their learning.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They respond well to staff and are eager to do well. Pupils enjoy breaktimes and lunchtimes, and play well together. The school works closely with parents to make sure that pupils attend school well.

Pupils' personal development is a key focus of the school's work. Pupils learn about life beyond school. They understand and celebrate the differences between people. They know and understand the fundamental British values. Pupils demonstrate these values, such as respect and tolerance, in the way they treat each other.

Teachers feel well supported. They know that their workload and well-being are considered. They receive a range of good-quality training. This has been crucial in the school's improvement. In the subjects where the curriculum is well established, leaders check that it is being taught well. This is less effective in the subjects which have been developed more recently.

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 yet identify precisely what pupils should learn and when. This can lead to gaps in pupils' knowledge. The school should ensure that in every subject the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in each topic are identified, to guide teachers' planning and assessment.

- In some subjects, leaders do not gather sufficient information to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum accurately. As a result, it is not always possible for leaders to identify where improvements should be made. Leaders should ensure that they are systematically evaluating the effectiveness of the school's work in all areas of the curriculum.

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

Unique reference number	119926
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10324077
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	115
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dawn Guzzetta
Headteacher	Maxine Michalowski
Website	www.heather.leics.sch.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 February 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than average.
- The school uses the services of two unregistered alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, science, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders, including the leader responsible for the provision for pupils with SEND and leaders responsible for behaviour and personal development.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority and those responsible for governance.
- Inspectors looked at information about behaviour, attendance and enrichment opportunities.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Paul Heery, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Azemia	Ofsted Inspector

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