

Montgomery Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Unique reference number | 103234 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 376858 |
| Inspection dates | 7–8 March 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Michael Sheridan HMI |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 702 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Anna Delargy |
| Headteacher | Tony Flynn |
| Date of previous school inspection | 19 January 2009 |
| School address | White Road Sparkbrook Birmingham B11 1EH |
| Telephone number | 0121 464 9115 |
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| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Age group | 3–11 |
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Introduction

Inspection team

Michael Sheridan

Her Majesty's Inspector

Veronica McGill

Additional inspector

Wendy Hanrahan

Additional inspector

Israr Khan

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 25 teachers in 38 lessons. Inspectors also observed the work of teaching assistants when working with small groups of pupils. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors, staff and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at school improvement planning, tracking data, work in pupils' books and records of incidents and behaviour. Inspectors considered the views of staff, pupils and 170 parents and carers through their returned questionnaires.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than that found nationally. All pupils come from minority ethnic groups. The majority of pupils are of a Pakistani heritage. A minority of pupils have Bangladeshi or Black African backgrounds. Consequently, the large majority of pupils are believed to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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 | 4 |
| Achievement of pupils | 4 |
| Quality of teaching | 4 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 3 |
| Leadership and management | 4 |

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- This is not a satisfactory school because teaching is not of a sufficient quality to eradicate underachievement. Leaders have recognised the need to improve teaching but have been unsuccessful in doing this consistently throughout the school. Attainment has been too low for several years. The current Year 6 pupils are in a position to do better than in previous years, but progress throughout the school is erratic and improvements are too fragile.
- Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Pupils make inadequate progress as they move through the school. Their language development is weak because not enough emphasis is placed on providing opportunities for pupils to talk and develop their vocabulary. In too many lessons, teachers do not give enough thought to how pupils develop skills over time. Teachers are too quick to send those pupils who have fallen behind to work as part of a separate group rather than considering how they can be helped to catch up within class.
- Leadership is inadequate because leaders at all levels fail to effectively manage the performance of teachers and support staff. As a consequence, too many lessons are inadequate and not enough teaching is good. Too often, teachers and other staff do not follow the guidance set out by the school's leaders and the quality of monitoring is insufficient to pick up on these inconsistencies and challenge them.
- Behaviour and safety are satisfactory. Pupils usually behave well around school and in the playground. Pupils generally feel safe and say that their teachers

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deal with incidences of bullying quickly and effectively. Pupils with challenging behaviour are managed appropriately so that their conduct does not have a negative impact on learning more than occasionally.

- Pupils enjoy their lessons and have positive relationships with their teachers. Pupils say that they enjoy school and the range of activities that are arranged for them.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the effectiveness of leaders so they rigorously and consistently monitor and evaluate the quality of provision, and hold teachers and support staff to account for pupils' performance.
- Raise standards of attainment to at least national average and ensure that no year groups underachieve, by:
 - increasing the quality and frequency of opportunities for pupils to develop their speech and language skills across the curriculum
 - taking every opportunity to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects
 - ensuring that any support or interventions provided for pupils are sharply focused on raising attainment so they quickly catch up
 - ensuring that activities are well matched to the needs of individual pupils
 - making sure that teachers are held to account for the progress of all pupils in their classes, including those who receive support and intervention.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it leads to consistently good progress for all groups of pupils by:
 - eradicating inadequate teaching
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge
 - providing models of good practice to coach and develop teachers and support staff
 - developing a culture where teachers and support staff have the highest expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment at the end of Year 6 is too low and pupils typically leave almost a year behind expected levels for their age. A significant factor in pupils' poor achievement is the lack of opportunity for them to develop their language skills. Teachers are quick to point out that many pupils speak a language other than English at home, but they have not adapted the curriculum sufficiently in response to this. As a result pupils fail to develop effective language skills and this holds them back in many

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areas of learning. There are too few opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to develop their communication skills through play, particularly in the Reception classes. As a consequence, children do not develop a sufficiently varied vocabulary and are ill prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils are slow to learn how to read so that attainment in reading at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is low. Teachers often ask questions that only require simple answers and provide few opportunities for pupils to extend their thinking or elaborate on their ideas. Another significant factor leading to inadequate progress is teachers' subject knowledge, particularly in mathematics. Teachers do not always know appropriate ways to develop pupils' understanding of particular concepts and, at times, this causes pupils to develop misconceptions that are likely to hinder them as they move to more complicated work.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make inadequate progress. These pupils are often included in groups that are taught outside the classroom. The quality of this provision varies and teachers too often fail to effectively monitor the progress of these pupils. As a consequence, many do not catch up with their peers and make limited progress over time. Most parents and carers who responded through the questionnaire stated that they felt that their child was making good progress at this school. Inspection evidence shows that too many pupils are making inadequate progress.

Quality of teaching

While some teaching is good or satisfactory, a significant minority of lessons observed by inspectors were inadequate. Too often, teachers do not provide activities that extend pupils' learning sufficiently. While different activities are provided for pupils of different abilities, these are often not thought out well enough, so they fail to tackle gaps in pupils' learning or build on their existing knowledge. Too many teachers display low expectations of pupils' capabilities, and as a result lesson activities across the curriculum often lack challenge. This is particularly evident in subjects other than English and mathematics, where many opportunities are missed to promote the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. This lack of challenge and the missed opportunities to deeply explore concepts and ideas, hinder pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

In good lessons, pupils demonstrate what they are capable of. In these lessons, teachers ask questions that make it necessary for pupils to think deeply and answer fully. Pupils in these classes are expected to develop and explain their views and, as a result, their vocabulary grows. In one good lesson, pupils spoke fluently about how to improve each other's writing. The teacher shared recently completed work with the class and pupils made well informed suggestions as to how it might be improved in terms of composition and sentence structure. In this class, pupils used more complex language in their writing and were able to talk with maturity about their work and what they were doing to make it better.

In most classes relationships between pupils and teachers are positive. Pupils learn

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to get on well together and teachers promote positive social development and high expectations of behaviour, which pupils usually respond to. Pupils enjoy their lessons and speak highly of their teachers. A large majority of parents and carers endorse this view, and feel it means that their children are taught well. This is not confirmed by inspection evidence.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most pupils behave well around school and in the playground. There are some pupils with challenging behaviour and this is generally well managed so that interruptions are infrequent and have a limited impact on other pupils. Behaviour is best in lessons where teaching is good. This is because pupils are engaged in their work and know that their teachers have high expectations of them. Parents or carers are generally satisfied with pupils' behaviour, although a small number raised issues around the effectiveness of the school strategies for dealing with bullying. Inspectors discussed this issue with pupils, who were clear in stating that all types of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. Almost all parents and carers stated that their children felt safe in school, as did the pupils themselves, and this is demonstrated through the calm and relaxed atmosphere in most classrooms and around school. In most lessons pupils comply with their teachers' instructions and work hard on the tasks they are given. Pupils are polite and get on well with each other. In class, gentle reminders normally ensure that any pupils who lose concentration quickly return to their work.

Leadership and management

Leaders, including governors, have set a vision for the school which is based on raising standards and promoting positive engagement with the local community. However, they have not been successful in realising this vision because improvements in teaching have not been rapid or consistent enough. Not enough has been done to raise teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of, and as a consequence too many lessons lack challenge. This demonstrates that teachers and other staff do not always follow school policy appropriately and that leaders' monitoring is insufficient to recognise this. Consequently, standards of attainment have remained low and the quality of teaching has not improved.

Year group leaders have recently been appointed but inspection evidence shows staff are ineffective in these roles. They do not all have sufficiently high quality teaching skills to be able to promote effective practice in their year groups. Subject leaders have a clear understanding of how to improve their subject, but their efforts have not been successful because monitoring has not identified all the endemic weaknesses that exist and the failure of some staff to fully implement their policy decisions. There are significant gaps in some teachers' subject knowledge and efforts have been made to resolve this through, for example, additional training for some teachers to develop expertise in mathematics. However, these initiatives are not having enough impact on improving teaching throughout the school. Leaders have not promoted equality of opportunity sufficiently well, because the curriculum does

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not do enough to overcome the identified barriers to many pupils developing their skills. As a consequence almost all groups of pupils underachieve in relation to national expectations and when compared to other pupils from similar backgrounds. The curriculum does not always provide enough challenge and too many opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. The school promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development satisfactorily through a range of activities that encourage pupils to get on with each other and contribute to special occasions. However, too few opportunities are provided in lessons to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development, with pupils often exploring issues only superficially. Governors fulfil their statutory duties so that arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and systems to maintain pupils' safety are robust.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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 | 46 | 46 | 8 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 47 | 40 | 5 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 38 | 40 | 8 |
| Special schools | 28 | 48 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 15 | 50 | 29 | 5 |
| All schools | 11 | 46 | 38 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Attendance: | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance. |
| Behaviour: | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| 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. |
| Safety: | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

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.



9 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Montgomery Primary School, Birmingham, B11 1EH

You will remember that I came with three other inspectors recently to inspect your school. Thank you for sharing your views with us, especially those of you who completed questionnaires. We judged that the school is not providing you with a satisfactory education, because you do not do as well as you should in English and mathematics. We have decided that your school needs extra help to resolve this and we call this 'special measures'. This means that the teachers and school leaders will get extra support in making the improvements that are needed. An inspector will come back to check on the progress that the school is making and write another report so your teachers, parents and carers can see how things are improving.

We have asked the school's leaders, staff and governors to work on three main things. First, you should be reaching at least the same levels as other pupils nationally in your Key Stage 2 tests. Every teacher must be really focused on giving you opportunities to develop towards this goal. It is going to be important that they have high expectations of your capabilities. You can help by working hard, thinking carefully and answering questions enthusiastically.

We have also asked the school to make sure that teaching improves. When we saw you in good lessons, we were really impressed with the progress you were making. However, we saw too many lessons where you were not making enough progress because work was too easy or teachers did not teach you the best methods or provide you with accurate information. Perhaps you could help by talking to school councillors about the type of lessons where you really enjoy learning.

The final thing is to make sure that leaders carefully monitor what is happening and change things quickly when you are not learning as well as you should. The teachers are going to be really busy working at all of these things and they will need your help and your best behaviour. On behalf of the inspection team I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Sheridan
Her Majesty's Inspector

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