

Hall Green Infant School

Petersfield Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, West Midlands B28 0AR

Inspection dates

22–23 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils' outcomes improved in 2017. The proportions of pupils achieving the expected standards in Year 2 were at or above national levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Outcomes in the phonics screening check were also above the national level.
- Teaching has improved over the last two years and is now good. Pupils make good progress across key stage 1. However, teachers do not consistently provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in problem solving and reasoning.
- Children in the early years are confident and happy individuals. They have positive relationships with all staff. Nevertheless, some children are not prepared well enough for the challenges of Year 1.
- Children make good progress across the early years. Staff plan to meet children's learning needs very well in the indoor environment. However, staff do not match activities in the outdoor learning environment carefully enough to children's learning needs.
- Behaviour across the school is very positive. Pupils are considerate and show respect to one another and staff. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is developed exceptionally well. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pastoral support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities helps them to become confident in school. However, leaders do not monitor their academic provision closely enough.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not consistently address the learning needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities as well as they should. As a result, some of these pupils do not achieve their full potential, especially in phonics.
- Governors have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They work closely with leaders to drive school improvement. Governors recognise that some gaps in their expertise need to be addressed to enable them to be even more effective.
- The curriculum is well planned and provides pupils with a range of interesting and stimulating learning experiences across a wide range of subjects. Pupils make good progress across the whole curriculum.
- The headteacher quickly made the necessary changes that were needed to stem the decline in the school's performance. However, the need for change was not communicated well enough to staff and parents. Consequently, some members of the school community lack confidence in the leadership team.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - ensuring that all leaders communicate more effectively with the whole school community, especially parents and staff
 - monitoring the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities more closely and providing training and support to all staff to develop their understanding of how to plan to meet these pupils' learning needs
 - continuing to develop the skills and expertise of governors to hold leaders to account.
- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers consistently plan work to meet the learning needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - pupils have more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in problem solving and reasoning
 - teaching assistants consistently provide effective support to pupils' learning, especially in phonics.
- Further improve the provision in the early years by:
 - ensuring that the outdoor environment better meets children's learning needs
 - better preparing children for the challenges of Year 1.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, supported by a strong wider leadership team, understands the school's strengths and areas for improvement in great detail. There is a determined drive to ensure that the school continues to develop, thus improving outcomes for all pupils. Evaluations of school performance are mainly accurate and development planning is focused on the right improvement priorities. Leaders set clear success criteria in the plans so they can check if improvement actions have been successful.
- Leaders use appraisal systems well to develop teachers and to hold them to account for their performance. Leaders target professional development carefully to meet staff needs. The appraisal systems have been used effectively over the last two years to eradicate weak teaching.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Teachers provide pupils with a wide range of stimulating and interesting learning experiences. The curriculum is planned carefully to ensure that pupils develop their skills and knowledge progressively over time. For example, there is a range of impressive art work produced by pupils across the school. A number of extra-curricular opportunities, such as music, choir, sports and cooking clubs, support the curriculum.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported extremely well. A pupils' 'Unicef team' works to ensure that all pupils' rights are respected. Pupils have a clear understanding of their rights. The school's values underpin fundamental British values and pupils show good knowledge of them in an age-appropriate way. Through this work, pupils are well-prepared for the next stage of their education and for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use the additional funding received to support disadvantaged pupils effectively. Pupils' academic and pastoral needs are identified and then a range of support is put in place to help them. The pastoral lead works with families to make sure that all measures possible are taken to help them support their children at home, as well as in school. As a result, disadvantaged pupils achieve well.
- Sport premium funding is also used to good effect. Specialist coaches develop teachers' skills and expertise. The school is part of a local sports partnership which has enabled participation rates in inter-school activities and competitions to rise.
- The Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) provides support to the school on behalf of the local authority. This support has been highly effective at identifying the key areas for development that leaders need to take action on. Reviews have focused on developing teaching and learning. The support continues to provide advice and guidance, helping to drive further school improvement.
- There has been a considerable amount of turbulence in staffing over the last two years. The headteacher and governors have managed these changes well to maintain the quality of teaching and learning and leadership and management. However, leaders have been less successful at ensuring that the school community understands what changes are being made and the reasons for them. This has resulted in some lack of confidence in the leadership by a small group of the school community.

- Additional funding received to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used well to support their pastoral needs. For example, leaders work with external agencies, such as an educational psychologist and speech and language therapists, to support individual pupils' needs. The pastoral and specialist support enables pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to grow in confidence.
- However, leaders do not monitor the overall provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities closely enough to ensure that it meets their academic needs. There is a lack of coordinated support for these pupils. In addition to this, some of the small-group work does not support the learning of these pupils. Some teaching assistants lack the skills to develop the learning, especially when teaching phonics. Consequently, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make as much progress as they should.

Governance of the school

- Governors understand their roles and responsibilities and act as a 'critical friend' to the school's leaders. They carry out their statutory responsibilities, including checking that all safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and applied.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance. They receive detailed information about pupils' progress and attainment and check that leaders are addressing any issues which may arise. The finance committee works to ensure that the school's budget is managed effectively.
- As a result of an audit, governors set up a strategic development group to focus on the planned direction of the school. Governors recognise that they are in a 'change phase' and that there is further scope to develop their expertise to enable them to be even more effective in their roles.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff place a high priority on making sure that pupils are as safe as possible. Pupils are well supervised at break and lunchtimes. Swift action is taken when concerns arise about pupils. Leaders work with a range of external agencies to follow up the concerns, and do not rest until the right support is in place to help them.
- Detailed checks are made on all adults who work or volunteer in the school, and visitors are supervised at all times. Appropriate procedures are followed to recruit staff safely. Risk assessments are in place and identify measures to minimise risks to pupils when in school. Individual support plans also identify clearly the specific needs of pupils.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of ways. They know that the 'safe-search' system will keep them safe when using the internet in school. E-safety is also shared with parents to encourage them to check that their children are using computers safely at home.
- Pupils know that there is always someone that they can talk to in school if they have any concerns or worries, and that the 'trusted adults' will help them if needed. There is a culture of open discussion across the whole school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Following a number of changes in teaching staff, teaching and learning are now consistently good across the school. Teachers show secure subject knowledge across the whole curriculum and use this to plan for pupils' learning needs.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to check where pupils are in their learning. They then adapt teaching in response to pupils' understanding to take their learning forward. Teachers use what they know about what pupils can do to plan activities which are matched to their learning needs. This is especially so for the most able pupils.
- Teachers model writing effectively. Pupils are given opportunities to develop and apply their writing skills in a range of different ways and in different subjects. Books show that teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' writing whether it is in English lessons or in subjects such as science or history.
- While assessment systems are still relatively new and are developing, teachers apply them consistently across the school. Teachers record what pupils can do, and this information is used to support their planning.
- Teachers provide pupils with highly informative feedback. The feedback focuses on what pupils have done well in their work, but also what they need to do to further improve. Pupils use this information to help them make good progress. Work in pupils' books shows that this is carried out consistently across the school.
- There are very positive relationships between pupils and all staff. Pupils respond well to teachers and are keen to share their thoughts and ideas in lessons. Positive attitudes to learning help pupils to make good progress. Pupils show pride in their work, and books are consistently well presented across the school.
- Teachers have high expectations of the majority of pupils. However, expectations of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are not consistently high enough. Some teachers do not understand what the specific needs of these pupils are, and therefore do not plan activities which support and develop their learning.
- Pupils' mathematical skills are developed well, especially their numerical skills. However, while pupils make good progress in mathematics, they do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving and reasoning activities. As a result, some pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
- Reading is taught well across the school. Pupils read regularly and often in school and at home. While pupils' achievement in the phonics screening check is at or above the national average, some pupils do not reach their full potential. Some teaching assistants do not support the learning in phonics well enough. This is especially so for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are given a range of opportunities to develop their skills of leadership. Groups

such as the eco and school councils actively contribute to school development. The school has a 'friendship squad'. These pupils support their peers at break and lunchtimes, providing company, guidance and support when needed.

- The 'Unicef team' helps pupils to understand that all children have rights, and that these rights should be respected. Pupils talk confidently about their rights. For example, pupils explained that they have a right to lead a healthy lifestyle. They say that there are many opportunities in school to exercise and be healthy.
- Pupils understand the difference between bullying and when they fall out with their friends. They say that bullying rarely happens, but know that there are many adults they can talk to if they are concerned. Pupils know that any issues will be sorted out quickly.
- The pastoral leader has ensured that pupils' welfare is a high priority. There is now a consistent and coordinated approach to supporting vulnerable pupils. Work with external agencies is particularly effective to identify and support pupils' needs. Pupils are well cared for at Hall Green Infant School.
- The 'Sunshine club' provides excellent before- and after-school care for pupils. There is a range of stimulating and exciting activities for pupils to engage in. Healthy snacks are provided and pupils are supported exceptionally well. This means that pupils have a very positive start and end to their school day.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils show respect for one another and all staff. They demonstrate positive learning behaviours in lessons and are keen to share their learning. Consequently, there are very low incidences of disruption to learning in lessons.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the behaviour system, which has been recently reviewed. Leaders track behaviour incidents in detail, although serious incidents are extremely rare. Leaders provide individual support plans for pupils who have difficulty managing their own behaviour. Where needed, pupils are given 'steps to success' to improve their behaviour.
- Pupils behave well at break and lunchtimes. For example, pupils queue sensibly and wait patiently for their food in the dining hall. The 'munch bunch' crew help to supervise their peers at lunchtime, which further contributes to the orderly environment around the school.
- Leaders track attendance in great detail. Pupils receive attendance awards, which encourage them to attend school regularly. Leaders work with a range of agencies to address attendance issues where they arise. Home visits are undertaken to support families, and leaders focus on identifying and addressing any concerns at an early stage. As a result, attendance is improving and is now in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The proportions of pupils achieving the required standard in the phonics screening check have been consistently in line with or above the national average for a sustained period of time.
- Pupils' outcomes showed a decline in 2016, with no pupils achieving a greater depth of learning in reading, writing or mathematics. However, outcomes at the end of 2017 rose considerably in all subjects. In reading and mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level and a greater depth of learning was above the national average. Outcomes in writing were in line with the national average.
- Leaders track current pupils' progress in great detail. Recently introduced assessment systems identify where pupils are in their learning. Any pupils who are not making the progress they should be identified quickly and pupil progress meetings focus on how they can be supported to catch up with where they should be. Current assessment information shows that the vast majority of pupils are making good or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders also check that pupils are making progress across the whole curriculum. Curriculum planning is detailed and tracks the development of pupils' skills and abilities across a range of subjects. Work in pupils' books also shows that pupils are making good progress in all subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to their peers. A range of both pastoral and academic support helps them to develop their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. At the end of key stage 1 in 2017, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard in reading was above the national average. While it was below in writing and mathematics, their progress from the beginning of key stage 1 was good.
- The majority of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, some support is not helping them to make the progress of which they are fully capable. This is especially so in phonics.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader demonstrates strong leadership of this provision. There is a detailed understanding of the strengths in the early years, but also where further development is needed. The leader recognises that the staffing changes have resulted in challenges to maintaining the quality of teaching and learning. However, these challenges have been overcome, and teaching and learning are consistently good across the early years.
- At the end of the Reception Year, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been consistently at or above the national average for a sustained period of time. Children enter the early years with skills and abilities which are typical for their age. Children make good progress across the early years.
- Staff understand the individual needs of children well, especially children who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged children. Staff take time to ensure that

learning meets children's needs, and that the right support and help are in place to help these children make good progress.

- Children demonstrate good behaviour, especially when learning in their classrooms. The children are very articulate and are keen to share their learning with visitors to the classes. Children show a high level of confidence and are very happy in their learning. Positive relationships with all children and staff are very evident across the setting.
- Staff ensure that parents are involved in their children's learning. For example, they hold workshops to help parents to understand how they can support their children's learning at home. There is an 'open door' policy in school to enable parents to share any concerns they may have. Parents also complete questionnaires to feed back strengths and areas for development to the staff.
- Children are prepared well for their start to the early years. Staff ensure that they get to know children's needs before they start school. This helps children to settle quickly. While children settle quickly and make good progress in the early years, some children are not ready for the challenges of Year 1. Staff do not consistently prepare children well enough for the start of this year group. A few children find the more formal structure of teaching in Year 1 difficult to adjust to. This slows their learning at the beginning of Year 1.
- Teachers plan to meet children's learning needs very well in the indoor learning environment. Activities are carefully designed to take children's learning forward in all areas of learning, especially communication, language and literacy. Children show a high level of engagement and sustained concentration in these activities because they are well matched to their learning needs.
- However, activities in the outdoor learning environment are less well planned. Staff provide too many different tasks and activities which are not focused on what children need to learn. This results in some children, especially boys, wandering around too much, with little focused learning taking place.
- All safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. Daily risk assessments are carried out to check that the site is safe and secure. Appropriate paediatric first aid is in place, and all staff know, understand and apply the safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff work with a range of external agencies to ensure that children's additional needs are met.

School details

Unique reference number	103210
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10043601
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	411
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jo Davies
Headteacher	Mrs Janice Wood
Telephone number	0121 464 3082
Website	www.hallgreeninfant.co.uk/
Email address	enquiry@hallgreen-inf.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Hall Green Infant School is a larger-than-average infant school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average.
- The school has a Nursery class.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- There are four classes in each year group.
- There is a before- and after-school club.

- The Birmingham Education Partnership provides support for the school on behalf of the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors met with pupils, heard a selection of pupils read and observed pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the early years leader, the pastoral leader, the leader of provision for special educational needs, and middle leaders who have subject responsibilities. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, held a telephone conversation with the chair of governors and met representatives from the Birmingham Education Partnership. Inspectors also spoke to teachers and teaching assistants.
- Work in pupils' books from all year groups and a range of subjects was looked at.
- A number of documents were considered, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Inspectors also considered information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety.
- Inspectors took account of 108 responses to Parent View. Inspectors spoke to a number of parents before school.

Inspection team

Ann Pritchard, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ed Masterson	Ofsted Inspector
Tracey O'Keeffe-Pullan	Ofsted Inspector

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