

Heber Primary School

Heber Road, London SE22 9LA

Inspection dates 29–30 September 2015

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This a good school

- The school meets its ambition that pupils show ‘responsibility, thoughtfulness and resilience’. This supports well the pupils’ social and moral development.
- The school successfully tackled areas for improvement identified at the last inspection by staff keeping sharply focused on continually seeking ways of improving teaching.
- School leaders have developed a culture among staff of supporting each other by sharing their ideas and expertise.
- Teachers’ high expectations underpin the good quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school. This has been instrumental in improving pupils’ progress, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- The governing body has a clear understanding of school performance from which to question leaders and plan for the school’s future.
- Learning is exciting for the children in the early years because of the wide range of interesting activities planned each day.
- There is a strong focus on developing pupils’ creativity, and this includes specialist teachers who foster a love of art and music. This makes a major contribution to pupils’ spiritual and cultural development.
- Pupils behave well and consider others. They are very keen to learn and try hard at all times. There is a very strong culture of making sure that everything possible is done to keep pupils safe.
- This is a very inclusive school. Staff are sharply focused on making sure that all pupils can be successful whatever their backgrounds, circumstances and abilities.
- Many support staff are highly skilled in guiding the learning of pupils with specific learning difficulties or when working in and out of lessons with other pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not always transfer the writing skills they demonstrate in English lessons to produce the same quality of written work in other subjects.
- Not all additional adults are sufficiently well trained or deployed to make a significant impact on pupils’ learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers' expectations of the pupils' writing skills are consistently high across all subjects.
- Refine the induction of new support staff so that they become effective quickly in their support for pupils' learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- School leaders and governors have high aspirations for pupils. They have developed a culture in which staff continually strive to improve their teaching. They have created a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils can learn well and where seeking high standards of behaviour is the norm.
- By keeping improving teaching at the heart of the school's work, leaders have taken effective action to deal with the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Senior leaders have a very sharp understanding of where strengths lie in teaching and assessment, and the impact these have on pupils' learning. Through meticulous evaluation of pupils' progress, they now have an accurate view of where improvements are needed. Teachers who are not on track to meet their personal targets are supported to do so by individual guidance from expertise in the school.
- Leaders use assessment information well to identify where pupils need extra support. They take great care to understand family circumstances and how these might affect achievement and personal development. This enables resources such as the pupil premium to be deployed effectively where most needed. Leaders check carefully that additional programmes make a difference and, if not, they take care to change them.
- The school uses its design of the curriculum to ensure that pupils develop key skills. Interesting topics make meaningful links between subjects and are supported by well-chosen texts. Additional activities, such as visits to cultural venues in London and visitors to the school, enrich pupils' experiences further. Together with the emphasis on art and music, these initiatives are used well to make a considerable contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- Staff strongly promote pupils' social and moral development while making sure that they understand what it means to be British. The school's success in a national debating contest and a visitor who explained the significance of Magna Carta helped pupils understand democracy at work.
- The school is rich in state-of-the-art robotics and other new technology, some of which was won in a national competition. This adds great interest and an additional dimension to pupils' learning, and particularly benefits disadvantaged pupils for whom this equipment is used to support their reading.
- The engagement of a specialist physical education teacher through the sports premium is leading to more pupils being involved in sporting activities, some of which they might not otherwise experience.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Following a review of their systems, governors are now holding senior leaders to account for the school's performance more closely than at the last inspection. Reorganised procedures and a much sharper understanding of assessment information have increased their expertise. This has enabled them to become more closely involved in planning for the next stages in the school's development.
 - Governors keep a close watch on how funding, such as the pupil premium, is deployed to meet priorities and whether it is having the required impact. They are fully aware of how the headteacher improves the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by managing staff performance and how this then links to salary progression.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are very effective. Procedures are very rigorous and regularly tested by the headteacher and link governor. Training pupils and parents in e-safety is a high priority and the school is very aware of where and how pupils might be at risk so that steps can be taken to minimise dangers.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers gain and hold the attention of pupils because they make learning interesting and challenging. Most have great enthusiasm for what they teach and generate confidence in pupils that they can succeed from whatever their starting point. The specialist teachers of art, music and physical education bring much subject-specific expertise to their teaching and are able to push pupils to reach high standards.
- Teachers typically check carefully to identify how well pupils are learning. From these observations they quickly adapt their teaching, alter the ways in which pupils are working, or, when necessary, move pupils on to greater challenges. Pupils are well prepared to explain their answers and their reasoning in detail, and give thought to their responses as a result.
- Teachers have risen to the challenges of the new mathematics curriculum by adapting their teaching. They focus on making sure that pupils who need time to secure new skills have the support and activities

to do so. Teachers recognise those who pick up skills accurately and quickly. Pupils respond well to challenges to sharpen their reasoning by applying their new knowledge to practical applications, puzzles and solving problems. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, some of the class practised formal methods of multiplication under the watchful eye of the teacher and support staff. Meanwhile, the most able showed that they could analyse solutions to questions and explain in detail where errors had been made.

- Specialist training has increased the awareness of support staff of the specific difficulties individual pupils face. They know when to stand back and let pupils think for themselves and when to intervene to move learning forward. Not all the newer support staff are as skilled, and they are not always clear how they can contribute or use their interactions with pupils to guide learning. At times they hold back learning by not getting pupils to think for themselves enough.
- The feedback and guidance teachers give in lessons and through marking help pupils to quickly rectify any errors. Teachers identify gaps and misconceptions so that pupils can make corrections, undertake additional work and eliminate mistakes so that they do not occur again.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are keen to do well by rising to the challenges presented by their teachers. They take pride in their school and their achievements. They take great care over the presentation of their work and respond thoughtfully to the guidance they receive through teachers' feedback, enabling them to improve.
- Most pupils are confident and thoughtful learners. They willingly try out their ideas before asking for help because they know they can learn by their mistakes. They listen carefully to their teachers and each other in lessons. They concentrate for long periods on the work they are undertaking, with the attention of a small number wandering only very occasionally.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school, and their parents agree. In helping pupils to be resilient, the school places a considerable emphasis on teaching them how to spot and deal with risks in and outside school. Pupils are also taught how to recognise and deal with bullying, although they say incidents are rare. Pupils respect others and reported to inspectors, 'You don't get teased for being different.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils talk about how behaviour has improved. Playground space is limited and had led to some incidents of poor behaviour in the past. Such incidents have been reduced, if not entirely eliminated, by the school providing more clubs inside at lunchtime and training adults to organise games outside.
- Pupils understand the behaviour systems and take responsibility for making the correct decisions about how to behave in different situations. They are polite and conduct themselves well and with consideration for others. Pupils welcome newcomers openly. They make friends with them, teach them school routines and help them to settle in sensitively.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their above average and rising attendance. The school's deep understanding of their family circumstances enables persistent absence to be tackled quickly, and ensures that school staff know quickly where pupils are if they are absent from school.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils' achievement has improved since the school's last inspection, particularly in writing and mathematics. Pupils now make good progress from their different starting points and their attainment is above average and rising. Most pupils reach, and significant numbers exceed, levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. They are prepared well for secondary school.
- The most-able pupils are challenged well by their teachers, particularly, but not exclusively, in mathematics. They quickly secure new skills and deepen their understanding and reasoning when applying these to solving problems and puzzles. Many make rapid progress as a result.
- Pupils are now increasingly incorporating their understanding of grammar, spelling and punctuation into their writing. As a result, their written work is accurate as well as creative and engaging. Many use very ambitious vocabulary and sentence structure in order to make their work more interesting. These qualities are not always transferred to pupils' writing in subjects other than English. Hence this is about to become an immediate development priority.

- Pupils read widely and fluently. They love to read, and find the choice of texts linked to the topics they study very interesting. They rapidly understand the sounds made by letters and how to apply these skills when they meet unfamiliar words.
- There is no significant difference in the achievement of different groups of pupils. This is because the school is so quick to identify when individual support is needed. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds achieve well, as do those speaking English as an additional language. Later arrivals generally make good progress once they have settled in, but are not always at the school for long enough to reach national averages by the time they leave.
- Close monitoring of pupils' learning enables the school to put individual support programmes in place early. This accounts not just for the good progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs but also for pupils who, for whatever reason, have fallen behind expectations of them and need to catch up.
- Achievement across other subjects of the curriculum is also good. Pupils make rapid progress in both art and music. Their work in these subjects is of a high standard. Pupils gain an understanding and love of the work of famous artists and start to learn basic music theory to support their playing.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress similar to others in the school. However, attainment gaps vary with other pupils nationally because several pupils receiving pupil premium support have additional learning needs or are later arrivals to the school.

Early years provision

is good

- The children's good behaviour and the effectiveness of much of the teaching are key factors in their good progress from starting points typical for their age. Attainment is above average by the end of Reception in all areas of learning. Pupils just at the start of their time in Year 1 show by their work habits and skill levels how well they were prepared for the transition during their time in the early years.
- Children are interested and engaged by activities put out for them to explore, and when working with teachers or support staff. By assessing children's learning continually, adults can make sure that activities are well resourced and closely meet children's needs and interests. Additional adults make a valuable contribution to learning through skilled questioning and redirecting children's learning. Learning areas are generally stimulating, although the outdoor area in the Nursery does not support learning as well as in Reception.
- By carefully evaluating the setting, staff have an accurate understanding of the needs of each group and which areas of learning need to be given the highest priority. There are effective systems to quickly spot children who need additional support with their learning. This enables the school to direct resources to meet identified needs. The children's welfare and safety are given the highest priority and as a result they are happy, safe and confident.
- Children have settled quickly into their new surroundings in both the Nursery and Reception. They are learning the routines, making new friends and trying hard to meet their teachers' high expectations for their behaviour. Most concentrate on activities, are attentive, and work constructively together. Close links with home have smoothed this transition. This includes some parents staying with their children for a few Nursery sessions and participating with them in their learning.

School details

Unique reference number	100793
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10001970

This inspection 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	490
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stef Lewandowski
Headteacher	David Block
Telephone number	020 8693 2075
Website	www.heberprimaryschool.com
Email address	adminoffice@heber.southwark.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 September 2013

Information about this school

- This school is well above average in size, compared with other primary schools.
- Half the pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. This figure is well above average.
- One quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language. This figure is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by funding through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding which, in this school, supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave part-way through their primary education is higher than in the majority of primary schools.
- The Nursery caters for 50 children on a part-time basis. Children attend the two Reception classes full time.
- The school hosts privately run daily breakfast and after-school clubs. These are inspected separately.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 16 lessons, 14 of which were visited with senior leaders. They looked at work in pupils' books from the previous and current academic years.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, and with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors. A meeting was also held with two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 150 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire and written contributions from 44 parents. They also met informally with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors also took account of the 28 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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