

Inspection of a good school: Heelands School

Glovers Lane, Heelands, Heelands School, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK13 7QL

Inspection date: 4 June 2024

Outcome

Heelands School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this school. They have a strong understanding of the school's values of 'friendship, respect, self-belief, cooperation, challenge and responsibility'. Pupils demonstrate this in all they do. They feel safe in school and always know who to talk to if they have any worries. Parents know that their children are well cared for at Heelands. The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve and the vast majority of them are learning well.

Pupils behave well and the majority attend regularly. Routines are taught effectively and even the youngest children in early years know what is expected of them. The environment in the school is calm, including at break and lunchtimes. Pupils are polite and confident speakers and they will happily talk about their learning and their school. There are a range of trips that all pupils are involved in. These often link to their learning in lessons and the school has carefully considered what experiences they want pupils to have before they leave. Pupils know about healthy eating and how to show respect to those from different backgrounds. They also understand how to stay safe online.

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

The school has high expectations of what all pupils can achieve, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those experiencing other disadvantages. Pupils who need additional support are identified quickly and receive the right help.

The curriculum the school has recently introduced clearly identifies the knowledge and skills pupils need for their next steps. Extensive training has taken place to ensure that staff have the right subject knowledge. However, at times staff do not all have the confidence to make the right adaptations in lessons to meet pupils' needs as fully as they could. They are not always checking carefully that activities gradually build on pupils' prior knowledge. This means that some pupils are not making as much progress as they could. This includes in the early stages of writing. Here, there is not yet a consistent approach to developing the letter formation needed for fluent and accurate handwriting. Activities are

not always appropriately chosen to allow pupils to practise the precise steps which they need to become better writers.

The school has ambitions that all pupils learn to read confidently. They provide many opportunities for pupils to hear and share stories and to practise their reading. This begins right at the start in Reception, where children quickly learn about the different sound and letter correspondences to become accurate readers.

The majority of pupils attend school regularly. The school had identified that some pupils were not always attending as often as they could. They have worked closely with those pupils who found this more difficult and have provided extensive support to ensure that they come to school on time and as frequently as possible. Staff have a clear understanding of what some of the barriers to attending can be and their work with families to overcome them has been effective.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to take part in a variety of trips and visits. These build on the taught curriculum and include trips to the theatre and the zoo, as well as trips around the local area. They have also learned about different religions and have visited a range of places of worship. Pupils also have the chance to learn about responsibility by being 'play monitors' and they enjoy talking about such roles.

Staff feel exceptionally well supported. They know that they have opportunities to discuss their workload and that adaptations will be put in place to ensure they have the time to fulfil their roles. They particularly appreciate the support they have received from across the federation and that their well-being is fully considered, especially when changes have been made. They are proud and happy to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While staff have a strong understanding of what needs to be taught, the activities they use are not always closely aligned to these learning outcomes or adapted to match pupils' starting points. As a result, pupils do not always make as much progress through the curriculum as they could. The school needs to ensure that staff continue to receive training on making precise adaptations in their teaching to meet pupils' needs fully effectively.
- There is not yet a consistent approach to the teaching of transcription. This means that some pupils are not yet accurate and fluent in their writing. The school needs to continue to develop strong practice in improving transcription that is applied consistently.

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 school to be good in October 2015.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	110382
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10321777
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tammy Haughton
Headteacher	Ian Fraser
Website	www.heelands.org
Date of previous inspection	23 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Heelands School is part of The Blue Sky Federation. The school is led by an executive headteacher and an associate headteacher.
- The school does not currently use any alternative providers.
- The school runs a breakfast club on the school site.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with leaders including the headteacher, executive headteacher, special educational needs coordinator and other leaders. The lead inspector also met with local governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff and considered their views through the confidential online staff survey.
- Inspectors met with pupils formally and informally around the school, in lessons and at playtime. Inspectors took account of the views of parents through the responses to the Ofsted Parent View and a letter that was sent to the inspection team.

Inspection team

Zoe Enser, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Martin Dyer

Ofsted Inspector

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