

Inspection of a good school: Heath Primary School

Slack Lane, Heath, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S44 5RH

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2023

Outcome

Heath Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is an inclusive and friendly school where pupils thrive. Leaders have created an ethos that nurtures and supports pupils. Pupils say that they are happy to come to school. They feel safe and know that adults care about them. However, some pupils do not attend well.

Leaders have ensured that pupils' well-being is at the heart of what the school does. Pupils talk confidently about their well-being and taking care of their mental health. Pupils' opinions are valued. They enjoy roles of responsibility. The reading ambassadors have influenced change, for example by bringing an author into school.

Pupils are respectful towards their peers and adults. Pupils meet the high expectations of behaviour. They behave very well. Bullying is rare, and staff deal with any incidents quickly.

In some subjects, staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. This is because some subjects are not planned clearly to ensure pupils gain the knowledge they should across the curriculum.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent spoke for many when they described the school as a place where pupils are 'cared for, celebrated and encouraged'.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that matches the requirements of the national curriculum. Leaders have thought carefully about how to teach their two-year rolling programme. They have identified the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn, and when, in English, mathematics and science. However, leaders have not determined the most important knowledge pupils need to know and remember in some other subjects.

In some subjects, teachers plan lessons that build on what pupils have learned before. In these lessons, pupils revisit and practise important knowledge before they move on to

new learning. However, this is not consistent in all subjects.

Teachers frequently check and clearly identify what pupils have learned and remembered in, for example, mathematics and English. However, leaders have not ensured that these checks are as well developed in other subjects.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Leaders and staff display a passion for reading. Pupils are motivated by this enthusiasm. Teachers read to pupils daily. Pupils say that they enjoy story time. Staff have high levels of expertise in teaching phonics. They use accurate assessment to identify those pupils who need extra help. Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they start in the Reception class. They read books that are matched to the phonic knowledge that they are learning. Children develop a love of stories from the time that they start in Nursery. Pupils quickly build their confidence and learn to read fluently.

Leaders have developed a mathematics curriculum that logically builds pupils' learning over time. The systematic approach to learning mathematics begins in the early years. Children in the early years focus on their learning of number, pattern and shape. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They ensure that pupils talk about their learning. Pupils often challenge each other to explain their mathematical thinking. Teachers carefully check what pupils have learned. Therefore, they can identify those pupils who need extra help. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively to learn alongside their peers. Teachers adapt the curriculum effectively to meet these pupils' needs. For example, they use appropriate resources and ask relevant questions that deepen learning. Support staff help pupils to overcome challenges and to develop their confidence. Those pupils with SEND who need individualised support benefit from time in the nurture group. These pupils successfully transition back to the main school provision.

Leaders have prioritised pupils' personal development. Pupils know and understand the schools' values of 'respect, achieve, together'. They make connections between the school's values and fundamental British values. Pupils learn about democracy. They understand the importance of the roles of the pupil parliament. Pupils learn the value of respect. Pupils talk about the protected characteristics and how 'nobody should be judged by them'. They gain from a wide range of activities that enrich their time at school.

Staff are positive about being part of the 'Heath family'. Staff are valued members of a hard-working and respected team. They appreciate the efforts that leaders make to manage their workload and well-being. Most parents believe that their children are happy, safe and thriving at school.

The governing body works together well to create an effective team. They know the school very well. It understands its role and fulfils its statutory duties effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that a strong culture of safeguarding underpins the school's work. Staff receive regular training to ensure that they are up to date with statutory guidance. Staff know pupils and their families well. They are swift to act on any concerns. Leaders work effectively with external agencies. They ensure that pupils and their families receive the help that they need. Leaders complete appropriate pre-employment checks on adults before they start working with pupils.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, for example when crossing the road and when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, leaders have not identified the key knowledge that pupils need to learn and when. As a result, pupils do not gain and consolidate the knowledge that they should learn in these subjects. Leaders need to ensure that the foundation subject curriculums set out the precise knowledge that all pupils should learn and when.
- Teachers regularly check what pupils have learned in the core subjects. However, leaders have not developed a consistent approach to these checks in the foundation subjects. As a result, teachers do not clearly know what pupils have learned in these subjects. Leaders need to develop a consistent approach to check pupils' learning in the foundation subjects.
- Rates of attendance remain too low. The number of pupils who are persistently absent from school is too high. This means that pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, miss too much of their education. Leaders need to continue to develop their work with children and their families to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly and that the rate of persistent absence is reduced.

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 predecessor school, Heath Primary School, to be good in June 2011.

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	146508
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10268424
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	348
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Armitage
Headteacher	Jonathan Lynch
Website	www.heath.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- Heath Primary School converted to become an academy school in January 2019. When its predecessor school, Heath Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. The inspector met with governors and a representative from the multi-academy trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and design and technology. For each of these subjects, the inspector held discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with teachers and pupils. The inspector listened to pupils read.

- The inspector reviewed a range of documents and policies.
- The inspector observed 'arts week' activities. The inspector spoke to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- The inspector spoke with safeguarding leaders, pupils and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe. The inspector reviewed safeguarding records and the single central record.
- The inspector considered staff responses to the Ofsted survey.
- The inspector spoke with parents and considered the parental responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Donna Chambers, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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