

Inspection of Heather Avenue Infant School

Heather Avenue, Hellesdon, Norwich, Norfolk NR6 6LT

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Stacey Coleman. The school is part of the Wensum Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Daniel Thrower, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Smith.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Heather Avenue Infant School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Heather Avenue Infant School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this inclusive and caring school. Pupils are happy and enjoy learning. They make an excellent start in early years. As they move through the school, pupils achieve exceptionally well, particularly in the core subjects: reading, writing and mathematics.

There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are well cared for. They have many adults in school they can talk to if they are worried. Pupils behave well. Most have excellent attitudes to learning. At breaktime and lunchtime, pupils behave sensibly. They enjoy taking part in a range of games and creative play together.

Pupils develop their wider character in different ways. On a daily basis they give 'compliments' to classmates and engage in active discussions about philosophical questions. From an early age, pupils think deeply and learn about right and wrong in the world around them.

A range of popular activities enhance pupils' broader personal development. All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, can access activities such as tennis, dance and outdoor learning. Educational visits considerably enhance the curriculum. For example, pupils enjoy visits to the theatre in London, places of worship, and go on residential trips.

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

The school has put in place a broad, ambitious and exciting curriculum. The school has considered what it most wants pupils to know and to be able to do by the time that they leave the school at the end of key stage 1.

Reading is at the heart of the school curriculum. All staff benefit from the regular training they receive. They demonstrate expertise in the precise way they deliver the agreed phonics programme. In early years, children begin learning letter sounds straight away. They practise phonics using books matched to the sounds they know. Those at risk of falling behind are swiftly identified and supported through carefully designed interventions to help them catch up. Pupils become confident, fluent readers. There is a love of reading evident across the school.

Children thrive in early years. The curriculum is designed to develop children's knowledge in all areas of learning, preparing them well for key stage 1. For example, the curriculum for communication, language and literacy helps to ensure adults model language and interact skilfully through familiar songs, stories and rhymes. The environment is deliberately designed to help children practise what they learn. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), become independent, curious and confident learners. This supports children to achieve exceptionally well in early years.

Across the school, the core subjects of learning, such as English and mathematics, are delivered particularly well. The knowledge pupils learn is broken down into clear steps and pupils build on their learning over time. Teachers regularly check what pupils have learned

and remembered. They use this information to adapt and improve the curriculum. Pupils achieve very well across these subjects.

On occasion, in some wider curriculum subjects, new knowledge is not always presented as clearly as it could be. This can make it difficult for pupils to grasp the essential knowledge intended for them to learn. As a result, some pupils may struggle to retain key information, which can lead to gaps in their knowledge and limit their ability to build on their learning over time.

The school supports pupils with SEND well. Teachers accurately identify how to overcome pupils' barriers to learning. Lesson adaptations mean that most pupils with SEND are successful in accessing the same curriculum as their peers. Where pupils need something more individual, this is provided without delay. As a result, pupils with SEND progress through the curriculum well.

Behaviour is managed effectively through the strong relationships that exist between staff and pupils. Pupils want to learn and know the school rules. They typically follow these in class and around school. Learning proceeds with little disruption.

The school's personal, social and health education programme is a priority. The awards the school has received reflect this. The curriculum is designed to help pupils to understand themes such as online safety, healthy relationships, and positive friendships. Pupils learn about a wide range of cultures and to respect differences through the regular international weeks. Pupils at an early age are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The trust and local governors know the school well. They offer a balance of support and challenge and visit the school regularly to monitor provision. Teachers benefit from the training offered by the school and wider trust. They appreciate that school leaders always look out for their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, the teaching approaches used do not fully support pupils to learn and remember the essential knowledge within the wider school curriculum. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their learning over time. The school needs to continue to refine their approach to teaching in some of the wider curriculum so that pupils secure and build on their learning confidently across all subjects.

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 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	144143
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10295095
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	115
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Smith
CEO of the trust	Daniel Thrower
Headteacher	Stacey Coleman
Website	www.heatheravenue.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Heather Avenue Infant School is part of the Wensum Trust.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the school leaders, subject leaders, staff, members of the trust central team, members of the local governing body, the trust chief executive officer and a trustee.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector heard pupils read to a member of staff.
- Inspectors also considered curriculum documentation and spoke to pupils about their learning in science.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including attendance records, pupil records, records of governing body meetings, school development plans and school self-evaluation documents.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and during breaktimes.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents through responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and conversations during the inspection.
- The inspectors gathered the views of pupils and staff through Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys, as well as discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Jonny Wallace, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Craig Avieson

Ofsted Inspector

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