

Heaton Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105306
Local Authority	Bury
Inspection number	336470
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Keith Bardon

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	362
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Greftey
Headteacher	Mr Paul Lord
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, observed 15 teachers and held meeting with governors, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed other aspects of the school's work and looked at a range of evidence including policies, the improvement plan, pupils' work and the school's records indicating pupils' progress and attainment. The inspectors also analysed the 96 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' attainment in writing
- whether the improvements in pupils' progress which became evident last year are continuing
- whether attendance is improving quickly enough
- how well teachers are promoting the learning of different groups of pupils
- the progress children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the different areas of learning
- how effectively leaders and managers have addressed the areas for improvement from the last inspection and the inconsistencies in pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about the school

Heaton Park is a large school. While a large majority of pupils are White British, three in every ten are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with pupils of Pakistani heritage the largest group. Almost one in ten pupils is at an early stage in acquiring English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The number with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. Close to three in every ten pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. The school holds the Basic Skills, Healthy Schools and Activemark awards and is an Investor in People. Breakfast and after-school clubs are available to pupils each day. The school is currently undergoing major redevelopment, which is causing some disruption to its normal ways of working.

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

3

Main findings

Heaton Park provides its pupils with a satisfactory quality of education and they feel safe and well cared for in the warm and friendly atmosphere which prevails. Pupils from a wide range of home and cultural backgrounds work and play happily together, describing the school as 'a nice place to go to' with staff who are 'kind and helpful'.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they make steady gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills. Throughout the school pupils' attainment is gradually rising and by Year 6 is close to the national average. While some lessons are taught well, a significant proportion of the teaching is satisfactory because it focuses on what pupils are to do rather than what they need to learn. Teachers interact frequently and constructively with pupils but the tasks they set are often quite broad and do not reflect fully what pupils of differing abilities need to learn next. The quality of teachers' marking varies and at times does not provide pupils with sufficient guidance on what they need to do to improve.

Many aspects of pupils' personal development are good. They show a strong sense of responsibility and take considerable pride in the achievements of the school council. Most pupils behave well and show respect for adults and each other. Levels of attendance are generally low but are now rising. The measures the school has in place to improve attendance have had a significant impact on the number of pupils who are persistently absent, which has fallen by over 40% during this school year.

Although some unevenness in provision remains, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and pupils are achieving better. While leaders and managers check the performance of the school thoroughly and have a broadly accurate picture of its strengths and what needs to improve, the methods they use to collate and evaluate the information gained, including that from the tracking of pupils' progress, lack refinement. Consequently, some of the important messages this information contains are not as clear and accessible as they should be. Carefully considered measures are being taken to accelerate pupils' progress but many have still to become firmly established and fully effective. The governing body supports the school well but is heavily reliant on staff for its understanding of how well the school is performing. These factors combined give the school a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To increase pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress, raise the quality of teaching by:

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- ensuring that lesson plans focus sharply on outcomes for pupils rather than the completion of tasks
- providing work that is closely matched to what pupils of differing abilities need to learn next
- ensuring that the marking of work provides pupils with clear guidance on how it can be improved.
- To accelerate the pace of school development, increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - improving the way in which the information gained from checking the school's performance is collated and evaluated to make the important messages it contains easier to see and respond to
 - increasing governors' involvement in measuring the performance of the school for themselves and determining its strategic direction.
- Work with parents and carers to improve attendance.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Most pupils show a positive attitude to school work and enjoy their lessons. They listen carefully to their teachers and try hard to follow the instructions they have been given. Pupils' concentration is generally good, but that of younger pupils in particular can quickly deteriorate when tasks lack challenge or they are required to work on their own for any length of time. Some pupils put forward ideas spontaneously and readily offer answers to teachers' questions, while others have to be encouraged to contribute and need to be drawn into lessons. Since the last inspection pupils' progress has fluctuated widely and they have achieved more in some subjects than others. These inconsistencies are starting to dissipate and throughout the school pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory.

Improvements in attainment in 2009, particularly in mathematics and science, are steadily being built upon. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is close to the national average. Most pupils read competently and tackle mathematical problems with confidence. While the quality of pupils' writing is improving, it is not as good as other aspects of their work. Many pupils have difficulty writing well-formed sentences that are interesting to read and do not always apply what they have been taught in literacy lessons well enough when writing in other subjects. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to other pupils, although those of Pakistani heritage often do a little better than their peers nationally. Pupils who arrive in school speaking little or no English receive effective support and quickly acquire the communication skills they need to join in lessons fully. Pupils with special educational need and/or disabilities make satisfactory and at times good progress, particularly when they are receiving well-targeted individual or small-group support.

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Pupils from a wide range of different backgrounds get on very well together and the school is orderly and harmonious. Pupils feel safe and secure in school, are comfortable taking problems to staff and express no concerns about bullying. Older pupils in particular show a strong sense of responsibility and readily take on tasks, such as helping younger pupils with their reading. Pupils understand the importance of healthy living, know what constitutes a sensible diet and try to exercise regularly to help them keep fit. Attendance is below average but starting to show improvement. The number of pupils with high levels of absence is falling rapidly and assessment information shows that these pupils are now doing much better in their learning than previously. Pupils acquire important skills such as working together to raise money for things they want to buy for the school and making sensible corporate decisions about how it should be spent. They gain confidence and independence as they grow older, demonstrate a strong sense of right and wrong and readily work to improve the lives of those less fortunate than themselves. These skills and personal qualities soundly prepare pupils for the next stage of learning.

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	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

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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Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good and many use a range of effective strategies, such as the creative use of information and communication technology, to stimulate pupils' interests and engage them in learning. Frequent discussions and the use of 'talking partners' encourage pupils to share their ideas with others and to utilise what they already know and understand. Teachers plan lessons carefully but at times the expected outcomes focus on what the whole class or teaching group is going to do rather than what pupils of different abilities are expected to learn. When this happens the work pupils are expected to do is appropriate for some but too easy or too difficult for others. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, often supporting those who experience difficulties with learning so that they are fully involved in the lesson. Pupils' work in marked regularly but the quality of guidance it provides varies from good to inadequate.

While the curriculum provides satisfactory support for pupil's learning, it is a little uneven and better in mathematics than in English, although the gap is narrowing. As part of its strategy to raise attainment, the school is moving towards a more flexible and creative approach where different subjects are linked cohesively together. This is at an early stage of development and is not having a full impact on pupils' learning. Pupils are taught French and Year 6 pupils thoroughly enjoy communicating with their pen pals in a school in Angouleme. Pupils benefit from regular visits to places of educational interest and visitors to school, which do much to broaden pupils' horizons and stimulate their personal development. The good range of after-school activities is much appreciated by pupils and attendance at these is good. Many of these are activity-based clubs helping to keep pupils fit and healthy.

The school keeps a careful watch over pupils and takes good care of them. Parents and carers show confidence in the school's ability to keep their children safe and secure and some have commented positively on the attention paid to safety while building work is taking place. Close attention is paid to the needs of vulnerable pupils and procedures to support them and their families are rigorous. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are new to learning English as an additional language is well organised and effective, often promoting a good rate of progress. The school has a range of appropriate strategies in place to promote good attendance, including the regular involvement of the education welfare officer. These are having a positive effect and the number of pupils who are persistently absent is falling rapidly. The well-run breakfast club provides those who attend with a healthy, secure and enjoyable start to the school day. Effective induction and transition procedures ensure that pupils enter the school and transfer to secondary school smoothly.

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	3

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2
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How effective are leadership and management?

Getting to grips with the inconsistencies in provision that have been affecting pupils' attainment and progress has taken a little time, but leaders and managers have a secure understanding of the influential factors and are steadily addressing them. Throughout the school there is shared sense of purpose and Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 staff are looking forward to the opportunities the building redevelopments will bring. Staff are working closely together to minimise the disruption for pupils during this time and to provide continuity in their learning. Procedures for measuring and checking pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection, but the important information they contain is not as easy to analyse and use as it should be. While all pupils are included fully in the life of the school and there is no discrimination, weakness in the match of work to pupils' abilities means that some pupils have yet to achieve their full potential. The school understands the communities it serves well. It makes a good contribution to local community cohesion, working with a range of agencies to support local families, raising funds for different organisations and carrying out work to enhance the environment. Links with communities further afield are productive and continuing to develop. While safeguarding procedures meet requirements and the school is vigilant in its approach to pupils' safety, procedures for reviewing key policies are not as systematic as they could be. Governors give careful consideration to the information they receive, but their involvement in evaluating the work of the school for themselves and influencing its development is limited.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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's attainment on entry to Nursery or Reception varies widely from year to year but is generally below what is typical for their age. Staff make good use of the resources available to provide interesting and lively activities which stimulate children's curiosity and encourage their participation. However, facilities out of doors are, and always have been, very limited. Staff make as much use of one of the school playgrounds as they can but the lack of outdoor provision reduces what children can experience and learn. Despite this, children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. By the end of Reception most children are working securely within the expectations for their age, although a significant minority have yet to reach their age-related targets. Teachers plan activities carefully and children are gaining much enjoyment from working on the 'building site' that has been set up in Reception to link with the developments that are taking place around the school. While much of the teaching is good, some staff lack a full understanding of how to intervene while children are playing to develop and extend their learning. Staff take good care of children and relationships are very positive. Children trust staff and respond well to them. Teachers and assistants form a strong and united team who are excitedly planning ahead for the new building and outdoor learning area in order to give the children the best possible experiences. Children's progress is assessed and evaluated regularly but the data collected is not used well enough to determine how well the Early Years Foundation Stage is performing or to determine where any weaknesses in provision lie. Good-quality care for children at the breakfast and after-school clubs gives the children who attend a very positive start to the school day and enjoyable and safe experiences at the end of the day.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A large majority of parents and carers hold very positive views of the school and of the education their children are receiving. They are pleased that their children enjoy school and feel they are kept safe by the staff. Some parents and carers would like more notice of events taking place at the school and inspectors feel this is a reasonable request. Although inspectors found the school's response to pupils' needs to be satisfactory, a minority of parents and carers feel it could do more.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Heaton Park Primary School 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 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 362 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	49	41	43	5	5	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	48	50	42	44	3	3	3	3
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	40	49	51	7	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	44	42	44	7	7	4	4
The teaching is good at this school	47	49	40	42	8	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	30	54	56	11	11	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	40	45	47	9	9	1	1
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)	34	35	48	50	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	41	43	45	13	14	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	38	46	48	11	11	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	27	56	58	10	10	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	32	33	50	52	6	6	4	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	47	42	44	6	6	2	2

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



18 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Heaton Park Primary School, Manchester, M45 6TE

Thank you very much for the very friendly greeting you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. Lots of you smiled and chatted to us which made us feel comfortable and welcome. We thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the work you do and special thanks go to those who talked with us about the school.

Heaton Park is a satisfactory school with a nice, friendly atmosphere. It was good to hear how safe you feel at school. This is important to the staff and we know they will be pleased. Most of you learn at a steady pace and by the end of Year 6 have the knowledge, understanding and skills expected of 11-year-olds. While this is satisfactory, we feel it could be even better. We have asked teachers to make sure that the work they set provides you all with just the right amount of challenge so that you will be able to do it, but only if you work hard. When teachers mark your work they give praise for what you have done well but do not always make clear what could be improved. We have suggested that this is something they need to do, but you need to play your part by paying close attention to what teachers have written and trying hard to follow their advice as soon as possible.

We looked at the attendance figures and noticed there is quite a lot of absence, although the number of pupils who have lots of time off is falling. It is very important that everyone attends school as often as possible so that there are no gaps in your learning and you are well prepared for the future. Some of the pupils who filled in the questionnaire indicated that they did not think behaviour in school was good enough. We think you are being a little hard on yourselves and that the behaviour we saw in lessons and around school was good. It was clear to us that you are growing into sensible and responsible young people and we were impressed by how well everyone gets along – well done! We have also suggested that teachers and governors find out more about how the school is doing so they can improve it even further. Thank you once again for a very enjoyable two days and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Keith Bardon

Lead inspector

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