



Vauxhall Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100588
Local Authority Lambeth
Inspection number 285826
Inspection dates 29–30 November 2006
Reporting inspector Heather Yaxley HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Vauxhall Street
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	3–11		SE11 5LG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02077354535
Number on roll (school)	204	Fax number	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Clare Checksfield
		Headteacher	Ms Shirley Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Vauxhall Primary is situated on the south side of Vauxhall Bridge in a three-floor Victorian building. There are eight classes, one for each year group, including the nursery. The majority of children come from the neighbouring estate. There is high mobility within the local population and up to 60% of children in Key Stage 2 classes are new to the school. Most of the children speak additional languages at home and represent a range of diverse ethnic backgrounds. The number of children with learning difficulties is higher than average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In order to achieve the satisfactory standard of education that Vauxhall Primary is providing for its pupils, the school has come a long way on its journey to improve. Staff and governors know that there is still much to do, but as a result of their commitment and hard work over a long period of time, sometimes in the face of very challenging circumstances, they have been successful in ensuring that most pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach average standards, but these could be higher but. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well because staff have high expectations and are consistent in the way in which they deliver the curriculum. They are able to build on this good foundation as they move through the school. There are still some pockets of underachievement in basic skills for older pupils, particularly in mathematics. This is being appropriately tackled by senior staff who provide satisfactory leadership. Other leaders are beginning to take more responsibility for improving the provision, but there is not yet enough involvement by all staff in using monitoring information to pinpoint exactly what will make the most difference. Similarly, although governors have a high focus on raising standards, they are not active enough in working with the staff team.

The school has quite rightly given priority to the development of good pastoral support. This has made a significant difference not only to the positive learning atmosphere within school, but also to the quality of pupils' personal skills and well-being. Pupils of all ages are confident, happy and work hard. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. They have a deep respect for one another's cultural differences and this helps them to feel safe and secure in their relationships. However, not all pupils attend school regularly enough and, although improving, rates of attendance are too low.

Visitors to the school cannot fail to be impressed by the quality of the learning environment. The building is bright, welcoming and well cared for. Classrooms and corridors are places where the importance of learning is emphasised and celebrated. Staff are enthusiastic and work well together as a team. Whilst satisfactory, teaching is not yet consistent enough across the school to provide all pupils with the challenge that they need to achieve greater things. This is most evident in the feedback that pupils get about their work, with not enough information about how they can make it even better. In a similar way the curriculum is satisfactory and developing well but lacks consistency across the school in how subjects are linked together.

The school has satisfactory capacity to make further improvements as shown by developments to provision since the last inspection. Although the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, its performance in attendance remains inadequate. Before its next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress that it has made in remedying this weakness. The school would receive two to five days notice of such a visit.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly in Key Stage 2
- Ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching so that pupils are clearer about how they can improve their work
- Involve all leaders and managers in making better use of information in order to raise standards
- Ensure that governors play a more active role in the drive to raise standards

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are broadly average and progress is satisfactory. Those who speak English as an additional language, as well as those with learning difficulties, make as much progress as other pupils in the school.

When starting in the nursery, children's skills are below and sometimes well below average. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage so that by the time they start Key Stage 1 many are attaining average levels. Girls achieve higher standards than the boys, particularly in writing.

Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils make steady progress, maintaining average standards. In Key Stage 2, standards are low in some year groups. Progress varies from year to year but is satisfactory overall. The effective identification of pupils requiring additional support has been successful in eradicating most areas of underachievement, with some pupils making more than expected progress. Some pupils in Key Stage 2 are not making as much progress as they should, particularly in mathematics. The most recent result shows that standards have improved slightly and those pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to meet the challenging targets set for them. Increasingly, pupils of all ages are achieving higher levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. This represents good progress from low starting points over a long period of time and is a result of the good care that they receive and opportunities that the school provides for their personal, social and health education. This leads to good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils take advantage of a range exciting and thought-provoking activities, especially for cultural and spiritual development. This makes a significant difference to the extent that they enjoy their learning and develop self-confidence. Attendance, however, is inadequate and has a negative impact on learning. Pupils show outstanding behaviour and are very good at taking care of one another. This ensures that they feel safe and can learn and play well together. Year 6 pupils take particular responsibility for aspects of daily routines at break times and with younger groups. This helps to develop their sense of community responsibility. Similarly, the

school council takes its duties very seriously, keeping pupils informed and gaining their views. These skills, together with satisfactory progress in basic skills helps pupils prepare adequately for the next stage in their lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, there are examples of good and elements of outstanding teaching across the school. Teachers are beginning to engage fully with the school's agenda of high expectations and reflecting this in their planning, delivery and assessment of learning. A lack of subject knowledge and a clear focus on what pupils are to learn sometimes results in pupils making only satisfactory progress during lessons. When the work is suited to the needs of the individual pupils, they work with sustained concentration, interest and enthusiasm. Teachers offer pupils time to ask and answer questions but do not always provide support so that they can expand their ideas and develop their understanding. Teaching assistants make an active contribution and work in good partnership with the teachers. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used effectively to support pupils' learning and make teaching more exciting.

Teachers' marking does not always show what pupils have achieved and the steps needed to reach the next level of learning. Pupils have targets for learning but they are not always linked to the lessons. Some teachers do not make sufficient use of the information about pupils' past attainment to ensure that any gaps in learning are addressed in a systematic manner.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with aspects that are good. Recent moves to link curriculum areas to specific schemes of work are not yet consistent across the school but are beginning to make a difference to pupil motivation and achievement. The curriculum is brought alive by visits and trips to some of the places of interest in the locality and also through good use of visitors and artists. When explicit links are made with the curriculum these opportunities enliven learning and raise the level of motivation. Provision for teaching modern foreign languages is good. The school makes good use of a range of programmes to provide targeted support to selected pupils and is beginning to fill any gaps in learning and development in a systematic manner. The involvement of support staff in planning lessons and evaluating pupils learning is having a positive impact on the overall provision. Pupils enthusiastically participate in a good range of extra-curricular activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school's core values of respect, responsibility and resilience have an impact on pupils' achievement and learning, resulting in satisfactory care, guidance and support. The school provides good quality care to its pupils and their families and the partnership between home and school is becoming strong. The learning mentor plays an effective role in supporting and guiding pupils and their families. The guidance for academic progress is not as strong as pastoral support because pupils are not given enough information to help improve their own work. The school environment provides reinforcement for positive behaviour and in class pupils are provided with the opportunity to discuss and agree their own rules and to follow them with greater ownership. Procedures are in place to ensure that appropriate guidance is followed to ensure health and safety. The school has good links with external providers to help meet the individual needs of pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior staff and governors demonstrate satisfactory leadership and management. They have a clear focus on raising standards and have made satisfactory improvements to provision since the last inspection. The headteacher is a good leader, successfully drawing together a stable, highly motivated staff team. She leads by example, is highly focused on achievement for all and has carried much of the responsibility for the many aspects that require on-going improvement. Appropriate priorities have been worked on resulting in good improvements to behaviour and an increasing sense of responsibility and belonging amongst the pupils and the wider school community. In addition to this, satisfactory pupil achievement has been maintained and most areas of underachievement eradicated. Attention is now focused on strengthening systems to support development of the curriculum and teaching, ensuring greater consistency across the school. There are systems in place to gather information and use it to set targets that are effectively raising standards. However, this information is not used widely enough amongst staff to get to the heart of what will make the most difference. Governors also are mindful of the need to be more involved in gaining a greater understanding of the quality of provision in the school.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

It was a pleasure for us to inspect your school and we are writing to let you know about the things that we found out and the judgements that we made.

The staff and governors are making sure that you receive a satisfactory education and they are working very hard to make the school an even better place where you can learn and play. They take good care of you and this helps you to respect one another and take pride in your school. We were very impressed with your excellent behaviour and the care that you take in your work. You clearly enjoy coming to school very much. You like learning new things and especially enjoy the school trips to local places. Your families are pleased with how well the school is doing. Some of you do not come to school as often as you should and this affects how much you can learn.

There is still a lot to be done so that you can achieve even greater things. You can help by talking to your headteacher, other members of staff and the school council about what to do next. We have asked your headteacher and staff to think about how to help you learn more in English, maths and science. Also, we have asked them to look at how your work is marked so that you know more about how to improve it. We think that governors should find out more about how well you are doing.

We wish you well for all that you want to achieve in the future.

Yours sincerely

Heather Yaxley

Her Majesty's Inspector