

Inspection of George Dixon Primary School

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

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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 at George Dixon Primary are happy and take pride in their school. They particularly take pride in their diverse community, and benefit from the opportunities organised for them including trips to the theatre, sporting activities and musical opportunities.

Leaders still have work to do to realise their vision for pupils' achievement, and are aware that outcomes have been too low for some pupils. They have worked effectively to improve early reading, which means pupils have a secure start in being able to access the curriculum. However, there remains too much variability in how well pupils are taught. This is especially so for pupils who often need more support to be able to achieve well.

Leaders have worked effectively to improve pupils' behaviour. This means that routines are well established, and pupils are clear on leaders' expectations for how they should treat each other. The reward systems in place mean that pupils are motivated to succeed. Pupils are clear that, if they have concerns, they can approach an adult, and support for them is provided quickly.

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

Leaders have clarified the key knowledge that pupils will learn. The school is ambitious in its aim as it understands that outcomes for too many pupils have been too low over time. There are areas of the curriculum that are delivered effectively, especially for the youngest children. The school has a clear vision for the development of the children in the early years. The curriculum is well designed and ambitious. Thanks to carefully planned activities, children make good progress from their starting points. Adults carefully work alongside children to develop their language. They ask well-considered questions to probe children's thinking. The school has also worked effectively to improve the teaching of early reading. The systematic approach to teaching reading means that pupils are supported well to learn to read, including pupils who speak English as an additional language. Through a careful selection of stories, pupils are inspired to love reading.

However, the picture is more variable across other age groups, as the ambitious curriculum is not delivered consistently as leaders intend. Too often, teachers miss opportunities to check pupils' understanding to adapt the tasks they are working on. This is especially the case for vulnerable pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils have their needs accurately identified, but teachers do not use the information provided to them to adapt the learning activities to enable pupils with SEND to achieve well.

The school has organised additional intervention sessions in some subjects for pupils who have gaps in their understanding. Too often, these sessions are not effective in enabling these pupils to overcome their misconceptions. This is because leaders

have not ensured that all the adults leading the sessions are sufficiently skilled in explaining the key knowledge that pupils need to understand.

The school has worked effectively to refine and embed the behaviour policy. This means that all pupils and adults understand the school's expectations. There are well-established routines which mean pupils get along well. Pupils are well supported should they need support to meet the expectations. Leaders have ensured that pupils attend school regularly, and carefully follow up absence. They are aware there remain a small number of pupils who do not attend as regularly as they need to. Leaders are continuing to work with these families to ensure that their children improve their attendance.

Pupils are proud of their diverse school, and willingly show visitors the range of languages and countries they represent. The personal, social and health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is well designed and comprehensive. It helps pupils to grow up with reflective and respectful beliefs about themselves and others. The work on Ghana helps them to understand the differences between needs and wants, for example. Pupils enjoy the range of clubs and trips that the school organises for them. These enrich their experience of the curriculum. A number of pupils also take on leadership roles in the school such as school councillors, peer mediators and librarians.

Governors are committed to the school, but their evaluation of the school is too generous and they have not held the school to account for the improvements needed in the quality of education well enough. Staff are proud to work in the school and reported to inspectors that leaders are mindful of their workload. The professional development of teachers is more recent and has yet to have a consistent impact across the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There remain inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is delivered. This means that the quality of education is variable. Leaders should ensure that their quality assurance and professional development supports all staff to deliver the ambitious curriculum as they intend.
- Some teachers do not adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils who find the work more challenging, including pupils with SEND. This means that some pupils cannot fully access the curriculum and do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that teachers know how to adapt their teaching so that all pupils can access the curriculum and achieve well.

- Some interventions are less effective in dealing with pupils' misconceptions. This means that gaps in pupils' understanding are not closed. Leaders need to review their intervention strategy so that all interventions are effective in rapidly closing gaps in pupils' understanding.
- Governors do not have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and have not challenged and supported leaders effectively over standards and the quality of education. As a consequence, weaknesses in the quality of education have persisted. Governors need to ensure that they hold leaders to account effectively to ensure that the quality of education is consistently high across the school.

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.

Further information

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	103200
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10294470
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	359
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Lynda Donaldson
Headteacher	Shaela Good
Website	www.georgedixonprimary.bham.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	15 June 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has its own specialist provision for a small number of pupils, 'The Reef', funded through its school budget.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and

considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- As part of this inspection, inspectors met with governors, the school improvement partner, senior leaders, subject leaders, teaching staff as well as other employees in the school. They also scrutinised governor minutes.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in: early reading, geography and science. They also looked at examples of pupils' work in other subjects. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also visited lessons in some other subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's extra-curricular activities, enrichment programme and its careers and personal development programmes with leaders and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's behaviour and attendance records with school leaders.
- Inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils, both formally and informally, at various points in the inspection. They took account of responses to a staff survey and Ofsted Parent View including a number of text responses.

Inspection team

Andrew Madden, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Matt Meckin	Ofsted Inspector
Pete Hines OBE	Ofsted Inspector

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