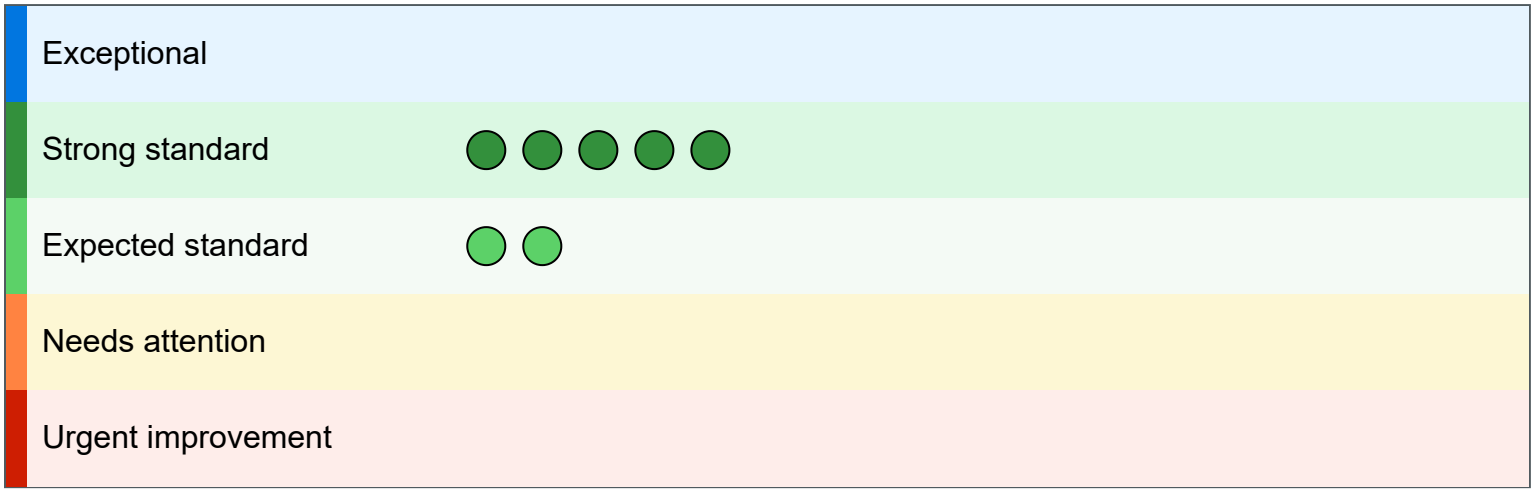
Heatherlands Primary School

Address: Library Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset, BH12 2BG

Unique reference number (URN): 145212

Inspection report: 6 October 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Leaders have a sharp focus on maintaining pupils' high attendance. They have established robust and rigorous systems to track the attendance of all pupils. Systems are highly effective. Attendance at the school is consistently above the national average. Pupils want to come to school. Leaders' highly positive and effective actions provide support to parents and carers. Regular letters, useful guides and information sessions help create high expectations. Leaders remove barriers where they exist and staff know pupils and their families well. Their astute work helps to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. Leaders have been particularly successful in their approach to sustaining and increasing positive levels of attendance for disadvantaged pupils.

Leaders have established a culture where pupils want to make the right choices. Pupils understand the benefits of behaving well. As a result, they feel safe and are very happy at school. Pupils embrace 'the Heatherlands way'. They are respectful and thoughtful in the classroom and during social times. Pupils say that incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are rare. If an incident does happen, it is managed sensitively and in close liaison with families. For pupils who struggle to manage their emotions, the school ensures they receive the support they need to remain calm, reflect and refocus.

Early years

Strong standard

Leaders have designed an ambitious early years curriculum. It places a strong emphasis on communication and language. Leaders provide a warm, well-ordered environment and establish clear, consistent routines, so that children develop their independence right from the start. There is an inclusive and calm atmosphere across the provision.

Staff skilfully scaffold learning, model rich language and extend children's thinking. Teachers know the children very well due to the well-planned transition. As a result, they carefully tailor learning to meet every individual need. Staff provide swift support for all children, especially those who may need additional help.

Teaching across the early years is effective and reading receives a high priority. Children learn through precise phonics teaching. Staff provide many opportunities to practise and apply this knowledge. This helps children to develop confidence and fluency as early readers.

Children achieve very well in the early years. This is because staff interact well with children, helping move their learning forwards at every opportunity. They regularly check children's progress. As a result, children are more than ready for Year 1.

Inclusion

Strong standard

The school has the highest ambition for all pupils. Rigorous strategies are in place to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) swiftly and accurately at the earliest opportunity. The barriers that pupils face to learning are known by

all staff. Staff are trained in the most effective strategies to support pupils with SEND. Additional staff are also deployed effectively to help pupils to access their learning and achieve success.

Leaders plan to provide exactly what pupils need. School leaders have created specialist classrooms so that those with complex needs can access a bespoke curriculum and thrive. In many cases, these pupils return successfully to the main classroom and learn alongside their peers. Leaders make regular and robust checks on all pupils and their progress both academically and socially. They evaluate the success of their provision. Across the school, skilful adaptations enhance pupils' learning and help them to overcome barriers and challenges to make effective progress.

The needs of vulnerable pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are very well understood by staff. The school uses any additional funding strategically to address a range of challenges that may affect pupils' outcomes. Pupils known to social services receive bespoke care to ensure that they thrive at school. This helps them to attend regularly and benefit fully from school life.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leaders have created a culture of mutual respect and ambition across the school, rooted in 'the Heatherlands way'. Staff and governors demonstrate the school values consistently. Leaders know their school very well. They have correctly identified that pupils' achievement in writing could be even higher. As a result, they have adopted a new handwriting scheme and have strategically implemented this effectively.

Trust leaders maintain a highly strategic oversight of change, as do local governors. Governors regularly challenge the actions of school leaders. They want to know that decisions are made in the best interests of the pupils. Governors support leaders' wellbeing. They fulfil their statutory duties with precision. For example, they assure themselves that pupils with an education, health and care plan are appropriately supported in school. Trust leaders support and challenge effectively. They work with leaders, continually looking for marginal gains that benefit pupils' experiences and outcomes.

Leaders have devised a comprehensive programme of professional development, rooted in research and evidence. Staff training supports both the individual needs and aspirations of staff as well as driving whole-school improvement effectively. For example, staff value the opportunities to learn from other teachers across the trust. Teachers at the start of their career receive bespoke and effective support to help them be successful.

Leaders make sure they are visible at the beginning and end of every day to speak to pupils, parents and carers. Parents value the culture that has been established, where each pupil is valued. They are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Parents recognise the many opportunities that the school provides for their children. Typical comments from parents mention 'thriving children' and staff who are 'friendly and professional'.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

Personal development and wellbeing are strengths of the school. Leaders have a clear and aspirational vision for the personal growth of pupils.

Staff deliver a comprehensive personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Pupils have a deep understanding of the PSHE curriculum. They talk with confidence and maturity about what they know, including aspects of relationships and sex education. Leaders adapt the PSHE curriculum to support pupils in keeping safe in their local area. For example, pupils have a secure understanding of the risks of open water. They also recognise the benefits and risks of social media. Pupils have an acute awareness of mental health and why it is important to look after their minds as well as their bodies.

Pupils learn about citizenship and enjoy the enrichment opportunities alongside those for reflection to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils value diversity and respect those who lead lives different from their own. Pupils contribute positively to their community. For example, they raise money for local charities without being asked. Pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of democracy and other fundamental British values. For example, they can elect the pupil representative for the ‘Heatherlands voice’. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pastoral support for pupils is highly effective. Staff are committed to giving pupils the support they need. As a result, pupils thrive. Some pupils benefit from starting the school day in specific quiet spaces around the school. Targeted extra teaching provides pupils with even more support. For example, pupils benefit from attending wraparound care where specific reading and number work helps pupils keep up with their learning.

The school offers enrichment opportunities for all. Leaders plan activities to develop pupils' skills and talents and to provide cultural experiences. They check pupil participation carefully to ensure that all benefit from the offer. Pupils enjoy educational visits and extra-curricular clubs. Leaders offer clubs based on pupils' interests to make sure that activities are both relevant and appealing to them.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils at Heatherlands typically achieve well. Published outcomes are typically in line with, or above, the national average. Most recently, published outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are above averages in all areas. This is a result of leaders' focused improvements to the delivery of the curriculum. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, make good progress from their starting points.

Pupils recall key knowledge from trips, including visits to the science museum. They particularly enjoyed learning about space in the planetarium. Pupils' work shows they build knowledge in all subjects, especially in reading and mathematics. They build on what they know and can do. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education. However,

some pupils still have gaps in their letter formation and spelling. As a result, they sometimes repeat errors in their handwriting. Leaders' work to address this is well planned, but the impact is not yet fully realised.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious and well sequenced. The important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember is carefully set out. Leaders make deliberate and well-informed decisions about what teachers teach and how they teach it. Pupils benefit from extensive opportunities to develop their oracy skills across the school. These opportunities help pupils to build their vocabulary and communicate confidently and effectively. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged, learn well. This is because staff make thoughtful adaptations to help them learn the curriculum. As a result, pupils with barriers to learning progress swiftly from their starting points.

Pupils recall important knowledge from across the curriculum. For instance, in science, key stage 1 pupils confidently talk about what plants need to grow. In mathematics, older pupils compare equivalent fractions with clarity. They apply their learning with increasing confidence and accuracy. School leaders ensure that reading has a high profile throughout the school. The various libraries are respected by pupils as they engross themselves in books.

Leaders, however, know that the curriculum is not always delivered as precisely as it could be. In a minority of lessons, pupils' misconceptions are not always identified, and activities are not always as well matched to pupils' starting points. As a result, some pupils do not always make as much progress as they should.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils at Heatherlands arrive at school with a genuine desire to get to their classrooms quickly. They live and breathe the school's values of 'respect, resilience, aspiration, motivation and independence'. Staff greet children warmly. Respectful and meaningful relationships help pupils to blossom. Pupils settle quickly into morning routines and meet the high expectations that staff set.

Pupils' behaviour is typically exemplary. They show maturity and self-discipline. Pupils talk to visitors with eloquence and genuine interest. They hold doors open and enquire about everyone's wellbeing. As a result, pupils feel part of the school family and thrive. Their attendance is highly positive. Pupils know that discrimination is not tolerated and have the utmost confidence in staff to address any concerns should they have them. Children in the early years are happy and quickly feel part of the school. They enjoy the range of activities on offer that help them to develop their early knowledge and skills. For example, children quickly develop their social skills in the newly built 'Nest', where they describe their snack time as like being in a café.

Leaders have created a culture of high ambition and resilience. ‘The Heatherlands way’ sets out how pupils should behave and grow. It underpins how staff support pupils in everything they do. As a result, pupils achieve well across the curriculum. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged flourish in the school's inclusive culture and access learning successfully alongside their peers.

Pupils relish the wide range of clubs and enrichment activities on offer to them. For example, the school choir enjoyed singing at a well-known concert venue, and other pupils shone when performing a script of ‘The Tempest’. Pupil voice is highly valued by school leaders. Those who act as curriculum ambassadors ensure that their views support meaningful changes to the curriculum.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the new approach to teaching handwriting, and the renewed focus on transcription, is implemented consistently well, so that pupils’ writing fluency and the quality of their written work are always of the highest standard.
- Leaders should ensure that the intended curriculum is delivered consistently well across all year groups and subjects.

About this inspection

This school is part of Coastal Learning Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Paul Howieson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Martin Copsey.

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

This inspection took place on 6 and 7 October 2026.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty’s Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and a range of other staff.

An inspector met with the CEO, the chair of trustees and 3 members of the local governance committee and several members of the central team from the trust.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

There is a breakfast and after-school club.

The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Julian Churchill

Lead inspector:
Thomas Brewer, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Claire Mirams, Ofsted Inspector
Carl Thornton, Ofsted Inspector
Liz Geller, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from different sources. More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

ⓘ The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 6 October 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

616
Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 268

School capacity

630
Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

29.55%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.5%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

4.22%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

14.77%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	58%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	61%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	74%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	66%	74%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	74%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	74%	72%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	69%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	68%	73%	Close to average

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	51%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	40%	46%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	74%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	53%	62%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	66%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	63%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	57%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	57%	59%	Close to average

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	51%	69%	-18 pp
2023/24 (final)	40%	67%	-27 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	74%	81%	-7 pp
2023/24 (final)	53%	80%	-26 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	66%	78%	-13 pp
2023/24 (final)	63%	78%	-14 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	R	R	R
2025/26 (provisional)	R	R	R
2024/25 (final)	57%	81%	-23 pp
2023/24 (final)	57%	79%	-23 pp

The Key Stage 2 data we used for this inspection has not yet been published; therefore, we have not provided it alongside this school's report card. ‘R’ in the table indicates that the data is not yet available. We will update the table when the Department for Education publishes the data for the latest academic year.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2025/26 (1 term)	4.3%	5.1%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	5.0%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	5.4%	5.5%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2025/26 (1 term)	12.7%	14.4%	Close to average
2024/25 (3 term)	10.7%	13.0%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	14.0%	14.6%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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