

Inspection of Heather Primary School

Main Street, Heather, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 2QP

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school and playing with their friends. They have welcomed getting back to more normal routines since the beginning of this academic year. Pupils live by the Heather values 'to be hard-working, enthusiastic, aspirational, team-spirited, honest, empathetic and responsible'. Teachers reward pupils with the 'star of the week' for demonstrating these values.

Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and adults. They demonstrate good manners. Pupils say they feel safe in school. They have lots of adults they can talk with if they have a concern. Sometimes, in lessons, pupils do not behave as well as they could. Some lessons are interrupted by low-level disruption and learning time is lost.

Pupils enjoy the different activities their teachers prepare for them. They talk with enthusiasm about some of the things they have learned, such as how the human digestive system works and the religions of the Mayans. However, the school's curriculum is not well sequenced. Sometimes, pupils' new learning does not build on what they have learned before. The school's programme for teaching phonics does not help all pupils to learn how to read well.

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

Staff are developing the school's curriculum. They have planned out an overview of what content they will cover. However, the curriculum is not planned well enough to show all the knowledge that pupils will learn. The curriculum for the early years does not set out how children's knowledge will develop. It is not clear how what children will learn in the early years links with the rest of the school's curriculum.

Teachers are creative in how they present new knowledge to pupils. Pupils remember the exciting activities that teachers have planned for them. Sometimes, teachers revert to teaching what they have always taught, rather than what the curriculum is telling them to. Teachers' assessment of what pupils can remember is not robust. Gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified quickly enough.

The school's programme for teaching phonics does not meet the needs of all pupils. Recent training has not supported all staff to deliver the programme effectively. Some staff do not always use the correct sounds when teaching. Some pupils are not able to say the sounds properly. Some pupils who fall behind are not provided with effective help to catch up.

Teachers encourage pupils to read for pleasure. Pupils receive 'Golden Tickets' for reading at home. Pupils swap books with each other and share their favourites. They appreciate story time when they can listen to stories together. Children in the early years enjoy reciting stories. They exuberantly retell familiar tales using actions and expressions.

The school's curriculum for mathematics is not fully planned and sequenced in all areas of the subject. Teachers sometimes do not follow the mathematics curriculum closely, so pupils develop gaps in their knowledge. Teachers check what pupils can remember by asking them 'Can you still...'. For example, 'Can you still remember how to calculate the area of a 2D shape?'

Staff give pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) extra support. Parents speak highly of the help the school provides. Leaders make sure that pupils with an education, health and care plan get support to help them access learning. However, sometimes, the support some pupils with SEND receive is not well matched to their needs.

Most of the time pupils behave well at school. They attend school regularly and are rarely late. They learn good manners and support each other well. However, sometimes in lessons, the behaviour of some pupils is not good enough. Sometimes, teachers do not manage this behaviour effectively and learning is interrupted.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in and outside of school, including when working or playing online. Pupils learn about mental health and how to be kind to themselves and others. Pupils' knowledge of what it means to be a British citizen is limited. While they know it is important to treat people equally, they do not fully understand how people might be different from each other.

Leaders and governors know what they need to do to make improvements to the school. However, leaders are not checking that actions for improvement have been carried out. Staff say leaders take their workload into account and provide support when needed. However, the workload of senior leaders is not always given the same consideration.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff, including the breakfast club and lunchtime staff, know it is their responsibility to look out for and pass on any concerns they have about pupils. Leaders have provided staff with up-to-date training. Recent training has included raising awareness of peer-on-peer abuse and sexual harassment. The school's records of incidents are comprehensive. Leaders make referrals to other agencies when needed. It is a priority of leaders and staff to develop positive relationships with families to make sure pupils are kept safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's programme for teaching phonics is not effective for all pupils. Some pupils do not learn the sounds well enough to help them to learn to read. Leaders must ensure the programme for phonics clearly sets out how pupils will learn

sounds and that staff receive the required training to implement the programme effectively.

- The curriculum for mathematics is not planned and sequenced well enough to show how pupils' knowledge will build over time. Teachers use a range of different sources to plan from. Pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders must ensure there is a coherent curriculum for mathematics that is used by all teachers to develop pupils' mathematical knowledge from the early years through to Year 6.
- The early years, and wider curriculum, are not planned carefully. Curriculum plans do not show all the knowledge that leaders want pupils to know. Some subject content does not get taught at all. Leaders must make sure the school's plans for all key stages and subjects set out what they want pupils to know and when, building on what they have learned before and what they will learn next.
- Sometimes teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour well enough in lessons, and learning is interrupted. Leaders must ensure all teachers follow the school's behaviour policy and receive support and training to enable them to manage behaviour effectively.
- The school's curriculum for personal development does not develop pupils' awareness of fundamental British values and the protected characteristics well enough. Pupils have only a superficial understanding of the liberties they are afforded and the ways in which people are different. Leaders must ensure pupils are provided with wider-ranging and relevant opportunities to learn about these aspects.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	119926
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10212516
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Smith
Headteacher	Maxine Michalowski
Website	www.heather.leics.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up their post after the last inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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 various meetings with the headteacher, representatives from the local authority and two members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history and science. Inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, spoke with teachers, visited lessons, spoke with pupils and looked at samples of their work.

- Meetings were held to discuss the school's arrangements for safeguarding. This included looking at documents and the school's safeguarding records.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from all year groups and observed their behaviour around the school and at break and lunchtimes.
- There were 32 responses to the questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and six responses to the staff questionnaire. Comments to Ofsted's free-text service were taken into account.

Inspection team

Helen Williams, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sarah Fielding

Ofsted Inspector

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