

George Dixon Primary School

City Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B17 8LE

Inspection dates 11–12 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Most pupils make good progress in most subjects.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make rapid gains from low starting points. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 make good progress.
- Pupils apply literacy skills well across the curriculum.
- Teaching and learning are good and there are examples of outstanding practice.
- Most teachers convey high expectations and provide challenging tasks that are well matched to pupils' abilities.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Attitudes and behaviour are exemplary in some lessons.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for at school.
- Leaders and managers have successfully raised pupils' achievement and improved the quality of teaching.
- Governors provide support and good levels of challenge.
- Good improvements have been made since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 is not good in all classes. Many pupils lack the skills to carry out investigative work with confidence.
- Opportunities are missed for pupils to apply numeracy skills in different subjects.
- In a few lessons, pupils are not challenged enough and they do not always have sufficient opportunities to learn independently and organise their own work.
- Attendance is improving but is still below average.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons.
- They held discussions with the headteacher, other staff, local authority staff, external advisers, members of the governing body, pupils and parents.
- Pupils were heard reading.
- The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.
- They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's policies, assessment information, a wide range of pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning.
- The inspectors analysed 21 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Green

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- George Dixon is an average-sized primary school.
- Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds with Black African, Pakistani and Indian being the largest groups. Three quarters of the pupil population speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average, but the proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- A much-higher-than-average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at different points in the school year is much higher than average, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, the minimum standards set for attainment and progress.
- At the time of the inspection, the school had just moved from its old site into new premises.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 so that it is consistently good across all classes by:
 - extending the good investigative and problem-solving practice seen in some mathematics lessons
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to apply and develop numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and ensure that all teaching is at least good by:
 - ensuring that tasks are always suitably challenging for pupils and that learning proceeds at a brisk pace
 - ensuring that pupils are given appropriate opportunities to learn independently and plan and organise their own work.
- Extend strategies to raise attendance to at least average levels.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection.
- Children enter Reception with knowledge, understanding and skills much lower than expected for their age. Clear and accurate assessments show that most children make rapid gains in their learning because of the high-quality provision and enter Year 1 closer to average standards in most areas of learning.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress, and attainment by the end of Year 2 is average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 has been uneven in the past but positive action has been taken to improve it. The high proportions of pupils who leave and join the school through Key Stage 2 present a considerable challenge. Although new arrivals make good progress, most do not have time by the end of Year 6 to reach the standards of other pupils who have been longer in the school. New pupils often join the school with little English.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 has steadily improved from the low levels of three years ago. It is now closer to average, particularly in reading and writing.
- Pupils who remain in the school tend to reach higher standards than those that are there for a short time. Nevertheless, new arrivals receive effective support so that they can settle quickly and learn well. Pupils achieve equally well irrespective of ethnic heritage.
- The considerable investment in teaching assistants is working well and these staff make a valuable contribution to the learning of new arrivals, pupils at an early stage of learning English, those who are disabled and those with special educational needs. Wise use is made of additional funding to support the many pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and most of these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening because teachers place considerable emphasis on these skills. Effective questioning by adults, paired discussion and role play all contribute well to pupils' progress.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to reading, and a regular and systematic programme for the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) helps to ensure that pupils acquire essential reading skills well. By Year 6, pupils read widely and use research skills effectively in a range of topics.
- Staff have worked hard to raise pupils' achievement in writing. Pupils write for a range of audiences and purposes. Pupils' handwriting is well formed, joined and neatly presented. Pupils take pride and care in the presentation of their work.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics in Key Stage 1, but progress in Key Stage 2 is no more than what is usually expected, rather than good. This is because teaching is not always good or better. There are fine examples of pupils applying numeracy skills to investigate and problem solve in mathematics lessons. However, this good practice is not applied in all classes. Furthermore, pupils' application of numeracy skills in other subjects is underdeveloped.

The quality of teaching is good

- The pupils said, 'Teachers make work challenging' and 'We learn new things.' There are examples of outstanding practice but, in a few cases, teaching is not as effective as it should be in ensuring successful learning.
- Teachers create a positive climate for learning and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Relationships are strong, and pupils work well together. They show respect for different cultures and appreciate literature and human achievement.
- Teaching presents a clear purpose so pupils know what they are expected to learn. In the main, teachers use assessment information well to plan their teaching and to match tasks to pupils' different abilities and needs. As a result, pupils are suitably challenged and they make good progress in acquiring knowledge and deepening their understanding.
- Occasionally, tasks are not sufficiently challenging and the pace of learning is not brisk enough. In a few lessons, pupils' learning is overdirected by the teacher, which hinders pupils' independence and skills in organising their own learning.
- In most lessons, pupils have good opportunities to assess their own learning against their individual targets and the learning intentions set. Teachers provide constructive feedback on pupils' performance to help move them on. The marking of pupils' work is effective. Good work is acknowledged and praised, and helpful comments guide improvement.
- In an outstanding English lesson in Year 6, pupils were highly motivated and inspired by the teacher's enthusiasm and strong expertise. Inspirational teaching included the imaginative use of visual aids, sound effects and role play to develop pupils' ideas and vocabulary for writing. Pupils were highly productive and made rapid gains in writing a multi-sensory ghost story.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage feel safe, behave well and are settling effectively into their new surroundings.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Records of incidents show that behaviour is typically good. Pupils informed inspectors that behaviour is very good most of the time. In a number of lessons seen, pupils demonstrated exemplary attitudes to learning and behaviour. They feel safe at school and are confident staff will always take care of them.
- In an assembly for pupils in Key Stage 2, pupils reflected on the determination, skills and talents displayed by Olympians and Para-Olympians over the summer. Pupils responded extremely well to impressive video clips and the animated presentation by staff. Their behaviour was outstanding throughout the assembly.
- Pupils show a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including persistent name-calling and cyber-bullying. They know the steps to take to prevent bullying. The school has clear and effective procedures for dealing with misbehaviour, including bullying, should it occur. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is very rare and that such behaviour is swiftly dealt with by staff.
- Attendance has considerably improved from low levels. The school has well-thought-out plans to extend strategies to raise attendance further.

The leadership and management is good

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher, key leaders and governors are promoting high expectations and successfully raising pupils' achievement. The school has remained focused on raising achievement while overseeing a major building project and moving from the old site to the current new premises. Pupils, parents and staff are impressed with the new facilities and the enhanced learning opportunities the new facilities bring.
- Good emphasis is placed on the monitoring and development of teaching. Senior staff observe teaching and provide coaching and support. Professional development and training are generally well linked to the school's improvement priorities. External advisers and consultants contribute well to the development of teaching. Newly qualified teachers receive effective support.
- The local authority provides effective support, particularly in data analysis and school review.
- Good progress has been made in improving teaching since the previous inspection. There has been considerable success in improving the teaching of reading and writing. Teachers' performance management targets are not always sharply focused on improving pupils' progress in mathematics.
- The headteacher and staff have created a positive school climate where pupils from different backgrounds and cultures are valued and provided for. The curriculum is broad, balanced and interesting. It enables most pupils to achieve well. Leaders are taking positive steps to make mathematics provision at least good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is successfully promoted by all staff. George Dixon is a harmonious school community.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body are enthusiastic and work closely with leaders in improving the school.
 - Governors possess a valuable range of experience and expertise which is used well.
 - Governance provides effective support and appropriate challenge.
- Very few parents responded to the online 'Parent View' survey. However, discussions with parents and the results of the school's own surveys indicate that parents are pleased with the care and education provided.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	103200
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	404859

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Constance Henry
Headteacher	Maria Carter
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2010
Telephone number	0121 420 3250
Fax number	0121 675 7807
Email address	maria.carter@georgedixonprimary.bham.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

