

Erdington Hall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	103251
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	376860
Inspection dates	22–23 February 2012
Lead inspector	Clive Lewis

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	459
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Beattie
Headteacher	Martyn Collin
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Clive Lewis	Additional inspector
Barry Wood	Additional inspector
Linda Phillips	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Twenty-five lessons were observed and all teachers and most support staff were seen working with pupils. Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and members of staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, looked at documentation including teachers' planning documents, and examined tracking and assessment data. Questionnaires from 146 parents and carers were analysed.

Information about the school

This larger-than-average primary school accepts most of its pupils from the socially and culturally diverse local community, although some travel from further afield. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is also well above average and over half of all pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average. A higher than average proportion of pupils join or leave the school at other than the normal time. The school does not meet current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations set for pupils' attainment and progress. There is a children's centre, managed by the governing body, on site. This was inspected separately at the same time as the school. A minority of the children who attend the children's centre move into the Nursery class.

An interim headteacher took up post at the end of the summer term in 2011. The school will convert to an academy on 1 April 2012. Ninestiles Secondary School has been identified as a suitable sponsor and the governing body has recently received confirmation of an academy order from the Secretary of State for Education.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is, therefore, given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' achievement.

- The overall effectiveness of the school is inadequate because attainment at the end of both key stages has been significantly below national averages for a number of years.
- Although pupils are now making satisfactory progress, historically, progress has been unsatisfactory and pupils' achievement has been inadequate. However, school data and lesson observations indicate that the school is now much closer to meeting the current government floor standards.
- The strong and constant focus on improving the quality of teaching under the leadership of the interim headteacher has been effective and, as a result, the quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall, and the teaching in a number of lessons was good. Work seen in pupils' books confirms that improved teaching is beginning to overcome the considerable gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Although provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, teachers' ability to provide an appropriate curriculum both indoors and outdoors is hampered by the current accommodation.
- The safety and behaviour of pupils are satisfactory. Pupils say they feel safe in school. They behave well most of the time, but sometimes become restless when lessons do not sufficiently engage them. Attendance and punctuality have improved significantly in the current school year and attendance is now in line with the national average. This is due to a whole-school focus on improving attendance involving both parents and pupils.

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- Leaders and managers are demonstrating the capacity to improve the school. The interim headteacher, with strong support from the partner academy school, has successfully introduced a number of well-measured initiatives designed to arrest previous underachievement and instil a culture of accountability in the staff and pupils. Under his leadership, weaknesses in teaching have been rigorously tackled and improved the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils' progress across the school has improved. Relationships with parents have improved and attendance has risen significantly. School self-monitoring and evaluation have been considerably strengthened.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement across the school by improving the quality of teaching to the level of the best by ensuring that:
 - the pace of teaching and learning and the level of challenge are better matched to the needs of different groups of pupils
 - information gained from assessments is used to plan work that consistently meets pupils' learning needs
 - pupils are more actively involved in lessons through practical tasks, discussions and opportunities to use their initiative.
- Improve the curriculum opportunities for the youngest pupils by investigating ways of providing direct access for all Reception children to a secure outdoor all-weather environment.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children begin in the Nursery demonstrating knowledge and skills that are well below those typically found, particularly in communication, language and number skills. They get off to a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make satisfactory progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. However, children do not make sufficient progress in their physical development and in developing independent learning skills because the school does not have adequate facilities to provide sufficient outdoor learning opportunities.

Although attainment is well below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in the latest teacher assessments and national tests, observations confirm that most pupils are now making satisfactory or better progress due to improvements in teaching. Although over time the legacy of some inadequate teaching led to underachievement, current school data and work in pupils' books confirm gaps in performance are narrowing rapidly. Inspectors' observation of lessons and work scrutiny indicate that the current Year 6 cohort in particular have made very good progress in the current school year and are on track to meet government floor standards in English and mathematics. Year 6 pupils were very well motivated and

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behaved very well in a literacy lesson where they were editing their work – the teacher set and maintained a very good pace and had high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Good progress was made during the lesson and pupils' books indicated good progress during the current school year.

Due to improved provision for guided reading and regular phonics activities, standards of reading at the end of both key stages are improving. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because of the effective support provided by teachers, teaching assistants and outside agencies. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are making satisfactory progress due to improved teaching and use of assessment and tracking data. The very large majority of parents feel that their children make good progress. Inspectors found that, although this has certainly not been the case in the past, rates of progress have improved and pupils are now making satisfactory progress across the school.

Quality of teaching

Although teaching over a number of years has not been effective enough, resulting in consistently low attainment, the quality of teaching has improved and is now satisfactory with some strong features. As a result, pupils are making satisfactory progress across the school. Although satisfactory and improving there is not yet enough good teaching to ensure the rapid progress pupils must make is sustained in order to raise attainment consistently.

Most teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. They ensure classroom routines are made clear and regularly reinforced so that learning takes place in a well-structured environment. Most teachers provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to lessons, although a small number of lessons were seen where pupils spent too much time listening to the teacher and not actively engaging in practical learning tasks, discussions or opportunities to use their initiative. Learning intentions are made clear at the beginning of each lesson and, as a result, in most lessons, pupils know precisely what it is that they are expected to do. Teachers now have a good understanding of the progress the pupils in their care are making due to a regular half-termly analysis of data about pupils' performance. Use of these data has been particularly effective in Year 6 where pupils are set into four groups for mathematics and literacy lessons and a strong focus on improving reading, writing and mathematical skills has enabled pupils to make accelerated progress during the current school year. In one good literacy lesson in Year 6, a more-able group of pupils learning to use varied sentence structures responded very well to the teacher's high expectations of work and behaviour. A good pace and a strong learning ethos were promoted throughout the lesson, and the rigorous focus on attainment and strategies for learning ensured that pupils made good progress.

In the best lessons, teachers generate high levels of enthusiasm for learning among pupils. This contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, in a small minority of lessons, planning does not take full account of assessment and tracking data in order to ensure that all ability groups are

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appropriately challenged.

A strong emphasis is placed on promoting positive behaviour and most teachers are skilled in doing this through giving consistent messages, using incidental praise and highlighting good responses from pupils. Clearly targeted support for pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs results in satisfactory progress. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel that their children are taught well. Inspectors found that, although improved teaching is helping pupils to make satisfactory progress, this has not been the case in the past and it is not yet effective enough to ensure that they make consistently good progress.

The curriculum provides a satisfactory framework to guide teachers' planning, though opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Under the leadership of the interim headteacher, guided reading activities have been improved and younger pupils receive regular lessons in the sounds letters make. As a result, pupils are making good progress in developing their reading skills.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils behave well around school and inspectors were particularly impressed by the classroom ambassadors who welcome visitors to their class, explaining what they are learning and what they hope to have learned by the end of the lesson. In the best lessons, when pupils are fully engaged, their behaviour contributes well to good learning. However, where there are weaknesses in teaching, pupils find it harder to concentrate and can become restless, limiting the progress they make. Pupils say that behaviour is generally positive and they know that there are adults they can talk to if they have any concerns. They say they feel safe both in the playground and in the classroom. School documents and discussions with pupils confirm that there is no bullying, although they are aware of the different types. The large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel that behaviour is good in the school and the overwhelming majority feel that the school keeps their children safe.

The attendance of pupils has been below the national average for a number of years but has improved significantly over the last year so that it is now broadly average. Leaders and managers have managed this aspect of the school very well, ensuring that absence is dealt with effectively in a number of ways, bringing parents with them to ensure pupils attend regularly and punctually and by rewarding good attendance.

Leadership and management

The quality of the leadership and management of the school is satisfactory and leaders and managers demonstrate satisfactory capacity to improve the school further. Although pupils' achievement over time has been unsatisfactory, under new

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and effective leadership, teaching has improved and pupils are now making satisfactory and sustained progress across the school due to focused input from the school's leaders and managers. The quality of the school's assessment and tracking systems has been considerably strengthened. Relationships with parents have improved significantly. These improvements, along with the much improved attendance rates indicate that leaders and managers have the capacity to continue to drive improvement.

Clear priorities have been set for further improvement and leaders and managers are keen to improve. In the past, senior leaders have been too generous in their evaluation of how well the school is doing from the monitoring they have undertaken. However, a more realistic view has been developed and leaders now have an accurate view of teaching and learning and of what the school needs to do to improve. The school development plan is precisely focused on the most important priorities requiring improvement and contains detail about how and when these are to be improved. Systems have been established to support teachers' professional development, including through the support of a number of teachers from the school's sponsor academy, and there are clear signs that this is having a positive effect. Leaders and managers are working more closely with parents and carers and, as a result, the large majority have positive views about the school. In particular, they have noticed the improvements that have been made since the appointment of the interim headteacher. The newly-restructured governing body fulfils its statutory duties, is supportive and is beginning to challenge the school to do well.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily. The broad and balanced curriculum with its strong focus on improving literacy and numeracy skills, meets pupils' needs. Leaders ensure that personal skills are promoted within the curriculum and ensure that any discrimination is tackled. Safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements and give no cause for concern.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Erdington Hall Primary School, Birmingham, B24 8JJ

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school and for talking to us about what you do there. It was good to see that you clearly enjoy school. You told us that you feel safe in school and are confident that the teachers and other adults can always sort out any problems that you may have. Your attendance has really improved in the last year. This is excellent news, well done!

While there are some positive things happening, overall, the school has not been doing a good enough job, so we have given the school a notice to improve. Those who lead your school do so satisfactorily. However, I am concerned that your progress in the past has not been as good as could be expected. I want the school to help you catch up rapidly on any learning you may have missed. In particular, I have asked the school to improve your standards in reading, writing and mathematics by:

- ensuring that teachers use information they have about how well each of you is doing to plan appropriately challenging work for you so that you always do your best
- giving you more opportunities to learn independently and practise what you have learned
- improving facilities and opportunities for outdoor activities in the Nursery and Reception classes so that the youngest children become more confident in finding things out for themselves.

Your headteacher, the staff and governing body all want the school to get better. You can all help by continuing to come to school regularly and on time and by trying as hard as you can in all of your lessons. Once again thank you for being so welcoming during our visit.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis
Lead inspector

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