

Inspection of Vauxhall Primary School

Vauxhall Street, London SE11 5LG

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 11 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. The school received an urgent inspection under section 8 of the Act on 2 October 2018. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are very happy. They enjoy learning in a calm environment. Pupils reflect the school's core values in their everyday activities. For example, they are kind to one another and they respect each other's similarities and differences. Pupils feel safe in all parts of the school and they know they can talk to any adult if they have any worries. Pupils like that teachers listen to them and give them the chance to explain things.

The school is ambitious for all pupils. In early years, the curriculum places no ceilings on children's learning and what they can achieve. Children enjoy creative and purposefully designed indoor and outdoor spaces where teachers carefully plan what they want children to learn. Older pupils are excited by the range of subjects that they learn in school. They are keen readers and enjoy choosing books from the school and local library.

Pupils are keen to do well. They are focused on their learning. From the start of early years, children learn how to identify and manage their feelings and emotions. This approach is used throughout the school and helps pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and be independent. Pupils are keen to help one another. This can be seen at breakfast club where reading ambassadors read with younger children.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has designed a curriculum that is broad and, overall, prepares pupils well for the next stage of their learning. The school's work has been especially successful in early years. Here, the curriculum has a strong focus on developing children's language and communication and understanding of number. Leaders have designed the curriculum so that children are fully ready for their learning in Year 1.

In most subjects, leaders have planned the order that pupils learn knowledge and skills in a very logical way. This means that pupils can build on their prior learning to attempt more complex tasks. For example, in computing, pupils start to learn to program using block programming applications. This enables them to learn about algorithms and how to debug errors. Pupils then use this knowledge in Year 6 to code in word-based languages, such as Python.

Learning in a small number of subjects is not ordered in a logical way. This makes it difficult for pupils to attempt more complex learning as they do not have the prior knowledge to do so. Some of the tasks that pupils complete are not related to the subject content that they are learning. This means that teachers are unable to tell if pupils have learned the key knowledge that was expected.

Pupils' outcomes in writing at the end of Year 6 are below the national average. Because of this, the school has changed its approach to how the curriculum

supports pupils to develop their writing throughout the school. In addition to the new way that learning is sequenced, revised approaches to assessing what pupils have learned have been introduced. This work is at an early stage. As such, it has been too soon for the school to check that the changes are having a positive impact on pupils' learning in the long term.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the full curriculum. The school swiftly identifies any additional needs that pupils may have and supports pupils with SEND to learn successfully in all subjects. Teachers use pupils' individual support plans well to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils in their class.

Reading is an absolute priority. Staff are well trained to teach the school's reading scheme and there is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading across the school. Pupils read books that match the sounds that they know. Parents and carers can attend coffee mornings to learn about the reading programme and they have access to online resources to support their children at home. Staff quickly identify any pupils who do not keep up with the programme and provide effective additional support.

Pupils behave extremely well. Teachers use rewards and sanctions consistently and fairly and pupils are motivated to do well. As a result, there are very few incidents of poor behaviour and lessons are rarely disrupted. The COVID-19 pandemic had a big impact on school attendance. The school has made improving attendance a priority. Leaders quickly identified the causes of poor attendance and put procedures in place to address these. For example, they now offer a free breakfast club and have introduced a soft start to the school day. There has been a significant improvement in attendance in a short period of time.

The work to support pupils' wider development is impressive. There are many after school clubs, from Taekwondo and film club to drumming and fitness. Participation rates are extremely high and leaders ensure all groups of pupils benefit. Pupils make a positive contribution to the school community via the wide range of leadership opportunities available to them. These include being anti-bullying ambassadors, well-being ambassadors and 'Team 12' representatives. Pupils are proud to represent their peers and their school.

The school is well supported by strong governance as well as leadership within the federation. Staff and parents are very positive about the school. Staff especially appreciate the training they receive and feel that leaders are mindful of their workload. Leaders regularly welcome parents into school and are keen to work collaboratively with them for the benefit of pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's work to prioritise writing and improve how the curriculum supports this aspect of pupils' learning is recent. This means that pupils have not been consistently well supported to become accurate and clear writers. The school should embed the changes made to the curriculum and check that these changes enable pupils to write accurately and clearly.
- In a few subjects, the school has not thought about the sequence that knowledge and skills need to be taught in so that pupils build well on their prior learning. In addition, activities to assess what pupils know and remember in these subjects are not always linked to the knowledge that has been taught. As a result, this reduces how effectively pupils remember the most important knowledge and skills needed for the next stage of their learning. The school should ensure that all subjects are sequenced in a way that allows pupils to build on prior knowledge and that assessments are appropriate to the subject matter being learned.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100588
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10296567
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Issa Issa
Headteacher	Vanessa Bennett
Website	www.vauxhallprimary.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her post in an acting capacity in September 2023.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the executive headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with the chair of the local governing body and the local authority school improvement partner.

- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, computing, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered pupils' learning in other subjects, including science and geography.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils in all key stages. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes was observed.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about the school's work, including about safeguarding and behaviour. Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also looked at staff, parent and pupil responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Mark Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Newby

Ofsted Inspector

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