

# Heatherside Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116010
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312146
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Thrussell

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	351
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr James Donaldson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Hannah Dunn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 January 2005
<b>School address</b>	Reading Road South Fleet GU52 7TH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01252 617928
<b>Fax number</b>	01252 811061

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Heatherside Junior is a large, three form entry school. The current headteacher has been in post for four terms and, during the last year, there have been other staff changes. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The majority of pupils are from a White British background. A smaller than average proportion has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These pupils have a variety of needs including specific or moderate learning difficulties and hearing or visual impairment. The school has gained Healthy Schools and Activemark awards.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Heatherside Junior is a good school. The headteacher has very quickly set a clear direction for its development, managed staff changes effectively, identified areas for improvement and achieved much in a relatively short space of time. In doing so, she has been careful to work closely alongside staff and governors, helping them to improve their performance and to take developments on board, whilst maintaining a very positive school ethos. Parents recognise this with comments such as, 'Since Mrs Dunn has become head, Heatherside is going from strength to strength. It has a wonderful ethos of caring and striving to achieve the best for each child.' Links with parents are now very strong. They particularly appreciate the recent opportunities to be more involved in their children's learning through, for example, mathematics workshops. Governors are very supportive of the work of the school, have become increasingly aware of its particular strengths and weaknesses and have started to challenge the school on its organisation and performance.

Good pastoral care and support for pupils contribute positively to their well-being and personal development. They feel safe in school and know that any concerns are dealt with promptly and sympathetically. As a result, they enjoy school greatly, particularly the wide range of clubs and additional activities, which are an important part of the school's curriculum. Through the sports partnership, there are opportunities to take part in different sports. Pupils recognise the importance of these opportunities in helping them to keep fit. Their good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning fully support the good progress they make.

Pupils enter the school in Year 3 with above average standards. They achieve well so that, by the end of Year 6, standards are well above average. More able pupils make good progress and a significantly high proportion reach the higher levels in the national tests. The school rightly identified that the progress of average and below average ability pupils was inconsistent. Some had considerable amounts of lost ground to make up in their learning. Improved teaching and learning over the last year has enabled a great many of these pupils to catch up and begin working at, or beyond, the levels expected for their age. Well focused teaching and additional support in Year 6 has boosted pupils' achievements further, and contributes to the well above average standards. A relative weakness in mathematics was identified and successful action taken, which has enabled the school to exceed the challenging targets set for this subject. Reading is stronger than writing, and the school has well-thought-out plans to close the gap.

Leadership roles have improved in the last year, and this has contributed to the advancements in mathematics and the provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. All staff are involved in self-evaluation. Through 'improving standards teams', any actions taken are monitored carefully and carried through to help ensure their success. Progress is now tracked and recorded carefully and any underachievement identified. This information helps teachers to plan an appropriate level of work and support for all pupils. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning has improved and is now good. However, the school recognises that still more needs to be done to ensure the match of work to pupils' particular learning needs. It also recognises that pupils need better information to help them understand how well they are doing and how they could improve and progress. Given the school's determination to strive for improved performance and the success of recent actions, it has a good capacity for further improvement.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers make fuller use of the information they have on how well pupils are doing to plan an appropriate level of work for all and to keep pupils themselves aware of their progress.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Initiatives to raise standards in mathematics, particularly amongst average and below average pupils, are proving successful. Mental mathematics, the development of recording strategies and raising teachers' expectations were identified as particular areas to work on. Further improvements in science are planned through a greater emphasis on investigative work. Appropriate plans are in place to make further improvements in writing. These include developing ideas and vocabulary through drama, providing more opportunities for writing in other subjects and making more time available for extended writing.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school. This is evident in their above average attendance and in their enthusiasm to take part in lessons and other activities. They are polite and courteous and form positive relationships with one another and staff. Pupils make good gains in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, their knowledge and understanding of the different communities that make up British society is only satisfactory. Pupils welcome the many opportunities they have to contribute to the local and wider community by taking part in local competitions and projects. They were keen to talk about their involvement in the Playground Partnership and how they had drawn up a plan and prepared a bid to try to secure funding for a trim trail. They take their responsibilities as council members, house captains and Year 3 buddies seriously, making a considerable difference to the school and its community. They take the initiative when organising activities to raise funds for charities. Such enterprising skills, together with their above average basic skills, prepare them very well for their future life and learning.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers establish good relationships with pupils. This helps to create a pleasant learning environment. Pupils are managed well and they work hard. 'This is a happy school because teachers are firm but fair', commented one Year 4 pupil. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) well to engage pupils' interest. There are good examples of the use of assessment to plan work that matches pupils' differing needs. However, this practice is better in some classes than others. Support staff are deployed well in most lessons, especially to work with pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and for those who have English as an additional language. Teachers show clearly what they expect pupils to achieve in lessons. However, there is not always sufficient time for pupils to fully discuss and evaluate how well

they are doing. The marking of pupils' work is evaluative and tells them what they have done well. It does not always show pupils how to improve and move their learning forward.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum takes good account of the academic and personal needs of all pupils. The school has started to make links between subjects to enable pupils to use and develop their different skills in interesting and purposeful ways. More work on this is planned. These links are offering a particular challenge to more able pupils and adding to the provision for those who are gifted and talented. There is an exciting range of extra curricular activities that contributes to pupils' enjoyment. Further enrichment is provided through interesting visits, which provide first hand learning experiences. The visit to Butser Ancient Farm contributed to pupils' learning and enjoyment of art, music, science and history. Another significant feature is the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language. Good attention is given to pupils' personal development and this enables pupils to be well informed about health and safety issues. Provision for ICT is good and pupils enjoy using the refurbished ICT suite.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Procedures to protect and safeguard pupils are thorough. Pupils are clear about whom they can go to if they need help or advice. The Year 3 buddy system makes a real difference to settling new pupils into the school. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities has improved and is now good. Their specific needs are now more readily identified and the provision for them carefully mapped out. The support for these pupils and for those who have English as an additional language is effective, enabling them to achieve well. It draws on the good links established with parents and outside agencies. Those with specific or moderate learning difficulties make particularly good progress in their reading. The support for the few pupils with visual or hearing impairment enables them to be fully included in lessons and in the life of the school. There are effective systems in place to track pupils' progress. Challenging end-of-year targets are set. However, the day-to-day guidance given to pupils to help them work towards these targets is not yet sufficiently developed.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is accurate in its self-evaluation and appropriate areas for improvement are identified and tackled well. Coordinators are effective in bringing about improvements, shown by recent action to raise achievement and standards in mathematics and improve the provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. A relative weakness in writing has been identified and clear actions are planned to bring about further improvements. Teaching and learning have improved through regular monitoring. Development points are identified through classroom observations, then support and additional training opportunities are provided. Regular progress meetings ensure that teachers are accountable for the progress pupils make. Good links with local schools provide opportunities to share classroom practice, curriculum development and leadership strategies. The school is very successful in involving parents in its life and work. Plans are in place to develop further links with the local and wider communities in order to help pupils gain a better understanding of them.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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**Overall effectiveness**

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

29 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Heatherside Junior School, Fleet, GU52 7TH

I am writing to let you know what we found when we visited your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We spoke with some of you during our visit and you were always interesting to talk to, very polite and helpful. You spoke very enthusiastically about enjoying school and all of the things in which you take part. Heatherside Junior is a good school.

We liked these things the most.

- You work hard and standards by Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are well above average.
- The school makes sure that you are safe and well looked after.
- Children who find learning difficult and those of you who are new to speaking English are well supported.
- You behave well, enjoy school and are all keen to keep fit and eat the right things.
- You go on many trips, have lots of exciting events and many school clubs to choose from.
- You are keen to take on responsibilities. Year 3 buddies are doing a good job at the start of the school year. I hope you are successful in getting the Playground Partnership funds for your trim trail.
- Your headteacher is doing a very good job.

We have asked the school to work on the following. The school looks carefully at how well you are doing in lessons. It must use this information more to plan work that is just right for each one of you, neither too easy nor too hard. This will help you all to make the best progress possible. The teachers also need to use this information to make you aware of how well you are doing and how you could do even better. I know that the school is planning to give you individual targets to work on. Look carefully at these and keep them in mind when you are working in class.

We did enjoy visiting your school and watching you learn.

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell

Lead Inspector