

Inspection of George Dixon Primary School

City Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, West Midlands B17 8LE

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 September 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well cared for at this school. Pupils from a range of cultures and backgrounds accept others' differences. The many pupils who are new to the school, settle quickly. This is because they get the support they need. Pupils enjoy the range of experiences on offer, particularly swimming and violin lessons.

Staff and leaders have recently changed the structure of the curriculum. In some subjects, this enables pupils to build on what they have learned before. However, some changes are very new and have not yet helped pupils to reach the standards of which they are capable.

Pupils are calm and orderly around the school building. In some lessons, pupils behave well and listen to the teachers. This helps them to learn. In other lessons, pupils talk over the teacher and staff let this happen. This behaviour slows down learning. Some pupils say that behaviour could be better, inspectors agree.

Pupils have highly positive relationships with the staff and leaders at the school. They like coming to school and say they feel safe. Most pupils say that bullying does not happen because, 'staff help to sort out problems straight away'. Some pupils say that there are still problems on the playground.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders, governors and staff want the best for all pupils. They introduced changes after the last inspection to improve the school. For example, a restorative approach to managing pupils' behaviour has helped reduce the number of incidents of rough behaviour on the playground. Pupils say there are still fights, however, and these are often over football.

Before the pandemic, pupils' progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics was improving. Standards in early years and phonics were rising. The numbers reaching the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage two were still low, but improving.

During the pandemic, leaders focused a lot of their time on supporting families with remote learning and children's well-being. Even so, leaders continued work on developing the curriculum. Working with external support, leaders have created curriculum goals for most subjects. These are helping teachers to plan more effectively.

Plans make clear the knowledge pupils need to know and remember in core subjects. As a result, teachers can carry out checks on what pupils know. This enables them to identify learning gaps and plan the support needed to catch up. This happens regularly in phonics and mathematics. Pupils are starting to catch up in these subjects. Leaders have made this a priority.

All staff recently completed training to deliver a new phonics programme. It maps out the sequence of sounds and words children need to be able to read. Pupils also have a daily reading lesson to develop their reading confidence, fluency and understanding, and they read books that match the phonic sounds they have learned. However, these strategies are not yet having the desired effect for pupils who struggle to read.

The mathematics curriculum builds on pupils' knowledge from lesson to lesson. Subject specialists provide training for staff. Teachers present concepts clearly. This helps pupils to develop their mathematical confidence and understanding.

In other curriculum areas, such as design and technology, curriculum plans are at an early stage of development. Currently, they focus more on what activities children will do and not on what they will learn. In subjects such as science and history, teachers do not systematically check pupils' knowledge and understanding. Therefore, teachers cannot be sure what knowledge pupils already have so that they can build on this effectively. This means that not all the work builds on pupils' previous learning.

Children in early years get a good start to their education. They settle into routines quickly and start learning straight away. Staff prioritise developing children's language and communication skills. Staff have high expectations and make these very clear to the children. As a result, children's behaviour and attitudes in the early years helps them to learn and develop.

Expectations in other year groups are not as high. For example, teachers allow pupils to talk over them, and other pupils. These interruptions disrupt and slow pupils' learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified and assessed when they join the school. Staff use a range of approaches to meet pupils' needs. Pupils with more challenging needs are well supported in 'The Reef'. As a result of these careful and thoughtful approaches, pupils with SEND are learning the curriculum as well as others.

Leaders provide a range of different experiences to support pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy trips to the farm, Roman workshops, and visits to the local church. Pupils develop their spirituality through considering questions such as 'where do I belong?'.

Governors know the school well. They ask questions about the information leaders and external partners share with them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have safeguarding as the highest priority. All staff are well trained and know the children well. Staff are vigilant and quickly identify and act when they have a concern. Leaders follow up concerns that they receive and do not stop until they are sure that their pupils are safe. Pupils are taught how to keep safe and to look after themselves. Leaders complete the necessary checks to make sure that staff are qualified and safe to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the approaches to developing pupils' fluency in reading are not yet having the desired effect. Consequently, some pupils, especially the weaker readers, do not yet have the skills to read fluently and confidently. Leaders at all levels must make sure that strategies implemented help all pupils to read fluently and confidently.
- The curriculum plans in some subjects do not always focus clearly enough on what teachers want pupils to know, remember and do. As a result, pupils in those subjects experience a disjointed curriculum and struggle to build on what they have learned. Leaders must make sure that all plans clearly identify the knowledge they want pupils to learn and how that knowledge is built on throughout the subject.
- In a number of subjects, including science and history, teachers do not use assessment to systematically check pupils' knowledge and understanding. As a result, teachers cannot be sure what knowledge the pupils already have so that they build on this effectively. Leaders must make sure that staff use assessment well to help pupils build on the knowledge they already have.
- Pupils' behaviour in some classrooms and at times on the playground, is inappropriate and unacceptable. As a result, pupils' learning and play is disrupted. Leaders and staff must make sure that high expectations for pupils' behaviour are understood by pupils and the school community and consistently applied.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	103200
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10201029
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lynda Donaldson
Headteacher	Shaela Good
Website	www.georgedixonprimary.bham.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	22 and 23 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has its own specialist provision for nine pupils in 'The Reef' funded through their school budget.
- The school achieved the young citizens spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) quality gold mark in autumn 2020.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), designated safeguarding lead (DSL), subject leaders, learning mentor, governors, including the chair of the governing body, and the priority partner assigned to the school by the Birmingham education partnership (BEP).
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and discussed subjects and other activities with staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the DSL and the deputy headteacher who is one of three deputy DSLs. Case files were reviewed. The single central record was checked.
- Inspectors met with staff, including early career teachers, experienced teachers, and support staff, to discuss their workload and the support they receive to carry out their roles.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils at breaktimes and lunchtime about how safe they feel in school and how they are taught to keep themselves safe.
- Inspectors visited the reception classes.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, the pupil survey, and to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Helen Forrest, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Heather Phillips

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Harwood

Her Majesty's Inspector

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021