

Hugh Myddelton Primary School

Myddelton Street, London, EC1R 1YJ

Inspection dates 3–4 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The school has not sustain the good features noted in the previous inspection. The quality of teaching has declined, as has pupils' achievement, attainment and progress.
- The governing body has not always been rigorous enough in checking the school's performance and challenging it to do better.
- Some subject leaders are new to their roles and are not yet playing a full part in driving improvement.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Sometimes they set them work that is too easy.
- Some teachers do not question pupils skilfully enough to check their understanding, draw out their ideas or extend their thinking.
- Pupils make slower progress in writing than in reading or mathematics. Few pupils write creatively at high levels. They have too few opportunities to write in different styles and for different audiences.
- Support staff do not always have the skills to contribute effectively to learning in lessons.
- Teachers' marking varies too much in the guidance it gives pupils on how to improve their work.
- Behaviour has improved this year but some pupils become distracted in lessons and do not give of their best.
- Teaching in the Nursery does not meet the children's needs and interests as well as in Reception.

The school has the following strengths:

- The headteacher has built a staff team who are rising to the challenge of improving the school. They are working hard to improve their teaching.
- The new team of senior leaders has already seen success in its actions. Teaching is improving, attainment rising and attendance levels increasing.
- The new programme for teaching phonics (the sounds made by letters) is resulting in good progress and rising attainment, particularly in Reception.
- Changes introduced in Reception, for example improvements in planning and the inside and outdoor areas, have strengthened learning and increased the children's progress.
- Parents and carers recognise the efforts made by staff and governors to take care of their children. Most pupils feel safe in school and any concerns they have are reported confidently to trusted adults.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 21 lessons, 14 of which were visited with the headteacher or senior leaders. They looked at work in pupils' books from the current academic year.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, and with the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor. Discussions were also held with two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 24 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire. They also met informally with parents at the start of the day and looked at the results of surveys undertaken by the school and the local authority over the last two years.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors also took account of the 30 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Martin Beale, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Stumpf

Additional Inspector

Deborah Hall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is well above average in size compared with other primary schools.
- Two thirds of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for funding through the pupil premium is high. This is additional government funding which, in this school, supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- An above average proportion of pupils join or leave part-way through their primary education.
- The Nursery caters for eight children on a part-time basis as well as 48 children who attend full time. Children attend the two Reception classes full time.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2014. Interim arrangements were in place over the previous year. There has been considerable turnover of teachers since the school's last inspection.
- The school provides daily breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the pupils' achievement in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for them to write at length in a range of styles and for different audiences
 - making sure they practise and develop their skills across subjects.
- Eliminate inconsistencies in teaching so that pupils make at least good progress by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have high expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour and set work that is hard enough
 - teachers question pupils with greater skill to check their understanding and deepen their thinking
 - support staff make a more effective contribution to learning in lessons
 - provision in the Nursery is of the same good quality as in the Reception classes
 - marking provides clear and consistent guidance on how pupils can improve their work.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - providing training and support for subject leaders to enhance their skills in driving improvement in their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that the governing body checks the school's performance rigorously and holds senior leaders more accountable for pupils' progress.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved further.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Changes of leadership following the last inspection slowed progress in dealing with the inconsistencies in teaching that developed over the last two years. The new senior team is addressing these as a matter of urgency but has not been in place long enough to eliminate them fully.
- Systems to manage and improve the quality of teaching were not sufficiently effective in the past but are now improving. The headteacher has set teachers challenging targets and has provided further training where needed. The link between good teaching and salary awards has been restored. This is helping to improve teaching but has not yet been through a complete cycle for leaders to see its full impact.
- Leaders are taking decisive action to improve the school's performance. They have developed a sense of purpose among staff, a shared direction and a climate in which good behaviour is becoming the norm. It is too early yet to see the full impact of their actions but, already, teaching is more effective, attainment is rising, particularly in Year 6, and both attendance and behaviour are improving.
- Local authority staff work closely with the new leadership team and governors to check that plans to raise achievement are implemented rigorously and to build their capacity to drive improvement themselves. Regular meetings to check on progress with school leaders and a recent review are enabling them to identify the impact of action taken and further priorities for improvement.
- A new structure for subject leadership is in place but some of the newly appointed staff have yet to take up their posts. The headteacher has identified that not all new leaders have the skills to undertake the role yet. A training programme for them will start next term.
- The partnership between home and school is strong. Parents value courses in how to support their children's learning and workshops that help them recognise bullying and how the school deals with incidents.
- The school's action to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination requires improvement. Disadvantaged pupils have not been achieving as well as others. However, gaps in attainment that widened in 2014 are closing rapidly because of the effective use of the pupil premium to provide support for these pupils' individual needs.
- Leaders and governors have developed a school culture in which the welfare of the pupils is paramount and striving for improved behaviour is a priority. Safeguarding procedures are rigorously implemented and regularly reviewed. Training helps to keep staff very vigilant of warning signs and records of concerns about pupils at risk are scrupulously maintained.
- School leaders have revised the planning and organisation of subjects to meet changes to the National Curriculum and make learning more interesting for pupils. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in many ways. The strong emphasis on tolerance and understanding others is reflected in events where different cultures are celebrated. Opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities, and elections for key roles, such as becoming school council representatives, introduce pupils to the notion of democracy. All of these aspects prepare pupils appropriately for life in modern Britain.
- Increased numbers of pupils are benefiting from specialist physical education teaching, funded through the school's effective use of the additional sports premium. Having more confident and competent teachers also enhances their learning. The pupils' attitudes to physical education have improved, as has their ability to work as a team.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have not been sharp enough in the past in checking the school's performance and challenging leaders to take action to reverse its decline. In recognising this, the governing body has started to review its processes and audit skills in order to become more effective. Until recently, governors have not analysed assessment data rigorously enough. They have not ensured that teachers were given sufficiently challenging targets so that only good and better teaching was rewarded financially. They understand that teaching declined and are becoming aware that the headteacher's actions are bringing improvements. Although finances have been managed prudently, it is only this year that governors have ensured that the pupil premium is having an impact on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils require improvement**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. When teaching is not interesting and challenging in a small number of lessons, pupils lose concentration, their behaviour deteriorates and their learning slows. Not all pupils show pride in their work by taking care over its presentation.
- Positive behaviour is constantly promoted and staff are developing effective techniques to deal with situations where an individual's behaviour could get out of hand. Pupils conduct themselves well at lunchtime and enjoy taking part in the wide range of activities available for them.
- Pupils talk about how behaviour has improved this year because they are keen to 'stay on green'. Records show a decline in incidents and improved attendance over the course of the year. Some parents still have concerns but are generally becoming happier about behaviour and the stance taken by the headteacher.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe through assemblies and regular guidance on internet safety. Parents are happy with the steps the school takes to support the care and welfare of their children.
- Pupils say incidents of bullying have diminished because they are simply not tolerated. The school's close involvement with the local 'Anti-Bullying Alliance' includes visitors who provide staff training, develop pupils' understanding and raise awareness of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. The 'Gutsy girls' group in Year 5 helps girls to be more assertive and confident that their voice will be heard.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching quality has declined since the school's last inspection. As a result, learning is uneven across the school and is not leading to consistently good progress over time.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of the pupils. The tasks they set are not always hard enough and they sometimes accept untidy work. Their questioning does not check the depth of pupils' understanding, draw out their ideas or extend their thinking. Additional staff are not always deployed well enough and some pupils become dependent on them for answers rather than solving problems themselves.
- The quality of teaching is improving. The most effective teaching is leading to pupils making good progress. Well-chosen resources and methods engage the pupils and stimulate their imagination. Questions and work set hold the pupils' attention and make them think. Behaviour is managed well because teaching is interesting and challenging, so pupils stay focused on their work and learning takes place undisturbed.
- The teaching of reading is improving and is developing an enjoyment of books among pupils, along with basic skills. Teachers adhere closely to the new programme for teaching phonics (the sounds that letters make) so pupils know what to expect at each stage of a lesson. Learning is also enhanced by the large number of volunteers who listen to pupils reading.
- Most teaching of mathematics is adapting to the demands of the new National Curriculum. Pupils have the opportunity to apply their skills and so secure their understanding, although this is not always the case. At times, the work set is repetitive and not demanding enough for all pupils.
- The teaching of writing requires improvement. Pupils are given too few opportunities to write in detail and at length for different purposes and in a range of styles. They do not have the chance to refine their skills often enough through writing in topics and other subjects.
- Marking varies considerably in the quality of the guidance and support it provides for pupils' learning. Some clearly identifies where errors need correcting and teachers check that advice has been followed through. This is far from consistent across the school. Marking in some classes does not pick out mistakes quickly or provide guidance on how they can be eliminated. As a result, errors persist and progress slows.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress throughout the school. The effect of staff and leadership changes led to weaker teaching in the past and this resulted in slower progress and falling attainment.
- In 2014, the Year 6 test results in reading and mathematics fell to average levels. They rose in writing but were still below average. The proportion of pupils reaching at least Level 4 in mathematics, reading and

writing was well below average, as it had also been the year before. This meant that a significant number of pupils in both years were not suitably prepared for secondary school.

- This year, the school has successfully increased pupils' rates of progress across the school and raised their attainment, particularly in Year 6. This has been achieved through teaching smaller groups of pupils and targeting individual pupils who were in danger of not making at least the expected progress. Many more pupils are working at the levels expected for their age.
- The most able pupils make good progress in mathematics, with a significant number reaching high levels by the end of Year 6. All pupils who have reached Level 3 in reading at Key Stage 1 reach Level 5 by the end of Key Stage 2. It is in writing where the most able have not always been pushed enough to reach the highest levels.
- Results of the phonics screening check for Year 1 pupils rose in 2014 but were still below average. The new phonics programme is giving current reception children a firmer foundation for developing early reading skills and increasing rapidly the progress of pupils at Key Stage 1. They are showing much improved understanding and the confidence to apply their skills when meeting new words.
- In the 2014 national tests in Year 6, disadvantaged pupils were four terms behind their peers in school and behind other pupils nationally in mathematics and writing. They were between two and three terms behind both groups in reading. The progress of disadvantaged pupils, although not consistently good, has increased considerably this year and attainment gaps have closed substantially.
- The achievement of pupils who speak English as an additional language is not significantly different from that of others. The weakest achievement is by White British pupils. Many are eligible for support through the pupil premium. Their progress has improved to be similar to others', although, given their lower starting points, attainment gaps remain.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also requires improvement. Strong systems are in place to support the identification of their needs and the school provides a comprehensive range of additional support outside lessons. Learning is less effective in lessons as teachers and support staff are not always skilled enough to meet individual needs accurately.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children do not make consistently good progress in the early years because teaching varies and requires improvement.
- Provision is improving more strongly in the Reception year than in the Nursery. In the Reception year, teachers plan activities that engage children's interest and meet their needs more effectively. Attainment is rising, with more children than previously working at levels expected for their age in the Reception year. Most are now being prepared well for Key Stage 1.
- The teaching of phonics has improved considerably this year and children's previously weak reading skills are improving rapidly in the Reception year. A sharp focus on providing activities to develop an understanding of number is leading to similar improvements in children's mathematical skills. There is less sign of improvement in writing. This is because writing activities are not extensive or engaging and do not stimulate the children's imagination.
- Adults lead learning effectively for the most part, for example when supporting children with programming a toy to move through a maze or exploring floating and sinking. However, sometimes adults do not use their interactions with children to move their learning forward quickly enough when children are engaged in their chosen activities. Their questions do not encourage children to express their thoughts. Sometimes they direct children too much rather than encouraging them to try out their own ideas.
- Children behave well throughout the early years. They are kind, caring and form trusting relationships with adults, who show how much they value the contributions of all children. The children feel safe and work and play in a harmonious atmosphere. They show much enthusiasm, imagination and curiosity when exploring resources and the activities provided.
- Leadership of the early years has not ensured that there is consistently good practice and learning across both the Nursery and Reception. Activities are not always sufficiently imaginative and stimulating in the Nursery to ensure good learning at all times.

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	131842
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	456087

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	447
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Court
Headteacher	Nathalie Parker
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2012
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