

# Heycroft Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114789
<b>Local Authority</b>	Southend-On-Sea
<b>Inspection number</b>	354317
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Williams

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	411
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Mathieson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Palmer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 April 2007
<b>School address</b>	Benvenue Avenue Eastwood Leigh-on-Sea
<b>Telephone number</b>	01702 521832
<b>Fax number</b>	01702 421528
<b>Email address</b>	office@heycroft.southend.sch.uk

---

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, who visited 30 lessons during which 19 teachers were observed. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and four governors, and informal discussions were held with a few parents. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its monitoring and assessment records, safeguarding documents and those relating to health and safety. In addition, 184 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were considered, together with those completed by pupils in Key Stage 2 and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the reasons for girls appearing to have made slower progress than boys in Key Stage 2, and how current pupils' progress compares
- the school's evidence to support its view that pupils make excellent progress in aspects of their personal development
- how well teaching and the curriculum impact on pupils' progress
- the extent to which the school's self-evaluation systems enable leaders to have an accurate view of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning.

## Information about the school

Most of the pupils at this large primary school are from White British backgrounds and very few are learning English as an additional language. A well below average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similarly low. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes. Amongst its awards, the school has Healthy Schools status and the Artsmark Gold award. The headteacher has been in post since January 2010.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Heycroft provides a satisfactory education for its pupils, who make satisfactory progress to reach broadly average levels of attainment in Year 6. Since the last inspection, the school's results in the national tests for the oldest pupils have fluctuated and, in 2009, they were the lowest for some time. The headteacher, staff and governors are working successfully to turn this round by introducing more robust systems to monitor the quality of lessons and pupils' books. This is providing leaders with a wealth of information from which weaknesses are identified and tackled rigorously. As a direct consequence of this work, the quality of teaching is rising and pupils' progress is accelerating, although this is not yet sufficiently consistent across the school.

There is considerable improvement in the performance of pupils currently in Year 6, particularly in English, where they are on track to reach above average levels of attainment. This represents good progress from their starting points. Amongst other notable successes is improved provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, these pupils are making good progress in their all-round development. The school's success in arresting the recent decline, raising pupils' attainment and accelerating their progress, together with leaders' accurate evaluation of its effectiveness and priorities, shows that the school is well placed to secure further improvement.

Improving teaching is contributing well to pupils' better progress, but it is not yet consistently good enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. Lessons are planned carefully to take account of pupils' different needs and abilities. Staff provide an interesting range of activities, often giving pupils practical, hands-on experience. There are inconsistencies, however, particularly in the pace of lessons, in the way that teachers check on pupils' understanding during the course of the lesson and in the quality of marking. Leaders have recognised that improvement has been more marked in English than mathematics, and raising attainment in this subject rightly remains a priority. A review of planning is providing pupils with more opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects, and plans are in hand to provide parents with guidance on the school's approach to teaching mathematics.

The broad and exciting curriculum contributes positively to pupils' enjoyment of school, and means that they make good progress in their personal development. A particular success is the exceptional way that the school promotes healthy lifestyles, reflected in its status as a Healthy School. As a result, pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of diet and exercise. Many cycle to school and take part in the wide range of sporting opportunities. Pupils behave well and are usually eager to learn, but they are not always sufficiently aware of their own targets for improvement. Opportunities for

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

them to evaluate their own learning are not consistent from class to class.

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

- Raise pupils' attainment in mathematics by:
  - completing the planning to improve the opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills and solve problems in other subjects
  - providing parents and carers with guidance on how they can help their children at home.
- Raise the quality of teaching to the level of the best by:
  - ensuring a more consistently brisk pace in lessons
  - using questioning more effectively to probe, challenge and assess pupils' understanding
  - providing pupils with sharper feedback on their learning and how they can improve.
- Accelerate pupils' learning by:
  - ensuring they are clear about their learning targets and how to achieve them
  - providing them with more opportunities to evaluate their own learning.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. National assessment results in Year 2 have varied between average and above average in recent years, and current pupils are on track to reach broadly average levels this year, representing satisfactory progress. In 2009, Year 6 pupils made significantly slower than expected progress from their starting points when they were in Year 2. The school has tackled this well, and has ensured that current pupils are making good progress in English and satisfactory progress in mathematics and science. In a successful Year 6 English lesson, pupils made good progress in their understanding of the structure of poetry because the teacher questioned well to keep a close check on their learning. Across the school, pupils enjoy lessons and their progress is accelerating, but the school's assessment records and pupils' work in books and lessons show that progress is not yet consistently good. Inspectors looked closely at the progress of boys and girls, because girls did less well than boys in the 2009 tests in Year 6. This revealed that there was a higher proportion of girls with special educational needs in Year 6 last year. Amongst current pupils, there is no difference in the performance of boys and girls. Improvements in the quality of support in and out of lessons for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities mean that these pupils are making good progress.

Pupils make good progress in their moral, social and cultural development. They have a

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

good understanding of cultures other than their own, relate well to each other and have a good understanding of right and wrong. Opportunities for their spiritual development, for example, through time for reflection in assemblies, are more limited. Most pupils feel safe in school, which is strongly endorsed by parents. They enjoy taking on extra responsibilities, for example, by acting as mentors, prefects and standing for the school council. Average attendance levels and satisfactory progress in basic skills mean that pupils are appropriately prepared for their future lives. They develop good team and enterprise skills through their work on the fair-trade council and by charity fundraising.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Staff have improved links between subjects to make learning more relevant and enjoyable, and this is contributing to the improving picture. As part of their efforts to raise attainment in mathematics, staff have recognised, rightly, that there is more to do to extend pupils' strategies for solving mathematical problems and using them in practical situations. In response, they are identifying where pupils can use their mathematical skills in other subjects. The curriculum responds well to pupils' interests

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

and gives them good opportunities to pursue their own lines of enquiry. A good range of visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning and enjoyment. French is taught successfully in Years 1 to 6. Opportunities outside lessons are widespread and popular. A high priority is placed on the arts, reflected in Artsmark Gold award, and the school competes with other schools very successfully in the sporting arena.

Staff are working productively with senior leaders to improve their practice and the proportion of good teaching is increasing. This is helping to improve pupils' learning, but is not yet sufficiently embedded across the school to secure consistently good progress. Where teaching is successful, lessons proceed briskly, teachers keep a close check on pupils' understanding and they tackle any misconceptions sensitively. This was seen to good effect in a good lesson in Year 2, where the teacher stopped the class at regular points to check their progress. Occasionally, pupils spend too long on an activity or listening to the teacher, which slows the pace of learning. Pupils are occasionally encouraged to reflect on their own learning but, often, opportunities are missed, or the questioning is too superficial to probe deeply enough. In addition, almost a third of the Key Stage 2 pupils who returned the inspection questionnaire report that they do not know how well they are doing. Lessons invariably run smoothly because teachers are well organised, pupils behave well and relationships are positive. Occasional challenging behaviour from a few pupils is usually well managed by staff.

Pupils' welfare is given a high priority. A considerable strength of the school is the care and support provided for pupils identified as potentially vulnerable. This ensures that these pupils are fully included and able to make similar progress to their classmates. Teaching assistants and the learning mentor are influential in this provision and in the improved support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A wide range of strategies is used successfully to provide support in lessons or to tailor the learning in withdrawn groups. Consequently, these pupils make good progress. Induction arrangements when pupils first arrive, and for their smooth transfer to their next schools, are good. Pupils who attend the after-school club are well cared for.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher, staff and governors are united in their drive to raise standards and their work is bearing fruit. They have established comprehensive systems to check on the school's performance. Areas for improvement are identified and challenging targets

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

are set and usually met. Leaders have successfully improved key areas of work, but there is more still to do because inconsistencies remain in the quality of lessons and pupils' progress. The governing body contribute well to self-evaluation processes. They are knowledgeable about the school and what needs to improve, and they hold leaders to account. Good links are established with parents. From its consultation, leaders have identified that an important part of their drive to raise attainment is the need to provide parents and carers with more guidance on the school's approaches to teaching mathematics and how they might help at home. The school is very inclusive and pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are afforded the same opportunities so that any discrimination is tackled effectively. Staff track the progress of different groups closely and they have successfully closed the gap in the performance of boys and girls. The school promotes community cohesion well, both in the school and the wider locality, and has a good understanding of the community it serves. Detailed plans have been drawn up to extend this work further afield. Safeguarding procedures are thorough and robust steps are taken to check on the suitability of adults to work with children.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children get off to a good start in Reception. Their already good progress is accelerating because of excellent teaching, planning and assessment that meet their learning and welfare needs well. The setting is exceptionally well led and managed which, alongside the high quality of provision, is contributing strongly to steadily improving outcomes. When children first start school, in most years their starting points are broadly typical of



**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

this age. They achieve well so that, by the end of Reception, most reach and some exceed the goals expected. The school's data shows that many children currently in Reception had lower starting points than usual. Despite this, they are matching the attainment levels seen in previous years because they are making even faster progress. They are eager to learn, approach all activities with great enthusiasm and concentrate for increasingly long periods. On the rare occasions when asked to sit for too long, a few become restless. Planning gives regular access to all areas of learning and excellent assessment systems ensure that those who might need extra help are identified early. Indoor and outdoor accommodation is exciting and highly stimulating and is used very imaginatively to promote children's all-round development. Links with parents and carers are excellent, informally and, for example, through contact books and home reading records. This contributes to the staff's acute understanding of each child's needs. Welfare requirements are met in full.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

**Views of parents and carers**

A higher than usual proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires, and the very large majority agree with each of the statements included. The majority strongly agree that they are happy with their child's experience, that their children enjoy school and are kept safe, and feel that the school is well led and managed. Inspectors endorse these views. Few parents and carers disagree with the statements. A few parents or carers feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. During the inspection inspectors found that, while a few pupils occasionally present challenging behaviour, they are generally well managed by staff so there is no loss to their learning or that of other pupils.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Heycroft Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 184 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 411 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	110	60	67	36	5	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	117	64	64	35	2	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	60	33	107	58	12	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	79	43	83	45	12	7	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	109	59	65	35	5	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	82	45	87	47	10	5	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	101	55	74	40	4	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	76	41	90	49	4	2	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	93	51	77	42	9	5	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	64	35	100	54	9	5	7	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	65	35	100	54	8	4	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	117	64	58	32	3	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	121	66	53	29	7	4	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



23 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Heycroft Primary School, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 5SJ

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school recently. A special thank you goes to those of you who completed a questionnaire or met with us to give us your views. You gave us lots of helpful information. Your school gives you a satisfactory education. This means that there are some things it does well and some things it could do better. Here are some of the things it does well.

You have an excellent understanding of how to be healthy.

The staff take good care of you and most of you, and your parents, told us that you feel safe. You behave well.

Children in Reception and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.

The staff give you lots of interesting things to do in and out of lessons.

Your headteacher and the other staff and governors have been working hard to improve the school and things are getting better.

So that your school can get even better, we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do three things.

Your work in English is improving quickly. We want you and your teachers to make your work in mathematics just as good.

We want your teachers to keep a closer check on your understanding during lessons and give you enough information about how you can improve when they mark your work.

We want them to help you to understand your targets and give you the chance to assess your own work.

All of you can help. Keep trying hard and listening to your teachers and please read their comments carefully when they mark your work.

Yours sincerely

Keith Williams

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**