

Heathlands Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103382
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336071
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Ted Wheatley

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	459
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Cox
Headteacher	Spencer Lambeth-Angell
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2006
School address	Heath Way Castle Bromwich Birmingham
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors who observed 25 lessons taught by 15 teachers. Inspectors talked to groups of pupils, staff, governors and local authority officers. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work, information about their progress and school development planning. They considered 63 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of different groups of pupils and whether the pace of learning is fast enough, and teaching challenging enough
- how well recent changes in assessment are helping to improve standards and progress
- how well the school deals with persistent absence.

Information about the school

This is a large school. About one third of pupils come from White British backgrounds. About one third of pupils do not speak English as their first language and about one sixth are in the early stages of learning English. After English, the most commonly spoken languages are Urdu, Punjabi and Bengali. An above average percentage of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Mainly, these pupils have moderate learning difficulties, speech, language and communication difficulties, behavioural social and emotional difficulties, or autism. The school runs a breakfast club and a pre- and after-school club for parents who work.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. Attainment is broadly average and improving although pupils' writing skills are not as well developed as they are in other aspects of English. Pupils' progress is satisfactory but is improving at both key stages after a period of being significantly below average. Many pupils make good progress and, while there is still some way for pupils to go to catch up on past underperformance, achievement is improving steadily through the school. Pupils who do not speak English as their first language make satisfactory progress. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make similarly satisfactory progress. Nevertheless, there are still pockets of underachievement, especially for some higher attaining pupils who do not always make as much progress as they should. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress, from below expected standards on entry to Nursery, to average levels of attainment by the time they enter Year 1.

Pupils enjoy school. They are kind and considerate towards each other and adults. Pupils who have responsibilities for example as school council members, playground buddies or peer mediators, take their responsibilities seriously and carry them out well. The great majority of pupils attend regularly. However, despite strenuous efforts by the school, a significant minority of pupils are absent too much, often because they take holidays during term time. Pupils know how to stay safe, are alert to potential dangers and report incidents that worry them. They have a good understanding of what bullying and racism are and say that incidents are rare and are dealt with well. Relationships between pupils from different backgrounds and cultures are good. Pupils' understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and regular physical exercise is good. Their literacy, numeracy and computer skills are satisfactory, which helps prepare them for the next stage of their education.

Teaching is satisfactory. It is improving and much is good. The best teaching is challenging, fast paced and sustains pupils' concentration and enthusiasm. Relationships are good and contribute effectively to encouraging hard work. However, there are inconsistencies. Occasionally, work does not meet pupils' learning needs and the pace of activities is slow. In some lessons, adults do not have high enough expectations of spelling, sentence writing, handwriting, or accurate grammar in pupils' speech, and do not model accurate speech and grammar themselves. While assessment is improving, marking varies in quality. The best is outstanding and based on accurate assessment. It gives clear guidance to pupils on how to improve and these teachers provide opportunities for pupils to respond to the advice given. The curriculum is good. Links between subjects and the increasing use of computers make learning relevant and fun. Residential trips, other visits and visitors, and out-of-school activities enrich pupils'

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experience effectively.

Care, guidance and support are good. The school make good use of a wide range of external agencies to support individual pupils' well-being, and to help families where necessary. Support for pupils from abroad is particularly good, helping them to settle into school rapidly and offering language support for families. The community holds the school in high regard. The breakfast club is well managed and is helping attendance to improve, and the 'smiley' club provides effective before- and after-school support for working parents. Safeguarding procedures are excellent.

Most aspects of leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides effective leadership, and he is well supported by senior leaders and others in leadership positions. The direction for improvement is clear and the evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate. Effective actions have been taken to improve teaching, progress, attendance and the curriculum and the capacity to improve further is good. The governing body is increasingly supportive and provides a sound level of challenge for the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of attainment and progress in writing by July 2011 by:
 - improving the quality of pupils' spelling and sentence work,
 - improving the quality of handwriting,
 - ensuring adults model fluent and accurate language,
 - encouraging pupils to speak grammatically.
- Improve pupils' progress by July 2011 by making sure that:
 - work consistently challenges all pupils,
 - all marking matches that of the best seen in giving guidance to pupils on how to improve their work, and providing time to act on that advice,
 - the pace of learning is consistently fast.
- Work with parents and families to persuade them of the importance of attendance at school and to reduce the frequency of holidays taken during term time.
- About 40% of schools whose effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Learning is satisfactory and for many pupils is good. The downward trends in attainment and progress in numeracy and reading have been successfully reversed and pupils are catching up on past underperformance. The current focus on writing is having a positive impact, but improvement is slow. While there is some progress because there are writing activities in most subjects and pupils' writing is displayed around school, pupils' spelling, sentence writing and handwriting are not consistently secure. In a lesson where progress was good, for example, pupils' progress in developing writing skills was good

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because they were encouraged to write their own sentences and to make sure that they wrote accurately. Although progress is improving, there are instances of slower progress for some pupils because work does not always meet their particular learning needs or because learning is not fast enough. The great majority of pupils who do not speak English as their first language make satisfactory or good progress because support is tailored to their specific needs, and to helping families so that they can help their children.

Pupils are confident and readily take part in learning activities. They work well together, especially when they are set tasks to do with 'work partners'. In the playground they play together well, and make sure that no one is left alone when they do not want to be. Their behaviour is good, especially in moving round and working in inadequate rooms and spaces. Pupils have a sound understanding of and respect for the values, religions and traditions of the wide range of cultures represented in the school and from the wider world. This is enhanced by the links with several different schools from around the world. Pupils raise money for several charities and are aware of the needs of people less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons, teachers fully engage pupils so they are enthusiastic, get on with work fast and rise to the challenges provided. Activities are varied and interesting and ensure pupils' concentration and enjoyment. In most lessons, learning intentions are clear and pupils know what they need to do to be successful. Marking usually indicates what pupils need to do to improve or make more progress, but teachers do not consistently set aside time for pupils to follow the advice provided. In most lessons, work is carefully matched to pupils' needs, with adults working closely with pupils to help them make progress. However, occasionally tasks are too long and not matched closely enough to pupils' learning needs. Classroom support for pupils who do not speak English as their first language is effective, reinforcing unfamiliar vocabulary and helping pupils express their ideas.

The curriculum is well organised to engage pupils' interests. Links between subjects make learning interesting and enrich pupils' experience and knowledge, for example, in music and physical activities. This has brought success in musical performance and in local sports competitions. Spanish is taught, giving pupils experience of another language. Writing is embedded in most subjects, which contributes to improving literacy skills. Skills in information and communication technology are improving now that facilities and equipment are better. The personal, social and health education programme is effective in helping pupils' emotional growth, and in developing tolerance towards other people. The wide range of out-of-school activities is well supported by pupils.

The school has established effective procedures to support pupils from a wide range of social, economic and cultural backgrounds. The care for pupils is sensitive and addresses their needs. Strategies to deal with unacceptable behaviour are good and, despite slow progress, the school has effective procedures and links with external agencies to deal with absence. Vulnerable pupils receive especially good support. Transition arrangements with the many secondary schools that pupils move on to are good. Parents and carers appreciate the efforts made by the school to help them and to support their children.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

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In the relatively short time the headteacher has been at the school he has stabilised staffing and dealt with inadequate teaching. His ambition for the school is reflected by others with leadership and management roles and there is a concerted drive to improve attainment and progress. The impact of this is in its early stages, but is evident in most classrooms. All in senior and middle management roles engage in evaluating teaching and helping to improve it. Professional development for staff is good and the impact evident in better teaching. Governors have analysed their own effectiveness and initiated an urgent programme of training and support to help them be more effective in supporting the school in its drive to improve. The school deals with discrimination well and the promotion of achievement by all pupils is satisfactory. The gaps in progress made by different groups of pupils are narrowing. Links with parents and carers are good. The school strives to involve them further; it takes their views into account and offers a wide range of social and educational activities. Partnerships to promote pupils' learning and welfare are good with effective links with external agencies to support school procedures. There is a wide range of contacts with organisations and other schools that promote learning through enrichment activities for pupils and opportunities for staff to share their skills and to gain further teaching expertise. The school promotes community cohesion well and ensures pupils become increasingly aware of and respect the wide range of backgrounds of the school's own pupils, and also of people in Britain and the wider world. At the time of the inspection all safeguarding requirements were fully met. Safeguarding procedures are excellent with daily checking of the premises to ensure they are safe, frequent checking of internet use and extensive monitoring of visitors.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress, some from particularly low starting points in literacy and personal and social skills. Children are keen to learn and enjoy the wide range of activities available. Teaching is well planned and all adults engage well with children, helping develop their literacy skills. Occasionally, adults over-direct activities and slightly restrict independent learning, but staff are working to improve this. The outside area is a little small for the number of children but it is increasingly well resourced and children use the equipment well. Adults assess children's progress well and match work to children's needs effectively. They teach children how to record work they do, and children make good progress in their initial attempts to write. Children behave well, sometimes exceptionally so, because personal and social development is expertly promoted. Children get on well together, share resources and listen attentively to each other and adults. The quality of welfare is good. Links with families are very good and well promoted by well-informed, sensitive staff. Leadership and management are good with a focus on maintaining and improving the quality of provision.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were generally positive in their views of the school. A small number felt that the school did not take their opinions into account, but inspectors found this aspect to be good. In a small number of questionnaires, parents and carers expressed concern about slow progress and occasionally too little help to develop literacy skills. Inspectors were partly in agreement with this. They found progress and writing to be improving, though writing only slowly. These issues form part of the areas the school has been asked to improve.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Heathlands Junior and Infant School (NC) to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 459 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	57	25	40	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	68	20	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	40	63	21	33	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	49	28	44	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	63	23	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	51	29	46	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	49	29	46	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	31	49	25	40	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	52	24	38	4	6	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	57	21	33	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	49	21	33	6	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	54	26	41	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	67	18	29	2	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Heathlands Junior and Infant School, Birmingham, B34 6NB

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We think it is a satisfactory and improving school. Here are some of the things we found during our visit.

You make satisfactory progress overall, and some of you make good progress. Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress.

Teaching is satisfactory with some that is good. Where it is good, you enjoy learning and find lessons fun. There are lots of activities, trips and visitors to make learning interesting.

You work hard and most of you know how to improve your work.

You behave well, most of you attend well, and those of you who have responsibilities carry them out well.

You are considerate and kind to each other and other people.

The headteacher, staff and governors work hard to help the school improve.

You know how to stay safe. Most of you eat sensibly and take exercise.

The way the school makes sure you are safe is excellent.

In order for the school to be even better we are asking the staff to do the following things.

Help you do better in writing by making sure your spelling, sentence writing and handwriting improve. We have also asked adults to make sure you speak correctly and set you a good example in how to do this.

Improve the progress you make by making sure work is always challenging and fast paced, and you have opportunities to correct work when necessary.

Make sure that those of you who are away too often, sometimes on holidays, realise how important it is to be at school and improve your attendance.

You can help by working hard at literacy, especially writing, and by telling teachers if you think the work is too easy. Try not to be away from school unless you are ill, because you will fall behind with learning. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ted Wheatley

Lead inspector

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