

Heath Mount Primary School

Mary Street, Balsall Heath, Birmingham, West Midlands B12 9SR

Inspection dates

21–22 March 2017

| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
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| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Requires improvement |
| Early years provision | Requires improvement |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies and is not yet good enough across the school because leaders have not been effective enough in checking the work of the staff.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to deepen their knowledge and understanding and extend their reasoning skills in all subjects including English and mathematics.
- Pupils, especially those who speak English as an additional language, do not have enough opportunities to develop their language and communication skills and address specific grammatical errors in their speech and writing.
- Leaders do not check that teaching across the school consistently reflects agreed expectations and procedures.
- The school improvement plan is not tightly focused on raising pupils' outcomes. It does not contain clear measures of success to help leaders and governors judge if actions have been successful.
- The curriculum is not planned well enough to help pupils make good progress in all subjects, including mathematics and English.
- There are weaknesses in teaching in the early years. Children do not have enough opportunities to develop their language and communication skills. Also, the outdoor learning environment is not used well enough.
- Leaders have not ensured that the required information is on the school website.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders are focused on the right priorities to improve pupils' progress and raise attainment. They have the full support of staff who value recent developments.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported to make progress towards their individual learning goals.
- Effective systems and procedures are in place to support vulnerable pupils. Pupils are well cared for and feel safe. Pupils' behaviour is good.
- Support for the disadvantaged pupils is effective. Their achievement is improving well and they make reasonable progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and the progress made by all pupils, including children in the early years, by ensuring that teachers:
 - provide pupils, especially those who speak English as an additional language, with enough opportunities to develop their language and communication skills and address specific grammatical errors
 - plan activities to deepen their knowledge and understanding and extend their reasoning skills in all subjects including English and mathematics
 - use time in lessons productively by checking pupils' understanding earlier in lessons and adapting tasks so pupils' learning moves on more rapidly
 - improve outdoor learning in the early years and the opportunities for learning when children choose play activities for themselves.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the school improvement plan is tightly focused on raising pupils' outcomes and is carefully monitored against measurable success criteria so that leaders and governors can gauge the impact of their actions
 - leaders check that teaching across the school consistently reflects agreed expectations and procedures
 - the curriculum is planned and delivered to reflect subject-specific skills and language in all subjects as well as mathematics and English
 - ensure all the required information is on the school's website.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good across the school. As a result, pupils' progress is variable. While progress was strong at the end of key stage 2 last year in reading and mathematics this is not a consistent picture for current pupils across the school in all subject areas.
- The school improvement plan does not clearly identify the intended impact that improvement activities will have on pupils' achievement. This makes it more difficult for leaders to evaluate the impact of their actions and for governors to hold leaders to account.
- The impact that leaders make to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable. Subject leaders are not effective enough when checking to see that all teachers fully comply with agreed expectations and procedures. A number of leaders are new to their role and while they are being supported they have not yet had the opportunity to fully implement the changes needed.
- The leader responsible for the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities provides effective support to help teachers and teaching assistants meet the needs of specific pupils. Regular checks on the progress of these pupils show that the special educational needs funding is meeting these pupils' needs. Conversely, there has been no formal assessment of pupils who speak English as an additional language and no formal training for staff. Consequently, the progress of these pupils is being held back due to the lack of targeted support in language development.
- Since the previous inspection the senior leadership team are making improvements by accessing support from partners and working with local schools on joint projects. At the previous inspection, leaders were asked to ensure pupils had opportunities to write at length. This has been addressed. Also, a new school tracking system has been introduced to allow leaders to analyse pupils' assessment information to check on the progress of a range of groups and individuals. This is effective in helping the school identify where extra help needs to be targeted.
- Local and national leaders in education have assisted in carrying out reviews alongside the school's leaders and some impact can be seen here but there is still work to do. Expectations and procedures have been implemented but these are not yet consistently applied or effective enough to improve the school's overall performance. For example, not all teachers provide opportunities to extend pupils' reasoning skills in mathematics or have made the necessary improvements identified from previous monitoring.
- Staff are supportive of recent developments. They value the training they have internally and with other schools and feel it is helping them to improve their practice. They appreciate the support they receive from leaders. The management of staff performance is in place and is beginning to be effective.
- School leaders have not ensured that the curriculum that is planned allows for pupils to develop specific skills relating to each subject and the relevant language in all subjects.

As a result, pupils do not make good progress in all subjects, including mathematics and English.

- Good experiences, however, are provided to enhance the curriculum, for example, through visits and residential trips to the city farm and local museums. Pupils learn about a variety of religions throughout the school. They also learn a range of musical instruments which they really enjoy, for example, brass, guitar, percussion, steel pans and djembe drums. They have opportunities to perform in school and also take part in music concerts locally.
- Pupils are taught British values to prepare them positively for life in modern Britain. Pupils know how to respect one another and talk knowledgeably about racial equality. They know it is good to be friends with people from different backgrounds and beliefs. School events are organised to support pupils' personal development, for example, e-safety week, anti-bullying week and road safety week. Visits to school from the police and fire services also help pupils to learn about keeping themselves and others safe.
- Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a range of clubs, for example, gymnastics, dance (hip hop, bhangra, breakdance), board games, football, netball, sewing, cricket. The range of clubs offered allows pupils of different abilities to take part. This is having a positive effect on their social development.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to diminish differences between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally. The progress of these pupils is tracked carefully. A range of support is provided to diminish gaps between their achievement and that of others nationally who are not disadvantaged, and also to extend their learning opportunities and experiences.
- The physical education and sports premium is used effectively to provide opportunities to participate in physical activity for the pupils within the school day and before and after school. A full-time sports coach has been employed who teaches physical education in lesson time and works with the pupils at breaktimes developing a range of skills. The school is a member of the local secondary school partnership, providing access to sports events and competitions. The funding provides an opportunity for pupils to experience sports outside school, for example, climbing at a local climbing centre. It is also spent on training and resourcing. It is making an improvement in the pupils' physical and sports skills and in their attitudes to the subject.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural education is strong. Pupils are given opportunities to engage in a range of experiences. For example, the pupils learn about global citizenship to develop a sense of the wider community and about caring for others.
- There are mixed views from parents and carers. Some parents are happy with the school and the progress their children make, others not so. However, the pupils are overall positive about their learning, the opportunities they have and their welfare and safety.

Governance of the school

- Governors have acted on the recommendations from the review of governance following the previous inspection. They have restructured and are now more involved in the life of the school. Governors have an understanding of the strengths and areas

for improvement They are informed as a result of regular reports of assessment information and reports from leaders. They now expect leaders to identify the intended impact that improvement activities will have on pupils' achievement in order to hold them to account more effectively.

- Documentation shows that governors challenge the leadership. They come into school regularly and provide rigour and support to develop staff. They have a working knowledge of the life of the school. They utilise their skills to contribute to the leadership, management and oversight of school improvement. Governors have a knowledge of the impact of the pupil premium and sports and physical education funding and of the impact of staff performance management. A panel of governors, guided by an adviser, is responsible for the performance management of the headteacher.
- Governors work hard to ensure all safeguarding practices are effective. They visit school regularly to hold leaders to account regarding safeguarding practices. Governors also receive safeguarding training and update reports from staff and some have received safer recruitment training.
- Governors are aware that the school website does not fully meet the requirements for the publication of information on its website.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding practices are well established and effective. Senior leaders and governors have ensured a culture and ethos of keeping children safe in school and staff go to great lengths to ensure pupils are safe. Training is up to date and regular reviews are carried out to check that this remains the case. This means that all staff and governors understand and follow the school's procedures. There is a code of conduct in place for staff. Leaders ensure that the necessary checks are made on staff before they are employed.
- Staff are proactive in identifying any pupil who may be at risk of harm. Concerns are reported and the school ensures support is tailored well. Leaders work well with agencies to safeguard pupils and there is good support from the designated leader for vulnerable pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they should.
- Teaching is variable across subjects and years. Teachers do not use time in lessons productively, or check pupils' understanding early in lessons to adapt tasks if they find they are too easy or too hard to move learning on more rapidly.
- Pupils now have more opportunities to write at length and improvements have been made in the quality of writing. However, teachers do not provide pupils, especially pupils who speak English as an additional language, with enough opportunities to develop their language and communication skills and address specific grammatical

errors. Misconceptions, either spoken or written, are not picked up and addressed quickly enough.

- Teachers' skills in giving guidance are improving, as is their subject knowledge. This enables them to ask detailed questions to meet the learning needs of different pupils. However, teachers do not plan activities to deepen the pupils' knowledge and understanding and extend their reasoning skills in all subjects including English and mathematics. For example, pupils do not have the opportunity to explain how they have arrived at an answer and to find other ways to check their answers.
- In adult-led sessions, especially in the early years, pupils have very limited opportunities to talk, practise and rehearse their ideas and use of language.
- Teachers clearly explain expectations to the pupils, and as a consequence, pupils can explain their learning. Pupils make effective use of skills they have learned previously. Pupils appreciate the feedback they are given and feel secure they are improving.
- Pupils enjoy their homework and say it gives them extra time to practise their reading and learn their spellings.
- Pupils work collaboratively with each other and help and support each other. They make use of displays, prompts and resources to guide and support their learning.
- Pupils are taught the skills of constructing and sounding out words well. Pupils make good use of their phonic skills when reading aloud in order to read unknown words. They enjoy reading and they have some knowledge of different authors.
- Pupils say they enjoy mathematics and they have positive attitudes toward the subject. The work in their mathematics books shows that they become fluent in number skills as they progress through the school. However, teachers do not plan enough opportunities for reasoning skills to be extended.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils show self-confidence and self-awareness and are keen to be successful learners. Their physical and emotional well-being is well catered for. Pupils are a delight to talk to, and they respond quickly to instructions from staff.
- While pupils are keen to learn and comply in lessons, the tasks they are given by teachers do not provide them with the opportunities to develop a real thirst for learning, resilience and perseverance.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe both physically and online. This is developed through lessons, class discussions, assemblies and talks by outside agencies. There are no well-founded concerns about pupils' safety in school.
- Pupils say bullying does not happen often but that they are aware of how to deal with any type of bullying. Pupils have a sense of looking after each other and they feel that the schools deals with bullying well. No examples of derogatory or aggressive language were heard during the inspection and none were recorded by the school. School has

made clear its approach to bullying through lessons, anti-bullying week and pastoral care provision.

- The school has a breakfast club before school. The pupils who attend are closely supervised by the sports coach and a teaching assistant and enjoy a range of activities that are provided for them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is orderly and pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and around school. Pupils respond quickly and correctly to instructions from staff. Pupils' behaviour in school and classes is good, which enables lessons to progress without hindrance or interruption.
- Pupils show respect for each other and share their views in class work, paired work or more social occasions. Pupils are polite and have good manners.
- The very few pupils who have emotional or behavioural difficulties have been assessed and effective action has been taken to make provision for these pupils to support them develop skills for self-conduct.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning, especially where teachers make learning interesting and engaging. On some occasions pupils do not display positive attitudes to learning when the lesson presentation by the teacher is not engaging enough.
- Pupils know the behaviour system and the way rewards and sanctions are applied. Pupils adhere to these rules well. Pupils say they are proud of badges and the rewards they receive for good behaviour.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average and has been consistently over time. The school monitors attendance closely and takes prompt action if a pupil's attendance falls. There are a range of awards for pupils to aspire to for good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- National data in 2016 showed that pupils at the end of key stage 2 made better progress than others nationally especially in reading and mathematics. However, the progress for current pupils in school is inconsistent. Pupils' books in English, mathematics and other subjects show that their progress varies widely across year groups from their individual starting points. This is because teachers do not adapt tasks quickly enough in lessons if they are too easy or too hard for the pupils. It is also because pupils' mistakes in grammar and spelling are not picked up quickly enough and addressed.
- While standards in writing have improved, on occasions teachers do not build in enough opportunities for the pupils to extend their language and communication skills, which prevents more pupils attaining greater depth in writing.
- There are a large number of pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language at a variety of levels of language acquisition. However, there has been no

appropriate assessment of these pupils, nor any training for staff. This means their progress is being held back.

- Pupils do not make enough progress in subjects across the curriculum such as history, geography and science. The curriculum is not planned well enough to ensure that they make good progress in these subjects or learn the vocabulary relevant to each subject.
- In 2016, disadvantaged pupils made significantly more progress than others nationally who are not disadvantaged in reading and mathematics from key stage 1 to key stage 2. Overall, the progress of disadvantaged pupils currently in school in most year groups is improving at a reasonable rate and differences between their achievement and that of other pupils are diminishing.
- Most-able pupils, including those that are disadvantaged, are often given a good level of challenge and consequently make progress towards their individual targets in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' knowledge of phonics is good as a result of carefully planned teaching. For the past three years, pupils' attainment in phonics has been above the national figure at the end of Year 1. By the end of Year 2, pupils who made slower progress during Year 1 have caught up. Pupils use their phonics skills well in reading.
- Pupils enjoy reading and are well supported to develop their reading skills. They choose texts appropriate for their age, and pupils in all year groups apply their knowledge of phonics to sound out unfamiliar words in the text. However, their understanding of what they read is weaker.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because they are given support with their learning.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children enter the school with skills that are below those typical for their age. In particular, children have low communication and literacy skills.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception is just below the national average. During their time in early years, children, including disadvantaged children, make the progress they should but too few make better progress. This is because children are given insufficient opportunities to develop characteristics of effective learning, such as curiosity, independence and resilience. Too often, teachers give children tasks that do not allow them opportunities to think, reason and investigate for themselves.
- Teaching requires improvement. Tasks are planned carefully and there are a range of activities for children to enjoy. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to learn through play, especially when they choose to work without the support of an adult.
- Children's learning in speaking and listening requires improvement because adults do not provide enough opportunities for children to develop their language and vocabulary, especially in adult-led sessions. Adults are not skilled in these sessions in encouraging children to talk by asking them questions and engaging them in dialogue.

- Phonics is taught well and children enjoy practising their letter sounds. They use their phonic skills to write words and simple sentences. For example, a group of children were very engaged in using their phonic skills to write Mother's Day cards.
- The indoor and outdoor environments are attractive and well resourced. However, not enough effective use is made of the outdoor area to develop the children's physical capabilities. For example, the children are not given enough opportunities to explore, create, investigate and have contact with the natural world and nature.
- There are warm relationships within the early years. The children are happy and settled and play well together. For example, one group of boys was busy making a tower together, while another group helped each other while using computer tablets.
- The early years leader, who is new to the school, has knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision. Some improvements have been made but these have not been made swiftly enough to impact on children's learning. For example, a new electronic tracking system has been introduced to record children's achievements but there is no system at the moment to share these regularly with parents or for parents to input information. The early years leader has not had time to evaluate the impact of the pupil premium funding on the outcomes for disadvantaged children.
- Relationships with parents are good. Parents have knowledge of the progress their child is making. Parents appreciated the new transition arrangements into Reception. These were introduced last summer and helped the children to settle in very quickly when they started school and become familiar with the Reception environment and the staff.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 103333 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 10025170 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 418 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Graham Evans |
| Headteacher | Rajinder Sahota |
| Telephone number | 0121 464 1691 |
| Website | www.heathmount.bham.sch.uk/ |
| Email address | enquiry@heathmount.bham.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 11–12 February, 2015 |

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The majority of pupils are from different minority ethnic backgrounds, more than three times the national levels. Almost half of the pupils are of Pakistani heritage. The proportion of pupils believed to speak English as an additional language is more than five times the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is around one quarter of the pupils in school and twice as high as the national average. The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- All the children in the Reception classes attend full-time.
- The headteacher was absent when the inspection took place and one of the assistant headteachers led the school as acting headteacher.

- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school clubs for pupils.
- The school meets the government's floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of key stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- All classes were visited during the inspection and a total of 28 lessons were observed. Three lessons were conducted jointly, involving the acting headteacher and the assistant headteacher.
- Discussions took place with the acting headteacher, assistant headteacher, middle leaders, six members of the governing body, a group of teachers and teaching assistants, a national leader of education who has been supporting the school since June 2015 and the district lead and the director of continuous school improvement.
- Pupils' work was reviewed during lessons and a more detailed scrutiny was made of pupils' books with the subject leaders for English and mathematics. Some pupils read to the inspectors and the inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection in order to gain their views.
- A range of documents was reviewed. These included the school's self-evaluation summary, action plans for school improvement, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, performance management documents, minutes of the meetings of the governing body, the school's own assessment information and records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of children.
- The behaviour of pupils was observed in lessons and at lunchtime as well as when moving around the building.
- The inspectors took account of the views of parents through the online survey, Parent View, and through discussions with parents. The inspectors also took account of the views of the staff and pupils.

Inspection team

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
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| Mary Maybank | Ofsted Inspector |
| Michael Appleby | Ofsted Inspector |

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