

Paddington Academy

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130912
Local Authority	N/A
Inspection number	381275
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Anne Wellham HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1275
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	275
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Richards
Headteacher	Oli Tomlinson (Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2009
School address	50 Marylands Road London W9 2DR
Telephone number	0207 479 3900
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Age group	11–18
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspection team observed 42 parts of lessons and four tutor sessions, taught by 42 teachers. Meetings were held with the Principal, leaders and managers, four representatives from the governing body and the regional executive for southern academies of the United Learning Trust (ULT). Inspectors also met groups of students and parents and carers. They observed the academy's work and looked at a wide range of documentation as well as 208 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, 181 questionnaires completed by students and 103 completed by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the academy's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well assessment information is being used to track the progress of different groups to ensure that all students make the progress they should.
- Whether actions taken to eradicate inconsistencies in teaching and learning are building sufficient capacity for all teachers to sustain improvement.
- How effectively partnerships, especially with parents and carers, are being used to improve students' outcomes.
- Whether monitoring and analysis in the sixth form is sufficiently rigorous to sustain improvements in provision and outcomes.

Information about the school

Paddington Academy opened in September 2006 and moved into a new building in September 2007. The students come from a wide range of socio-economic, ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. Most are from minority ethnic groups, the largest being of Black African and Bangladeshi heritages. Kosovan, Iraqi and Black Caribbean heritage students are the next largest groups. Almost three quarters of students speak English as an additional language with over 50 first languages spoken. The most common languages other than English are Arabic, Albanian and Bengali. The proportions of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those known to be eligible for free school meals, are much higher than found nationally. A high number of students join partway through their education. The academy has specialisms in media, performing arts, business and enterprise. It was awarded Healthy Schools status in 2010.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Paddington Academy has sustained rapid improvement since the previous inspection to become an outstanding academy under the exceptional leadership and direction of the Principal and senior leaders. The promotion of equality of opportunity is exemplary. It is at the heart of the academy's work and underpins students' good and sometimes outstanding learning and progress, together with the exceptional care, guidance and support they receive. Examination results have improved steadily at GCSE and A Level and are above the national averages. Achievement in English, mathematics and the specialist subjects is particularly strong. Assessment data about the achievement of different groups of students including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and those who join partway through their education, are monitored meticulously to ensure that all groups make similar good progress from starting points that are below average.

The academy is extremely effective in supporting and guiding students in their choices of how to behave. It does not shy away from confronting issues of gang culture, and the anti-social behaviour that exists in some of the local neighbourhoods. The reinforcement of high standards and positive role models are used to challenge the moral and social complexities surrounding peer group pressure so that students know and understand that 'the street stops at the academy gate'. Attendance is high because all students feel extremely safe and secure. They are proud to be part of the academy community, behave well and show high levels of respect for each other, adults and for the academy environment. Bullying and racism is very rare and dealt with quickly and effectively. One student reflected the views of many by reporting that, 'Learning never stops because staff bring out the best in you.'

The majority of teaching is good or better because senior and middle leaders are building up a detailed and accurate analysis of how and why effective teaching improves students' achievement. This is shared among all staff and used to inform high quality professional development and continually raise expectations. Teaching and learning are not outstanding overall as best practice is not demonstrated consistently across all teams. The pace of learning slows in a minority of lessons where students are not given sufficient opportunities to reflect on what they have learnt before moving on to the next stage.

Students' good learning is supported well by an inclusive curriculum that is tailored to

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the needs of individuals. Highly effective partnerships particularly with parents and carers, local community groups, local authority organisations and business partners are well established, and are actively involved in improving outcomes for all students.

The sixth form makes a good contribution to the academy community and has effective leadership. Since the last inspection monitoring and analysis has been sharpened to make sure that students are being placed on appropriate courses that match their abilities and interests. As a result, achievement is rising and a culture where students expect success is being established.

Staff members at all levels understand the journey that the academy has been on and share an explicit vision for further improvement. Very effective self-evaluation, combined with the academy's track record for sustained improvement, underpins its outstanding capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that high expectations of achievement and accountability for teaching and learning are demonstrated consistently across all teams in the academy
 - providing explicit opportunities during lessons for students to reflect on and consolidate their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In the majority of lessons observed, the quality of learning was at least good with some instances of students making outstanding progress. Students have positive attitudes and are motivated to learn. They engage enthusiastically and make outstanding progress in lessons that offer the correct level of challenge, provide opportunities for them to become actively involved in their learning, and provide time to reflect. Most students participate in the extensive range of opportunities to extend their learning, including academy study clubs, holiday schools and extra-curricular activities. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language receive personalised intervention and guidance. This allows them to develop good habits for learning and gain the literacy and communication skills that they need to make good and sometimes outstanding progress.

The academy is exceptionally effective in promoting the values of respect and tolerance and promoting students' social, moral and cultural development. Their capacity to be creative in their learning and to contribute to decision-making in relation to their learning is less well developed. Students have a good understanding of the risks that have an impact on their physical and mental health and emotional well-being, and recognise the benefits of a healthy diet and regular exercise. They take pride in the academy community and willingly take on posts of responsibility as

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mentors and ambassadors. Students realise their own capacity for their future economic well being through their high attendance and good punctuality. They apply basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology well, and develop enterprise skills, personal qualities and team work by participating in a wide range of clubs, competitions and educational visits.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Most of the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching reported at the last inspection have been successfully eradicated and there is a higher proportion of good and outstanding teaching. The most effective teachers are confident enough to take risks to challenge students to think for themselves and amend tasks accordingly. They place a high priority on developing the oral and literacy skills of students, whatever the subject content. In outstanding lessons observed in art and dance, students were provided with meaningful subject specific words to learn and apply when evaluating other students’ work; key phrases were modelled to allow them to articulate their ideas well. The best teachers extend the abilities of students who are at the advanced stages of learning English or who have additional learning needs identified through their accurate use of assessment data. In good or better lessons, technology is used imaginatively and enhances teaching because the teachers use it for a specific purpose rather than to improve presentation. In addition, students receive precise meaningful feedback on how to improve their work. In the few lessons where teaching is less effective, the key learning points are not consolidated clearly enough and marking does not provide useful feedback for students on how to improve.

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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Good learning is promoted through the excellent curriculum which uses the knowledge and expertise of staff to best effect, and is frequently reviewed to match the needs and interests of students. The academy’s work is strongly based in community and Performing Arts links, and these partnerships have an outstanding impact on student learning and development. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities, community links, trips and links with external partners provide meaningful opportunities for students from different backgrounds, and of different ages, to interact and work together.

Exceptionally high levels of support and care are carefully targeted to improve the confidence, self-esteem and achievement of all students. The academy knows and understands the context of its students and families extremely well. It ensures that students’ diverse needs are identified and supported throughout their time in the academy. This helps to secure appropriate and relevant provision for their future education, employment and well-being.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Under the inspirational leadership of the Principal, leaders and managers at all levels have a shared and explicit vision for sustaining improvement. Morale among all staff is very high and there is a strong belief in the academy’s capacity to improve further. Staff consistently confirmed the high quality of support they receive, the pride they have in the academy, and how much they value the opportunity to contribute to its success. Sophisticated and transparent systems to monitor students’ progress and the quality of teaching and learning are used rigorously and meticulously to evaluate where positive learning is leading to better outcomes. Targeted support is provided to improve accountability and raise expectations in the few areas of the academy where performance could be better.

Governance is securely good and fulfils the governance arrangements set out by the United Learning Trust. Members are building constructive relationships with staff and becoming more strategically involved in improvement planning.

The academy exceeds the statutory requirements for safeguarding and practice is exemplary. Staff work very effectively with a range of external agencies, such as health and social services, to promote the safety, health and welfare of all students.

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The academy’s engagement with parents and carers has improved significantly since the last inspection and is very successful in involving parents and carers in supporting their children’s learning and behaviour. The academy invites and receives useful feedback through the Parents’ Forum and other links. The academy’s successful ethos is built on the principle of promoting a cohesive community. It places a high value on the diversity of the academy community, and works closely and effectively with local partners and broader national and international communities. The partnership with the Trust drives improvement strongly through high levels of challenge and involvement, and the effective sharing of good practice particularly in professional development.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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	2

Sixth form

The sixth form has improved rapidly since the last inspection and is now good. A dedicated sixth form team, led by the director, have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas that need further improvement. They communicate a clear vision on how to share good practice in teaching and learning, and for increasing accountability across subjects for the quality of provision. Significant progress has been made in reducing the variation between subjects to make sure that the majority of students make good progress and complete courses which are appropriate to their abilities and interests. Students’ progress against challenging targets is reviewed six times a year with personal tutors and reported to parents and carers, although there is some inconsistency in the accuracy and rigour of tracking progress at department level. Students report that they value the good quality of teaching and the dedicated support they receive to further their learning. Relationships between teachers and students are excellent. Students receive regular and detailed feedback on their progress and the good marking of work informs them of what they need to do to

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improve. There is a developing sixth form enrichment programme and a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including high quality support and facilities available beyond the school day and at weekends.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers who responded were happy with all aspects of the academy’s performance. They were particularly pleased with their children’s learning and progress and how the academy keeps their child safe and happy. Inspection evidence supports the view of parents and carers that the academy is providing an outstanding quality of education in nearly all aspects of academy life.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Paddington Academy 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 208 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1275 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	129	62	77	37	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	128	62	77	37	1	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	113	54	81	39	8	4	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	90	43	110	53	4	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	111	53	88	42	2	1	3	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	94	45	94	45	11	5	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	76	37	119	57	10	5	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)	105	50	88	42	4	2	3	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	77	37	118	57	6	3	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	109	52	92	44	4	2	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	82	39	108	52	7	3	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	106	51	94	45	1	0	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	123	59	77	37	5	2	1	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 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



21 October 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Paddington Academy, London, W9 2DR

Thank you for the very friendly and polite welcome you gave us when we inspected your academy. We enjoyed meeting you, your teachers and parents, visiting some of your lessons and eating the delicious cupcakes that you made for us. We were very impressed with your good behaviour, the respect that you show each other and your excellent attendance. We think your academy has improved so much since the last time it was inspected that we have judged it to be outstanding. As well as helping you to achieve excellent results in examinations and make good progress, the academy encourages you to have high aspirations for your future. It is a very special and safe community because of the exceptional care and support you receive, and the opportunities that allow everyone to have an equal chance to succeed. You have many exciting chances to learn by taking part in a wide range of study clubs, trips and activities that help you gain valuable skills for your future life. The sixth form is a very important part of the academy and the sixth form students set a good example for younger students to follow. The Principal and senior staff lead your academy exceptionally well. Your teachers and other adults are dedicated to helping you and work very hard to make sure that you achieve the best you can. We think that they like coming to the academy as much as you do.

Although there are so many excellent things about your academy there is always room for improvement. We have asked the academy to make sure that every member of staff continues to expect the very best from you. We also have asked the teachers and adults that support you to provide more time in lessons for you to think about your learning and make sure that you really understand things before you move on to the next stage. You can help by discussing your learning with your teachers and letting them know if you find work too easy or too hard.

We wish you all at Paddington Academy a very happy and successful future.

Yours sincerely

Anne Wellham
Her Majesty's Inspector

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