

Fulham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100329
Local Authority	Hammersmith and Fulham
Inspection number	335525
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Ann Sydney

This inspection of the school 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	333
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marie Thomas
Headteacher	Leesa Schooneman
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils as well as informal conversations with parents. The team observed the school's work and looked at school data, records, policies and plans. Questionnaires were received from 94 parents and carers, 97 pupils and 13 members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how successful the school is in raising attendance and improving punctuality
- whether leadership and management are succeeding in raising standards
- the quality of assessment in class, and the use of information on pupils' progress to plan lessons that match the specific needs of all pupils
- how well the school is building partnerships with parents.

Information about the school

The school is larger than average with the majority of pupils eligible for free school meals. This is a much higher proportion than usual. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also very high. There are many heritages represented in the school. The largest ethnic group is Black African. More than half of the pupils speak English as an additional language, with 103 of them at an early stage. At least 33 pupils are refugees or asylum seekers. All classes are made up of two year groups. The school has the Healthy Schools and Investor in People awards.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school where many recent improvements are bringing parents on board and raising standards again. There is good support for pupils' welfare, particularly for those who are vulnerable. Safeguarding procedures are exemplary. Parents are very happy with the school. As one said, 'The school has vastly improved in a significantly short space of time.' The school's checks on progress show that standards in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 are rising from being well below the national average in the summer 2009 to more broadly average levels. The quality of teaching is improving, due to close monitoring and coaching by the senior management team and half of all teaching is good. Standards are still not high enough in reading, where guided reading sessions are ineffective for the youngest pupils when many are at an early stage of learning English.

Parents appreciate the improved communication with the school. Senior staff welcome parents in the playground at the start and end of the day. Frequent newsletters and phone calls to parents keep the community in touch. Attendance, however, is still too low. Most pupils attend well, but there is a small minority who are persistent absentees. This is in spite of the school's concerted efforts to help reduce the number.

The headteacher is systematically putting improvements into place and developing the skills of new middle managers. She has brought a new energy and vision to the school. Self-evaluation is accurate and improvement planning, with the help of the local authority, is thorough and focuses on clear priorities. What is holding progress back is the weak use of information on pupils' progress which is not simple, clear or reviewed frequently enough by staff. Although a priority to improve, it means that teachers do not plan lessons that accurately match the needs of all the groups in the class. This hindered pupils reaching the higher levels in the 2009 national tests.

Governors have been re-invigorated by training and encouragement to challenge as well as support the school. The new senior management team has already improved a number of aspects of the school in a very short time and has gained the strong support of parents. Consequently, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reduce the proportion of persistent absentees by 50% by December 2010 by:
 - improving the quality of communication with these families and involving local community groups
 - persuading parents of the value of sending their children to school more

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regularly.

- Ensure that teachers match work more accurately to pupils' needs through the school by:
 - making sure that all staff assess progress at least half-termly
 - making sure teachers use this information to plan lessons that accurately match the needs of different ability groups.
- Improve pupils' rates of learning through the school by:
 - raising the quality of all teaching to the good level seen in some classes
 - teaching reading more effectively in Years 1 and 2 so that pupils make at least satisfactory progress
 - giving them more guidance on how to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Children enter the Nursery with skills below the national average, and in some years and in some areas of learning, with exceptionally low skills. In national tests in summer 2009 there was a sharp decline in results in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils who speak English as an additional language performed better than native English speakers but almost all groups of pupils were below the national average. To some extent this reflects pupils who had entered Nursery with very low scores and the large number of new pupils arriving through the school year, some with no previous formal education. Those pupils who had been in school since Nursery had scores closer to the national average than more recent arrivals.

This term there is evidence from the school's checks on progress and pupils' work that standards are rising in English and in mathematics for older pupils due to improvements in teaching. Progress is satisfactory and pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. This is good where teaching is of higher quality. In a Years 5/6 lesson, pupils made good progress, using research on the internet to follow up on their visit to a famous local cemetery. They were able to write at length and were producing their own well-punctuated individual guidebooks. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making satisfactory progress overall, but progress is too slow in reading in some classes where not all pupils get the adult attention they need. Pupils made good progress with their vocabulary and understanding in a numeracy lesson where they used everyday language to describe the position of objects.

Pupils make good progress in their personal development. They feel their views are listened to. Children from a very wide range of cultures play and work together harmoniously. They know very well how to keep themselves healthy and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe in and out of school. Their behaviour is good and sometimes excellent because of the school's good level of care and its focus on equality, community and personal development. One pupil said, 'Everyone respects others' ethnicity or religion; it's a very united school.' This is a feature that parents appreciate.

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Attendance is still well below the national average despite a small improvement in the past year due to tightening up on school policy on holidays in term time. There is still a small core of persistent absentees.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall, although half of lessons were taught well, and this better teaching is spread evenly through the school. However, reading is not taught well in all the Years 1 and 2 classes and so pupils who already have below average communication, language and literacy skills do not make up ground quickly enough. All teachers have good relationships with their classes and have good behaviour management skills. Where teaching is inadequate or satisfactory, it is when teachers are not using information about pupils' abilities accurately enough to plan lessons to meet the needs of pupils of differing ages or abilities. This leads to slower progress for these pupils. All classes have pupils with a wide range of ability, age and facility with English. In the better lessons, quick assessment and questions directed at the full range of pupils give the teacher information to adapt what comes next. There is less whole-class

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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teaching and pupils work in pairs and small groups with generally good support from extra teachers, assistants and volunteers. Longer periods of whole-class teaching slow down the pace of learning, for example in science lessons where early learners of English do not have the vocabulary to explain concepts. There are examples of good marking, especially in English, but in too many cases, pupils are not given the opportunity to correct their work. Many teachers link their marking to descriptions of the level pupils are trying to achieve, but this good practice is not followed by everyone.

The curriculum adequately meets pupils' needs. It provides for pupils' personal development well by emphasising the social and emotional aspects of their learning. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and clubs which are popular and well attended, including French and gardening. The breakfast club and after-school club are very effective and valued by families. An appropriate priority in the school development plan is to emphasise more creative aspects of the curriculum, review the organisation of classes and establish stronger links between different subjects.

The level of care, guidance and support for pupils is good. The ethnic make-up of staff and governors reflects the local community and they have a good knowledge of pupils' lives outside school. Pupils have delicious, healthy meals which take religious observances into consideration. Vulnerable children and their families are supported well through a range of agencies. The school diligently tries to trace all pupils, especially if families suddenly move away from the area or to another country. Safeguarding is exemplary. The school is exploring innovative ways of improving attendance, but this is not yet leading to significant improvement.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There is very strong leadership from the new headteacher, who has an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She is well supported by the local authority's plan for improvement. However, plans do not identify the need to improve currently weak reading lessons for younger pupils. Subject and phase leaders are in many cases new to their post but are observing lessons and gaining management skills from more experienced staff. Governors have been given training so they now have the tools to challenge as well as support the headteacher. A lot has been achieved in a very short time. Leaders have been particularly successful in building up relationships with parents and carers, developing better communications and building up morale in the school

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community. Staff and governors, who reflect the ethnic mix of pupils, ensure equal opportunities for all groups in the school. Community cohesion is outstanding in many respects such as in the way that pupils from different backgrounds respect each other's differences, but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to go out into the community. Systems for keeping pupils safe are now excellent, behaviour is good and teaching is improving. Systematic lesson observation, targeting areas for improvement and offering coaching is leading to higher quality teaching and learning. However, data is not easily to hand, gathered frequently enough, or in a form that class teachers can use to plan their lessons for individual pupils and this is holding back teaching and learning.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

When they enter the Nursery class, most children have skills lower than expected nationally, especially in communication and language. Many of them are not used to hearing English spoken at home. They make good progress overall so by the time they reach Year 1 they reach broadly average levels. Children make outstanding progress in physical and creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they enter Year 1. Last year they made only satisfactory progress in language and literacy and this held them back when more formal teaching takes over in Key Stage 1. They are now making good progress due to specific teaching in phonics and good teaching of language throughout the day.

Effective partnerships with parents and carers start with home visits before children

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enter Nursery. Parents are welcome to stay with their children. There is a strong emphasis on racial harmony and classroom displays reflect the wide range of backgrounds of the families. Relationships are good and staff work well as a team. Adults are each responsible for their own little group's learning and welfare, and make a good range of observations. They keep parents well informed of progress.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and there is a common sense of purpose. Safeguarding is robust, welfare has a high priority and there are good links with other agencies to support families and children's additional needs. However, information is not always well used to monitor progress, especially in communication, language and literacy. Although the Early Years Foundation Stage has a good range of resources, they are well worn and need refreshing. Learning takes place inside and outside, but the small outside space places limitations on some activities. Improvement for this is on the school's development plan.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers strongly support the school. All feel their children are safe. An overwhelming majority of those who returned the questionnaire say they are happy with what the school provides and that their children enjoy school. The same proportion agrees that the leadership and management of the school are good and that parents' concerns are listened to. A very large majority agree that behaviour and teaching are good. Parents and carers feel that they are helped to support their children with learning and they are kept well informed of their progress. They say their children are taught how to keep healthy and their needs are met, so that pupils are well prepared for secondary school. Although a very small number disagreed with the statements on the questionnaire, not one parent or carer disagreed strongly.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fulham Primary School 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 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 333 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	38	55	58	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	43	52	55	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	33	35	56	53	4	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	29	57	61	7	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	28	63	67	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	28	58	62	7	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	52	64	68	5	6	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)	28	30	55	58	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	22	63	67	7	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	29	60	64	5	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	23	65	69	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	23	66	70	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	29	63	67	2	2	0	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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 pupil's 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.



27 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fulham Primary School, London SW6 1JU

Thank you for welcoming us to your school recently. Many of you told us how much you enjoy coming to Fulham Primary. One of you said 'it is a very united school' and we agree. Your parents are very pleased with the new things that are happening, such as the weekly newsletter. All the staff at the school care for you very well and do everything they can to keep you very safe. Your parents appreciate this. However, although you behave very well in class you are not making progress fast enough with your work. We think that yours is a satisfactory school but your headteacher already has some exciting plans for improvements.

We have asked the school to:

- Improve attendance. Most of you come to school every day you can, but there is a small number of pupils who take too much time off. We have asked the school to come up with ideas for getting these pupils back into school. You could help by passing on any good ideas to the headteacher, and by telling people outside school about all the good things that go on at Fulham Primary.
- Keep track of your progress much more often. Teachers should use this information to plan lessons so that the work challenges all of you. You can help by telling the teacher if work is too easy or there is something you do not understand.
- Make all teaching as good as the best lessons. In particular, improve reading lessons for the younger pupils so they make faster progress. If you have a younger brother or sister, or a friend who finds reading difficult, you could perhaps help them.

Thank you again for making our visit such a pleasure.

Yours sincerely

Ann Sydney

Lead Inspector

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