

Inspection of Heronswood Primary School

Heronswood Road, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY10 4EX

Inspection dates: 30 April and 1 May 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

The headteacher of this school is Rhoda Pierpoint. This school is part of the Rivers Church of England Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Matt Meckin, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andy Jobbins.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Heronswood Primary School are expected to do their very best and live by the school's 'STARS values' of sharing, trust, achievement, respect and safety each day.

The school sets very clear expectations for pupils' behaviour and attendance. Pupils attend regularly and feel safe at school. Pupils are respectful of staff and one another. Classrooms are hardworking places where pupils work hard and achieve well. 'Zone boards' help pupils to take ownership of their behaviour in school. Staff apply the school rules with fairness and consistency. Any pupil who needs it, gets high-quality support to behave well.

Pupils enjoy competing in a range of activities, like the bell boating regatta and a choir event. There is strong uptake of the wide range of clubs that are available to pupils. These include art, gymnastics, drawing, mindfulness, forest school and board games. The exciting annual box car rally and the lever and Lego workshops help pupils to develop science, technology, engineering and mathematical knowledge and skills (STEM). All this helps pupils to broaden their horizons and develop new talents and interests.

Pupils apply for and take on responsibilities such as school councillors, head boy or girl, sustainability leaders and digital leaders. This helps pupils to develop teamwork, negotiation and interview skills.

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

The Heronswood Curriculum is extremely ambitious for all pupils. The knowledge and skills pupils need for future success are robustly planned and sequenced. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They make sure that pupils build successfully on prior learning so that pupils know and remember more of the curriculum over time.

High-quality lessons motivate pupils to want to do their very best. Staff are skilled in spotting when pupils might need more help in understanding the lesson, or how it links to what they have learned in the past. Trips, visits and visitors help pupils to deepen their learning of the curriculum. For example, a chocolate factory visit, a castle trip and Stone Age workshop. All this helps pupils to meet the high expectations the school sets and achieve well.

Early reading is exceptionally well taught. Staff are highly skilled at teaching daily phonics lessons. Pupils read and are read to regularly in school. They practise and apply new sounds when reading books that match the sounds they learn. Any pupil who falls behind in their reading gets swift and effective support to catch up. The 'golden shelf' of books, school book swap, 'battle of the books,' and fifty

recommended class reads help pupils to develop a love of reading. Pupils learn to read with the confidence and accuracy expected for their age, many exceed this.

Children in the early years get off to a great start in their education. Staff carefully consider how children in early years learn best. Consequently, they get the best support to learn well from different starting points. They develop important social skills of taking turns and working together. They quickly develop an effective pencil grip to form letters clearly and legibly. Children build confidence in using numbers and counting. They learn to read and write words and simple sentences. Children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are exceptionally well supported to be successful in school. Their needs are identified swiftly and met. For example, classroom staff are skilled in using technology to overcome barriers to learning. Support from external professionals, such as speech and language therapists, enrich the provision for pupils with SEND. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well in school.

Emotional well-being is prioritised so that pupils get the most from every lesson. Pupil well-being champions support pupils during social times with friendship issues or worries. They provide weekly well-being assemblies for younger pupils and offer well-being strategies to help them in school life.

Pupils learn that they have a voice and the right to be heard through the work of the school council. A visit to the Houses of Parliament and a meeting with the local member of parliament helps pupils to learn about democracy. Carol singing at a local care home and litter picking provide opportunities to become active members of the community. Pupils learn about different religions, including Buddhism, Christianity and Sikhism, and the importance of places of worship for different faiths. This helps pupils to respect difference. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders, including those from the trust, work hard to understand what the school does well and how it can get even better at. This includes capturing the thoughts of pupils, parents and staff. Staff value the meaningful and effective engagement from leaders who listen and care. They report high levels of support for any workload or well-being issues they raise.

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

Unique reference number	141246
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10294601
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	456
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Jobbins
Headteacher	Rhoda Pierpoint
Website	www.heronswoodprimaryschool.co.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 December 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- The school has opened a new on site two-year-old provision since the last inspection.

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.
- 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, geography, mathematics, and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of sessions, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and held discussions with leaders about the art, computing and Spanish curriculum. They also considered pupils' writing.

- The inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult and reviewed reading resources.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation on the school's website.
- 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 observed pupils in lessons and at other times during the day.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding leader, curriculum leaders, member of the trust including the chief executive.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View, pupil surveys and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rebecca Cox	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Turner	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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