

Inspection of Heathcoat Primary School

Broad Lane, Tiverton, Devon EX16 5HE

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 November 2021

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

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils do not receive a good quality of education. The curriculum from Year 1 to Year 6 is not sufficiently ambitious. It does not help pupils to know more and remember more across subjects. Consequently, some pupils are not prepared well for the next stage in their education. Children in early years get off to a better start. The early years curriculum prepares children well for Year 1.

Pupils at Heathcoat Primary enjoy coming to school. They are cheerful and polite. Staff know pupils well and build strong relationships with them. Most pupils feel safe. Nonetheless, there are occasional incidents of bullying. Staff are not consistent in their approach to dealing with this.

A minority of pupils do not behave well. Leaders are beginning to take appropriate action. For example, they have made their expectations of behaviour clear. There are early signs that this is beginning to pay off. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are reducing. However, too many pupils still have their learning disrupted by the behaviour of others.

Pupils talk knowledgeably about the school's values: Teamwork, Respect, Aim high, Independence, Never give up! (TRAIN). Pupils are positive about the range of additional activities the school is starting to offer again, such as singing and different sports clubs.

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

There are weaknesses in the curriculum. Leaders do not check how well the curriculum is organised for some subjects. Assessment is not used effectively to check that pupils understand and remember important knowledge. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Pupils say that they need more time and sometimes teachers rush them. This means that pupils are not supported well enough to ensure that learning sticks.

Teachers of early reading use a consistent approach to teach phonics. However, errors that some pupils make are not addressed quickly. Pupils, particularly those at the earliest stages of reading, are not moved on quickly enough to the next stage. Leaders are working towards promoting a love of reading. Nevertheless, there are some pupils who do not enjoy reading and do not recognise how important it is.

In some subjects, the curriculum does not provide sufficient challenge for pupils. For example, in mathematics, the stronger mathematicians are not stretched. Even so, the mathematics curriculum is effective in improving pupils' ability to solve problems and explain their thinking. There are gaps in pupils' knowledge about healthy lifestyles and how to maintain good physical health, and their understanding of staying safe online is limited. The curriculum is organised better in other subjects, such as geography and music. The early years curriculum is skilfully planned to meet children's needs. For example, in early mathematics, children use practical resources

such as sorting hoops, counting cubes, number cards and number lines to help them learn to add and subtract accurately.

Staff in early years have planned an ambitious curriculum. Children play imaginatively together and, through this, learn to solve problems. For example, when building towers, children explore how to make the tower taller, wider and more stable with careful questioning and suitable support from adults. Teachers build strong relationships with the children and care for them well.

Most pupils behave well. Nevertheless, some pupils do not show respect for, and tolerance of others. Pupils say that there are occasions when their learning is disrupted. Pupils understand the behaviour system. Leaders are ensuring that more and more pupils stick to it.

Leaders are not preparing pupils for life in modern Britain effectively. The curriculum does not promote pupils' understanding of characteristics such as ethnicity, gender and disability. Pupils do not learn enough about fundamental British values, such as tolerance and individual liberty.

The leader responsible for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is new to her role. She understands the precise difficulties that some pupils with SEND have with their learning. She is working effectively with teachers to support them to meet the needs of these pupils. This work is recent and it is too early to see an impact. Pupils with SEND are supported well enough when learning meets their needs. However, the curriculum is too variable for them, as it is for all pupils.

Governors acknowledge the need to improve how well pupils learn and remember the planned curriculum. They know that school leaders are focused on improving the quality of education and have made significant changes to the curriculum recently. However, some staff feel that leaders do not consider the impact of this rapid change on their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders act quickly on concerns that staff bring to their attention. They keep a careful eye on pupils they know to be vulnerable. Staff have regular training and updates so they know what to do when a pupil is at risk. Leaders make sure that staff know about local area risks.

The school keeps detailed records on the suitability of staff to work in the school. Leaders work closely with other agencies and professionals to ensure that pupils get the help they need. For example, the local police officer talks with pupils in Year 6 about issues they might encounter in the wider community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are weaknesses in the quality of the curriculum in some subjects. Teachers do not check that pupils have remembered and understood prior learning before they move on to more difficult concepts. As a result, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that they are improving these areas of the curriculum so that pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding in all subjects.
- Assessment is not used well enough in reading. Pupils' errors and misconceptions are not picked up quickly enough and reading books are not well matched to pupils' needs. This limits pupils' progress in reading. Leaders need to ensure that assessments are timely and accurate in identifying gaps in pupils' reading skills.
- The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is not detailed enough. Some aspects, such as educating pupils about healthy lifestyles, have not been considered as well as others. Leaders need to ensure that all aspects of the PSHE curriculum are implemented effectively.
- There are still too many occasions when poor behaviour disrupts the learning of others. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Leaders must ensure that teachers' approach to behaviour management is consistent.
- Leaders' actions to improve the curriculum have resulted in a challenging workload for some staff. This has led to some staff reporting low morale and well-being. Leaders must seek to understand the reasons for this and take appropriate action to speedily resolve this situation.

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	113343
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10199706
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	394
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lucy Bull and Andrew Rigamonti
Headteacher	Samantha Crook
Website	www.heathcoat.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 and 20 April 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined The Federation of Tiverton Schools in 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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 had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- During the inspection, inspectors met with the executive headteacher, head of school, assistant headteachers, special educational needs coordinator, and other leaders, pupils and members of the governing body. An inspector also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, music and PSHE. Inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at

curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. It was not possible to visit geography lessons, so inspectors reviewed a wider range of pupils' work.

- Inspectors considered curriculum plans, visited lessons and spoke to leaders about other subjects.
- Inspectors met with governors, including the co-chairs of the governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school, including improvement plans, leaders' self-evaluation, minutes from governing body meetings and documentation relating to behaviour.
- Inspectors examined safeguarding records, checked staff's safeguarding knowledge and spoke with pupils. An inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- Inspectors considered 35 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 35 free-text comments. They took into consideration 37 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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