

Inspection of Heathfield Primary School

The Broadway, Darlington, County Durham DL1 1EJ

Inspection dates: 10–11 December 2019

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have transformed this school. They are ambitious for each individual pupil. Pupils study a wide range of subjects and teachers are well equipped to teach them. Pupils achieve well. Most leave Year 6 ready for secondary school.

Leaders aim high for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff in 'the Ark' and 'the Rainbow room' support pupils with SEND. They also help those with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. They do this well.

Pupils are happy and feel safe. Most look forward to coming to school every day, but some pupils are absent too often. Bullying is rare. Pupils trust adults to help them if they have a worry and say that any problems are sorted out quickly. Pupils behave well in classrooms and when moving around school. They concentrate in lessons and let others get on with their work.

Leaders want all pupils to experience the world around them. They make sure that pupils enjoy a range of cultural activities, sports clubs and local visits.

Leaders are working hard to ensure that any gaps in pupils' learning are filled. Some pupils still need to improve their spelling, punctuation and grammar.

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

The headteacher and her team have transformed the school since the previous inspection. An example of this is the way in which leaders have improved the curriculum. Most subjects are now well planned so that pupils build their knowledge and deepen their understanding. Teachers are well trained and know the order in which different parts of each subject should be taught. This is particularly strong in history, geography and science. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They deliver the curriculum effectively.

In mathematics, for example, curriculum plans are detailed. Teachers help pupils to learn step by step. A daily recap of previous learning helps pupils to practise and remember important aspects of mathematics. By doing this, teachers check how well pupils have fully understood and remembered the topics that have been studied. Leaders know that the approach to ensure that pupils remember what they are taught is not consistently strong in all subjects.

All pupils are treated equally well. Pupils with SEND are given the support that they need to be successful. Leaders understand that some pupils have additional social and emotional needs that sometimes make learning more difficult. Many of these pupils attend lessons in 'the Ark' or in 'the Rainbow room'. Here, pupils receive extra help in a calm and supportive environment.

Leaders know that learning to read is crucial. Reading is given a high priority. Staff teach phonics well and pupils enjoy learning to read. Leaders know that some pupils do not know as many words as others. They have mapped out key pieces of vocabulary that they want pupils to learn during their time at school. This helps pupils with their reading comprehension. There is still work to do to ensure that pupils have a strong grasp of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Some older pupils at school still have gaps in their knowledge in these areas.

Children get off to a good start and are happy in the early years. Staff are good at supporting children, including the most vulnerable. Leaders want children to do the very best that they can. Leaders have developed a list of what it means for children to be ready for Year 1 at school. To be 'trust ready', children enjoy a wide variety of experiences, such as nature walks. This ensures that no-one misses out, and that all children begin to appreciate the world around them. Leaders make sure that teachers in Year 1 build on topics and knowledge from the early years.

Behaviour has improved markedly since the last inspection. Parents, pupils and teachers praise pupils' behaviour. What is more, pupils say that school is a calm and friendly place in which to learn. They understand the reward system and say that they know that it is 'good to be green'. They say that any unkind behaviour is dealt with effectively. A system of restorative justice is in place. Through this, pupils discuss the impact of any misbehaviour on others. This is effective. Many pupils attend school regularly. However, too many are still absent too often.

Staff provide well for pupils' personal development. Leaders want pupils to be prepared for the next stage of their education and their future lives in Britain. The annual 'world of work week' opens pupils' eyes to potential careers. 'Language of the month' helps pupils to celebrate different cultures and traditions. Sports, physical education and 'wake up, shake up' help pupils to stay healthy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The welfare of pupils has a high priority. Leaders know their pupils well. Staff receive regular training. They are aware of the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm and they report any concerns to leaders. Staff understand the additional needs of pupils with SEMH issues. They do all that they can to keep these pupils to remain safe. Leaders have a clear oversight of pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Leaders are quick to seek support from other agencies for individual pupils where there are concerns. They make sure that pupils and families get the help that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans help teachers to build pupils' knowledge sequentially. Leaders' thinking is particularly advanced in history, geography and science. They know that there is still a little work to be done in other subjects, such as art and design and technology. Similarly, assessments in some subjects help teachers to pinpoint exactly what pupils know and remember and what needs further work. This is not consistent across all subjects. Leaders should continue to refine curriculum plans and assessments so that all pupils achieve consistently well across the curriculum.
- Pupils achieve well in reading and mathematics. Sometimes their achievement in writing is hampered by weaker skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar. This is particularly the case for older pupils in school. Leaders need to ensure that these pupils catch up and that any gaps that they have in their knowledge are closed.
- Many pupils attend school regularly. Leaders work well with families to ensure that they understand the importance of attending school. However, there is more work to do. Leaders need to ensure that fewer pupils are persistently absent. This includes pupils with SEND and those who are entitled to free school meals.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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	138179
Local authority	Darlington
Inspection number	10121716
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	406
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stuart Crowther
Headteacher	Helen Tarokh
Website	http://www.heathfieldprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	18–19 October 2017

Information about this school

- There is a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND who have cognition and learning difficulties at Heathfield. Many of these pupils have additional social and emotional needs. Currently, 11 pupils are benefiting from this provision.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of the senior leadership team. We talked to curriculum leaders. We met members of the governing body, including the chair. We met with the chief executive officer of the trust and two colleagues responsible for school improvement within the trust.
- We looked in detail at English (including early reading), mathematics, science, music and physical education. We talked to leaders and teachers about their curriculum plans. We visited lessons in these subjects. We spoke to pupils about their learning. We looked at pupils' work, including that of children in the early years.
- We met with those responsible for safeguarding. We looked at a range of documentation linked to safeguarding, including: child protection policies and

procedures; absence data; information about how pupils' behaviour is managed; and information about how more vulnerable pupils are supported. We talked to pupils during the inspection and asked them about how safe they feel.

- We took into account the 26 responses to Ofsted's online parents' questionnaire, Parent View, including any free-text comments. We also considered the 26 responses to the survey for staff.

Inspection team

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