

Inspection of Heathlands Primary Academy

Heath Way, Castle Bromwich, Birmingham, West Midlands B34 6NB

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Heathlands Primary Academy's values thread through everything the school does. Pupils know they are expected to persevere, achieve and cooperate while being responsible, respectful and resilient. They live up to these expectations.

Pupils told inspectors that everyone is welcome here. They celebrate differences and understand the importance of equality and acceptance. In lessons and during playtimes, pupils behave well and demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. Learning in lessons is rarely disrupted. However, some pupils do not attend school regularly and they miss out on important learning. Pupils understand what bullying is, but say it is rare. They have absolute trust in staff to resolve any poor behaviour quickly.

Pupils are safe and happy. Staff care for all pupils effectively and are highly skilled at supporting pupils when they need help. All adults have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and are ambitious for all. Pupils find the curriculum exciting and they thoroughly enjoy their learning. Teachers go above and beyond to provide pupils with rich learning experiences, both in and out of the classroom. Pupils benefit from these experiences and achieve well.

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

The curriculum at Heathlands, starting in Nursery, is ambitious for all pupils. It is well designed and structured so that learning builds over time. Subject leaders, supported by class teachers, make sure that the content of the curriculum is what pupils need to know. In most subjects, content is planned and sequenced with careful consideration. However, in a small number of subjects, teachers have not identified the precise detail of what to teach. Consequently, pupils do not learn as much as they could.

Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. They are skilled in identifying and putting in place the help that pupils need to achieve well. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND receive the support they need to access the full curriculum.

The early years provides children with a great start in their education. Children learn to be kind to one another, listen attentively and focus well on activities. The environment is safe and engaging and offers a purposeful learning space, both indoors and outside. Leaders and staff have extensive subject knowledge. They use this well to provide structured, well-chosen learning activities of high quality. Staff know the children extremely well and shape provision to meet their needs. Staff leave nothing to chance.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of early reading and phonics. Leaders are relentless in ensuring that they train staff well. Staff know exactly what to teach, how to teach it and how to support pupils who fall behind. Through accurate assessment, adults provide pupils with books that match their phonic knowledge. Pupils become fluent, confident readers.

To help pupils develop a love of reading, the school provides a wide selection of books to choose from. Pupils enjoy reading and are very proud of their school library, which they visit often. The '100 Books in Year 6' challenge inspires Year 6 pupils to read widely. Teachers read high-quality books to pupils, who enjoy hearing and discussing them.

Subject leaders are passionate and knowledgeable about their subjects. They use their expertise to ensure that teachers teach well by providing good support and training. Pupils achieve well because of the consistent approach teachers use; this is particularly the case in English and mathematics.

Leaders have focused on improving writing in recent years. Their work has been successful at raising the standard of pupils' writing. Pupils write skilfully, adopting techniques to communicate effectively both in English and across the wider curriculum.

Teachers revisit previous learning regularly. This helps pupils to know more and remember more. Pupils are enthusiastic, confident and skilled at applying what they have learned to new situations.

Leaders have extended the curriculum beyond the academic. The school's 'curriculum promise' sets out an ambitious offer of activities to enrich pupils' personal development. There is a strong focus on widening pupils' understanding of the world, diversity and equality. Pupils relish these experiences. They particularly enjoy the visits, the clubs on offer and the school allotment.

Leaders at all levels know the school extremely well. Governors offer focused challenge and support to leaders. Through careful monitoring, leaders identify accurately the school's strengths and next steps. This means that strategic plans are highly effective in driving improvement. Subject leaders demonstrate enormous passion. They have strong subject knowledge and a relentless drive to make their subjects as effective as possible. Leaders support staff very effectively. They are always considerate of workload, staff well-being and the training they provide.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff know exactly what to do if they have concerns about a pupil's well-being. This is because leaders provide staff with regular training and advice.

When staff have concerns about a pupil, they report them immediately. Leaders respond promptly and engage with other agencies effectively. Leaders keep detailed safeguarding records. They know pupils and their families well. They are relentless when dealing with concerns and offer support when needed.

Leaders make and record appropriate safeguarding checks on all staff and visitors who come into school.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in and out of school, including online, through the personal, social and health education curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, teachers have not identified the exact detail of what pupils need to know. This means that pupils are not achieving as well as they could in these subjects. Leaders need to ensure that teachers identify the precise knowledge pupils need to learn across all subjects as well as they do in English and mathematics.
- A significant minority of pupils are regularly absent from school. As a result, they are missing out on important learning and are not achieving as well as they could. Leaders should identify more effective strategies in their work with parents and carers to reduce levels of absence and persistent absence, so that all pupils attend school regularly.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	140890
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10268325
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	438
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sean Starr
Headteacher	Pete Higgins
Website	www.heathlnd.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, a member of the local academy committee and a member of the trust board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors 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. An inspector also observed pupils reading.

- Inspectors met with leaders about the school’s safeguarding procedures. Inspectors reviewed policies and records relating to safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors spoke to pupils and staff about pupils’ safety.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator, the early years coordinator and those responsible for monitoring attendance.
- The lead inspector reviewed a wide range of documents, including governors’ minutes, school improvement plans and the school’s website.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted’s surveys of staff’s, pupils’ and parents’ views. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Gareth Morgan, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Graeme Rudland	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Harwood	Ofsted Inspector

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