

Heathfield Academy

7 Aberdeen Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1EQ

Inspection dates

24–25 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders, governors and trustees have been highly effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching is exemplary. Pupils, therefore, make excellent progress across the curriculum.
- The leadership team, along with trustees and governors, have ensured that there is a rich, stimulating curriculum within and beyond the school day that meets pupils' needs exceptionally well.
- There is a strong culture of high expectations which is wholeheartedly endorsed by all staff. Teachers apply the same highly effective approaches when teaching so that pupils get equally strong provision and make excellent progress from their starting points.
- Excellent training and professional development opportunities ensure that teachers perfect their craft.
- Safeguarding takes high priority. Procedures for ensuring that pupils are kept safe are very thorough. Pupils said that they feel safe in school and their parents agreed.
- Pupils are kind and courteous. They play well together and listen to adults' advice, following instructions immediately and sensibly. This means that no time is wasted in lessons and conduct around the school is exemplary.
- Leaders foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The children's parliament helps pupils understand democracy, and British values are interwoven with the school's strong values system. In this way, pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Children get an excellent start to their education in early years. Outstanding teaching ensures that children make rapid progress and that attainment is above average.
- Leaders are already putting plans in place to ensure that this high-quality provision is maintained as the school grows and pupils move up into key stage 2.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the exceptionally high standards of behaviour and learning as the school grows and takes on a new key stage.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders, including governors and trustees, are highly ambitious. They have established a culture of insisting that all pupils achieve well. This is reflected in the trust's values of passion, urgency, positivity, aspiration and commitment.
- The support for schools within the trust has been pivotal in ensuring the success of this school and supporting its ongoing growth. Working together as one team across the whole trust creates an environment where people learn from each other and grow together.
- Teachers benefit enormously from the extensive programme of well-considered training and development opportunities to enhance their practice. Within the school and across the trust, staff are given support and encouragement to progress in their career. This has led to a motivated and committed staff team. Those staff who responded to the Ofsted survey unanimously stated that they were proud to be part of this organisation.
- The additional pupil premium funding is spent exceptionally well so that eligible pupils gain confidence, self-esteem and proficiency in skills and understanding across the curriculum. This ensures that disadvantaged pupils, irrespective of their starting points, do as well as, or better than, other pupils nationally.
- The funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is also spent wisely. Teachers and learning support assistants ensure that teaching activities are adapted to meet the needs and interests of this group of pupils. As a result, they make strong progress in a range of subjects.
- Leaders have a clear rationale for the spending of the physical education (PE) and sport premium. For example, they have provided a wide range of sporting activities as part of their after-school provision. A large proportion of pupils attend at least one additional activity a week, and many attend more than that. In addition, teachers have regular opportunities to develop their skills in teaching PE, including working alongside specialist coaches. As a result, pupils' physical skills are well developed and they have a good understanding of the importance of sport and exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.
- The curriculum is vibrant, varied and meets the needs of all pupils exceptionally well. Classroom activities are further supplemented by trips to places of interest, visitors to the school and a wide range of extra-curricular clubs. For example, Year 1 pupils visited a local park so that they could compare its features with those of the rainforest and pupils still talk about when the police visited to teach them about 'stranger danger'.
- Leaders ensure that pupils become well-informed young citizens. Alongside the emphasis on the school's values, pupils learn about British values as well as events of local and global importance. For example, children in early years were very knowledgeable about the recent Royal Wedding and older pupils could talk about votes for women and the issues surrounding coral bleaching.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered extremely well. Pupils learn about a wide range of faiths, either through visiting places of worship or

through welcoming religious leaders into school. The school observes key festivals such as Remembrance Day, Easter, Chinese New Year and Diwali. There are many occasions for pupils of all ages to mix socially, such as around a campfire on a trip to local woods. Fund-raising for charities helps pupils to empathise with those who have different life experiences to them.

- The school works very effectively with the local authority. For example, the local authority uses the school's expertise in early years provision as an example for others to aspire to and learn from.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Communication between home and school is very strong. Parents really appreciate the letters leaders send them thanking them for their support. Parents feel well informed and that the home learning their children complete is valuable. All of the parents who completed the Ofsted survey would recommend the school to others.

Governance of the school

- Local and trust-wide governance is highly effective. Governors and trustees are very clear about their vision for all the schools within the trust. Governors are ambitious; they challenge and support school leaders to offer pupils the best experiences possible.
- Governors and trustees have a wide range of skills that they use proficiently to hold school leaders to account for standards of teaching and behaviour. Governors ensure that their skills and knowledge are up to date by attending relevant training, including on safeguarding.
- Trustees ensure that the academy team of schools and central personnel are well placed to work together for the benefit of all their pupils.
- Governors and trustees plan judiciously for the future, pre-empting issues of change and growth within their schools; they have worked closely with school leaders to plan for an expanding staffing structure as Heathfield Academy grows.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Systems for checking on the suitability of staff are comprehensive. The records of these checks are very well organised.
- There is a strong commitment to safeguarding. Regular safeguarding training and opportunities to discuss safeguarding issues ensure that staff have a thorough understanding of how to identify and report concerns. Leaders monitor concerns carefully, referring to specialists where appropriate. Leaders work assiduously with outside agencies to make sure vulnerable pupils and their families get the help they need.
- Provision for pupils who have medical needs and the administration of first aid are efficient and well organised. There is clear signage in prominent places around the building. Emergency equipment is also easily visible and accessible. Pupils who have allergies or special dietary needs wear badges to identify them when they are in the lunch hall.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- The executive headteacher and the headteacher have created a culture of high expectations. The exceptionally strong quality of teaching ensures that pupils can meet these expectations. For example, to help pupils become adept at writing in full sentences, teachers encourage them to speak in full sentences. During the inspection, it was obvious that this is the norm. As a result, pupils are very articulate and their writing reflects their strong communication skills.
- Teachers know their pupils well. They ask incisive questions to check pupils' understanding. This ensures that the work teachers provide is perfectly designed to extend pupils' learning. Consequently, pupils produce work of a very high standard across a wide range of subjects.
- Teaching matches the needs of different groups of pupils extremely well. Learning support assistants provide excellent support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities so that they achieve well. Teachers are adept at providing the most able with challenging and stimulating tasks, resulting in work of an exceptionally high quality. In history, the most able Year 2 pupils showed their understanding of rhetorical questions, as well as their historical and geographical knowledge, to good effect. Sentences such as 'Did you know Sparta was shielded by mountains?' was typical of the work produced.
- This detailed and challenging work was equally evident in pupils' mathematics books. Teachers ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to reason and explain their mathematical thinking. These explanations show how well pupils have understood new concepts and allow teachers to offer further support where necessary. In this way, no pupil is left behind and all achieve extremely well.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge across the curriculum. This enables them to provide activities that help pupils understand concepts in depth. For example, pupils in Year 1 learned many facts about the rainforest and could confidently compare conditions there with those in a local park that they had recently visited.
- Phonics is taught exceptionally well. All staff use consistently effective techniques with which pupils are familiar. Pupils join in enthusiastically. This ensures that pupils have the skills they need to become confident readers.
- There has been a strong focus on developing pupils' vocabulary and punctuation and ensuring that they become confident with grammar usage. This has led to high-quality writing. For example, pupils can name different word classes such as connectives, adjectives and imperative verbs. Pupils in Year 2 use a range of punctuation confidently and the most able are beginning to experiment with using parentheses.
- Teachers ensure that they expose pupils to high-quality texts that provoke debate. For example, writing about a female character who eschews make-up enabled pupils to think about gender roles. The pupils who spoke to inspectors were adamant that it is equally fine for men and women to wear make-up (or not) should they choose.
- Parents who shared their views with inspectors stated overwhelmingly that their children make strong progress and are taught well.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. It was a pleasure to look at the work in their books. Handwriting and presentation are very neat, showing that pupils take great care and pride in their work. They are proud to embody the school's values. For example, they can explain how they show commitment by not giving up if work seems too hard initially.
- Pupils know about healthy eating and fitness. Many seemed just as excited about the carrot sticks in their end-of-term lunch treat as they did about the chips, which they understand you should eat only occasionally. There is a wide range of clubs which supplement PE lessons to support a healthy lifestyle.
- Pupils know the difference between bullying and 'falling out' with friends or occasional unkindness. They are confident that they can go to an adult if they have any concerns and that these would be resolved.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe. They cite the police visiting to deliver talks about how to stay safe from strangers and workshops and assemblies on road safety. They told inspectors that you must always wear a helmet on your bike or scooter.
- Pupils are very knowledgeable about online safety. They stated emphatically that you should 'never tell anyone where you live or where your school is.'
- Pupils were unanimous in telling inspectors that they felt safe at school. Parents echo this view.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. All staff have very high expectations of behaviour and apply the school's policies consistently. This leads to exemplary behaviour, both in lessons and around the school.
- Routines are well established. Pupils follow instructions to the letter and with urgency, which is one of the school's values. This means learning time is maximised. Teachers' excellent behaviour management techniques, and the school's culture of high expectations, mean that no learning time is lost due to disruptions.
- Pupils are courteous and polite. They play together harmoniously. There is a good range of resources and activities for pupils to choose from at playtime. Adults encourage pupils to make the most of what is on offer. This leads to productive and enjoyable outdoor experiences.
- Procedures for promoting good attendance are thorough. Leaders work with outside agencies to support families where attendance needs to improve. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. The school's figure is now in line with the national average.

- Staff record incidents of poor behaviour. Leaders monitor these records. Their analysis shows that there are very few and the figure has dropped across the course of this year.
- Leaders work highly effectively to support any pupils who have particular behavioural needs to learn to regulate their behaviour. There have been no exclusions since the school opened.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- The excellent quality of teaching leads to outstanding outcomes for pupils.
- The precision of phonics teaching meant that, in 2017, the school's results in the Year 1 phonics screening check were above average. In a recent test, every single Year 1 pupil reached at least the expected standard, and many had very high scores. Leaders are therefore confident that this year's phonics results will be even higher than last year's.
- Pupils use their phonics skills confidently in their reading and their writing. The pupils who read with inspectors used phonics to help them sound out unfamiliar words. Spelling is often very good, even when pupils are using complex words.
- Leaders take into account pupils' attainment in early years to check how much progress they are making across key stage 1. The information for the current Year 2 class shows that all pupils are making at least good progress. This means that all those who achieved the early learning goals in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Reception will reach at least the expected standard at the end of Year 2. This is a higher than average proportion. Equally, all pupils who exceeded the early learning goals will reach greater depth. This reflects the work inspectors saw in pupils' books. Progress is similarly strong in Year 1.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well in other subjects too. Inspectors looked at work in topic books, which cover science, history and geography, and in religious education books. These subjects are taught to a very high standard. Pupils use vocabulary specific to the subject, for example 'landmarks' in geography and 'monuments' in history. Pupils strengthen their reading, writing and mathematical skills further by applying them across the curriculum.
- Leaders are committed to ensuring that all pupils do equally well. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive excellent support and so make strong progress. Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, make excellent progress because teachers ensure that activities stimulate and challenge them.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similarly strong progress as their peers because of the strong focus on developing vocabulary and speaking in full sentences.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children get a fantastic start to their education in this exceptional setting. Leaders are ambitious and have high expectations. They ensure that teaching meets children's

needs extremely well. Consequently, children make strong progress from their starting points, which are often low, so that many more of them reach a good level of development than is the case nationally.

- The quality of teaching is exceptional. Teachers check children's learning carefully so that they know exactly how well children are doing. They spot gaps in understanding quickly and put in measures to redress these so that no child is left behind.
- Leaders promote reading and writing extremely well across early years. There is a strong focus on developing vocabulary. Phonics skills are taught effectively so children spell and read well. Because of this, children are confident readers and writers and often choose reading and writing activities over other options.
- Children are equally keen on mathematics. The most able are confident with numbers beyond 20. Teachers find innovative ways to present mathematics activities. For example, to secure work on doubles, children were sticking two sets of pompoms onto paper plates using tweezers and glue. They then had to write a corresponding sum, for example $4 + 4 = 8$. Children were fascinated by manipulating pompoms in this way and many of them had a go, successfully, at this activity.
- Children take pride in presenting their work well. Their handwriting is very neat. Children have made exceptional progress in their writing. Many are barely able to write their name when they join the school. At the time of this inspection, most could write fluent stories with sophisticated vocabulary and sentence structure for their age.
- The curriculum is well thought out, with a good balance of different kinds of activities to stimulate and engage children. There is a lot of hands-on learning; children see chicks hatch, sow seeds and watch plants grow, for example.
- Leaders use funding judiciously to ensure that children achieve well. In 2017, all disadvantaged children reached a good level of development.
- Children behave really well. They are kind and thoughtful, so they play well with each other. Their attitudes to learning are exemplary. They listen to the teacher carefully and follow instructions without delay. This means learning time is used to maximum effect.
- Leaders ensure that the move from home or nursery into school is very smooth. Staff gather information from pre-schools and parents in order to be able to meet children's needs from the outset.
- Parents are universally positive in their praise. They say their children make excellent progress and they feel well informed about their children's learning. This is in part due to the detailed reports teachers send home every term.

School details

Unique reference number	140435
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10048316

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Appropriate authority	Strategic governing body
Chair	Chris Stevens
Executive headteacher	Paul Glover
Headteacher	Rachael Atkinson
Telephone number	020 8353 4250
Website	www.heathfieldacademy.org
Email address	office@heathfieldacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Heathfield Academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It is a member of the STEP (Striving together for excellence in partnership) Trust. The school opened in September 2015 in temporary accommodation and had to move to a second temporary site before settling into its current, permanent site in September 2017. A strategic governing body works across two schools in the trust.
- Currently, the school caters for pupils from Reception to Year 2 but will grow year on year until it covers Reception to Year 6.
- The school serves a very diverse community. The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest group being of Black or Black British African heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is nearly three times the national average. A significant minority of these pupils are at the very early stages of learning English.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is similar to national figures, although a further number of families live in difficult circumstances, particularly in overcrowded households.
- A higher proportion of pupils join the school at times other than at the start of Reception than is the case nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average, although the proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is average.
- The school offers wraparound care with a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited every class in the school more than once to observe teaching and learning in a range of subjects. The vast majority of these visits were conducted jointly with senior school leaders. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work to review progress over time.
- Inspectors met with staff, trustees, governors and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and spoke with them both formally and informally, including at play- and lunchtimes, to gather their views on the school.
- The inspection team visited an assembly and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' outcomes, strategic planning, behaviour, attendance and the curriculum.
- Inspectors gathered the views of parents by taking into account the 70 responses from the online Parent View survey and speaking to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took into account the views of the 16 staff who completed Ofsted's online survey.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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