

# Heathmere Primary School

Alton Road, London, SW15 4LJ

## Inspection dates

8–9 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress is too variable. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are generally below average.
- A number of teachers are new to the school and some teaching is good. However, the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school and across subjects, and as a consequence, pupils' progress is also inconsistent.
- Some teachers do too much work for the pupils rather than encouraging them to carry out tasks for themselves. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Work is not always accurately matched to pupils' needs.
- In some mathematics lessons, pupils are not provided with the resources they need to be able to understand shapes and numbers, and as a result, their progress slows.
- Pupils' writing skills lag behind their reading skills because they have too few opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects.
- In marking pupils' books, teachers do not always provide clear guidance on what pupils should do to improve the quality of their work.
- Leaders, managers and the governing body do not always make sure that plans are specific enough about improvements that are needed and the deadlines for achieving them.

### The school has the following strengths

- There are signs that changed leadership, including the more active governing body, is bringing about improvements, for example by taking effective measures to help pupils in danger of falling behind. As a result, Year 6 pupils did a little better in 2012 than in previous years.
- Support for vulnerable pupils and those with a range of additional needs is effective, enabling them to make progress in line with others.  
Pupils generally behave well in lessons and
- The school is an inclusive community where pupils from different cultures and faiths integrate well together. Pupils feel safe and are generally kind to one another. Pupils' worries and concerns are quickly acted upon.
- As a result of vigorous action by the school, attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now average.

around the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons across a range of subjects, most of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at samples of work and attended assemblies.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, the acting Chair of the Governing Body, local authority representatives and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the views of staff in 30 questionnaires.
- There were no responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, but inspectors spoke to several parents and carers during the course of the inspection and examined the results of the school's own questionnaire to parents and carers collated in October 2012.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including development plans, the self-evaluation report, monitoring files, the data on pupils' attainment and progress, safeguarding information, records relating to behaviour and safety, and the governing body minutes.

## Inspection team

Monica Raphael, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Natalia Power	Additional inspector
Noureddin Khassel	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Heathmere is slightly larger than the average primary school.
- Around half of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, and this proportion is higher than average.
- Over two thirds of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages, and around two out of five speak English as an additional language.
- A higher than usual proportion of pupils, around two out of five, have special educational needs and the proportions of pupils supported at school action plus and through a statement of special educational needs are above average. Such needs are mostly for emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- The school runs and subsidises a breakfast club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes in leadership and in staffing. Over half of class teachers were newly appointed in September of this year. The senior leadership team has changed with the appointments in September 2012 of the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. The headteacher, who has been in post for six years, is retiring at the end of the current term. The governing body has been led by an acting chair since January 2012.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics, so that it is consistently good by:
  - raising the level of challenge so that all pupils are expected to do as well as they can
  - ensuring that teachers give pupils as many opportunities as possible to work independently and to undertake their own research
  - matching work accurately to the abilities of pupils
  - consistently offering clear guidance in marking about how pupils can improve
  - ensuring that pupils use appropriate equipment, particularly in mathematics lessons, so that they learn to count and handle numbers with confidence.
- Improve the quality of pupils' writing by giving them as many opportunities as possible to write at length in a range of subjects and topics across the curriculum.
- Ensure that planning by leaders and managers is sharply focused on what pupils need to do to improve, and identifies tight deadlines to ensure that improvement is accelerated.

## Inspection judgements

### **The achievement of pupils** requires improvement

- Children enter the Nursery with variable language, number and social skills. Generally, these skills are below those expected for their age. They make steady progress through the Reception Year and through Years 1 and 2. Though the teaching is caring, too little is sometimes expected of the pupils and, as a result, their language and number skills remain below average.
- In Years 3 to 6, pupils' attainment and the progress they make reflect the quality of the teaching. Teachers tend to be more confident in teaching English. As a result, pupils make better progress in this subject, especially in their reading. Mathematics teaching, however, tends to be less confident and, as a result, pupils' results in this subject have tended to lag behind those in English.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do better in reading than in writing; this is because there is an effective programme to teach them about letters and sounds, and how these come together to form words. Pupils from both years are put into ability groups, and often make fast progress because lessons provide a good level of challenge, tailored accurately to their needs. This is not always the case, however, especially in lessons where pupils receive work which does not challenge them enough.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language do particularly well as their needs are identified from the start of their school career. Effective additional support is put into place, which enables them to catch up quickly and in some cases do better than those who speak English as their first language.
- Money provided to the school from the pupil premium is used well to provide effective support to those pupils known to be eligible for this funding, and this enables them to make progress in line with others. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make the progress typically expected of them.
- Pupils who experience behavioural and emotional difficulties gain confidence through counselling from the Place2Be, and this enables them to learn in a calm way and make progress in line with others.

### **The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to undertake their own research and share this with their classmates. All too often, the teacher dominates the lesson and does too much of the work, sometimes preventing the pupils from finding things out for themselves.
- The tasks set by teachers are not always successfully matched to pupils' abilities, sometimes lacking challenge, and in these instances pupils make slower progress.
- In some mathematics lessons observed by inspectors, pupils made slower progress than they should, because they were not given the resources, such as number blocks needed to help them with counting, or accurate shapes to enable them to learn to distinguish a hexagon from an octagon.
- In the best lessons seen, there was a brisk pace and pupils made good progress because they were enthused by the teaching. For example, in one fast-paced Year 6 English lesson, the pupils were engaged in exploring how clauses work in order to write interesting sentences of their own. The teacher gave the pupils plenty of opportunities to do their own thinking, and one wrote, 'After the war, when everyone stopped fighting, people began to mourn the dead,' a moving comment during the week of Remembrance Sunday, showing that pupils did more than analyse sentence structure.
- Teaching assistants provide caring and effective help, enabling pupils with a range of additional needs to keep up with others.
- Some adults in the Nursery and Reception classes are very conscious of the importance of encouraging the children to develop their use of language, such as when one child brought a

small clump of grass to show an adult and she encouraged the child to discuss its texture, and how it grew and how its roots looked. This is not always the case, however, particularly where the activities provided lacked excitement and opportunities for children to experience a sense of wonder.

- Teachers' comments in pupils' books have a tendency to describe or praise pupils' work, without providing sufficient guidance on what pupils need to do to improve the quality of their work. As a result, pupils sometimes continue to repeat the same mistakes later in their books and this restricts their progress.
- The school is cohesive and its provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. For instance, the audience of pupils, and parents and carers, clearly enjoyed learning about evacuees in a thoughtful assembly presented by Year 3 pupils.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils told the inspectors that they felt safe and happy at school, and that they enjoyed their lessons because the teachers were kind to them. Pupils confirmed that the good behaviour seen during the inspection was typical.
- Inspectors observed good behaviour in lessons and around the school. Teachers generally manage pupils' behaviour well and there are usually positive attitudes to learning in the classroom, though pupils occasionally become a little restless when given insufficient opportunity to learn independently.
- Teachers, counsellors and other adults are patient with the pupils, and are calm and supportive to those who occasionally find it difficult to control themselves, while at the same time pointing out how their actions disrupt the learning of others on these occasions.
- Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures get on well and are kind to one another. The youngest children in the Nursery and Reception classes are ready to play nicely and take turns on the equipment.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when they are out of school, such as never talking to strangers. However, a few pupils do not have a detailed understanding of e-safety.
- A concerted drive to raise attendance from previously low levels has resulted in attendance which is now average. The school's breakfast club provides those who attend with an incentive to attend regularly and punctually. Pupils enjoy the competitive element of the 'in to win' assemblies, where they stand to win prizes for exemplary attendance.

### **The leadership and management** require improvement

- The new leadership team is introducing a new 'can do' ethos in the school, drawing support, not only from the local authority, but also from a nearby outstanding school. Though these are steps in the right direction, and though results improved for Year 6 pupils in 2012, there has not yet been enough time for a secure pattern of improvement to be established.
- The school has met some, but not all, of the recommendations from the last inspection. Attendance has risen, but although there has been some improvement, learning and progress remain areas for improvement.
- The school's plans for the future, though identifying the right priorities, have not been sufficiently ambitious to raise performance. As an example, plans to improve mathematics do not identify precisely what needs to be achieved and the timescale for improvements is not urgent enough.
- Leaders and managers are generally clear about the strengths and areas for development in the quality of the teaching, but their evaluation on the performance of individual teachers is sometimes too generous. Consequently, teachers are not always clear about how to sharpen the

quality of their work to get the best out of the pupils. Nevertheless, procedures for managing staff performance are sound.

- The school keeps pupils safe and ensures that those who work with them have been properly checked.
  - The curriculum provides pupils with enjoyable enrichment activities. For example, pupils had the opportunity to develop creative skills through African drum playing as part of Black History month, and one pupil described this as 'the best thing ever'.
  - Opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills are sometimes missed. All too often, pupils cut and stick worksheets, instead of having the chance to write at length on topics such as science, religion and history.
  - The school offers some opportunities for parents and carers to become involved in the life of the school, such as through the Place4Parents, which provides counselling services for parents and carers. However, school leaders acknowledge that there is scope to do more to reach out to parents and carers, and to create a stronger community ethos.
  - The local authority provides extensive and effective support for the school and this is beginning to bring about improvements.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body has, since it restructured in January 2012, improved in quality with the support of the local authority and the National College for School Leadership. As a result of this support, governors recognise that there is a legacy of inconsistent teaching which has had an adverse effect on pupils' achievement; consequently, the governing body, in making the unusually large number of new appointments, has opted for experienced teachers and has assigned salaries appropriate to their experience. Governors have a sound awareness of how the school manages staff performance. They accept that, in the past, governors have not challenged school leaders vigorously enough on pupils' performance and this is now beginning to improve; for example, governors have requested further training on how to interpret statistics on pupils' performance. The governing body has a good grasp of the school's finances, such as by ensuring that the pupil premium funding goes entirely towards supporting those pupils in danger of falling behind, and this enables them to make progress in line with others. Governors play an active part in the life of the school, including attending plays and special events.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	10129
<b>Local authority</b>	Wandsworth
<b>Inspection number</b>	400451

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	268
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Freya Guinness, Acting Chair
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pramilla Fouracre
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11–12 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8788 9057
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