

Saxon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125111
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	340719
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ray Vango
Headteacher	Mary Ellen McCarthy
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried by three additional inspectors. Over two thirds of the inspection time was spent looking at learning. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, covered all year groups and class teachers, and visited classes at other times to evaluate the school's provision. They undertook other general observations, including displays of the pupils' work. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff, the school council and another group of pupils. They looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan, records of meetings and the school's monitoring records and analysis of pupils' attainment and progress. They also analysed 70 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and took into account the views of pupils and staff expressed in their questionnaires.

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

- the effectiveness of learning and progress across the school, and to what extent the school monitors, analyses and addresses any relative weakness
- whether teaching provides suitable challenge for all groups of pupils, based on astute assessment, effective use of targets and knowledge of pupils' prior attainment
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in bringing about improvements to pupils' learning and well-being.

Information about the school

Saxon Primary School is a little smaller than average, but numbers have increased significantly since the previous inspection and the roll continues to rise. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals and those from minority ethnic groups are in line with national averages. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those with a statement of special educational needs, are above average. The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in its Reception class, and provides a breakfast club and an after-school club each day.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is a good school where there has been significant and rapid improvement since the last inspection. The strong drive and ambition of the outstanding headteacher and leadership team have been key factors in these substantial improvements. Progress has clearly accelerated rapidly and is now good throughout the school. The school has a good and growing reputation in the local community and there are excellent partnerships with other schools and local agencies. Issues raised at the last inspection have been successfully addressed. The hard work and dedication of the dynamic headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors have gained the support of staff, pupils and parents and carers so that all share a strong ambition to keep improving. Such strengths in leadership, alongside the impressive track record since the last inspection, clearly show that the school has outstanding capacity to sustain its rapid rate of school improvement.

The school has very positive relationships with parents and carers. They agree that the school provides a warm, friendly atmosphere where children feel happy and safe. One noted, 'Saxon school is managed by a very competent and professional headteacher who, with the governors, recruits the best staff; the school has turned a corner and will now have a great future.' Several commented on the significant improvements to the learning environment and said, 'the school has been transformed to a place where children want to be'. Inspection evidence shows that the parents' and carers' positive views are entirely justified.

The exceptional quality of care, guidance and support, and the improved curriculum have led to a rising trend in pupils' attainment. Pupils enjoy learning activities and apply themselves well. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. The school has improved provision and continues to increase the rate of pupils' progress and the broadly average standards they attain in English, mathematics and science. These improvements result from rigorous and successful efforts to improve teaching and the careful tracking of pupils' progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress in line with their peers and vulnerable groups are cared for particularly well. While the overall quality of teaching and learning is good and improving because of astute monitoring by senior leaders, inconsistencies in teaching prevent a greater proportion from being outstanding. Weaker areas of practice and provision include the consistency and pace in some teaching, coupled with subsequent variations in the quality of pupils' work. The school has begun to address this challenge and has several successful initiatives in place.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Increase the proportion of teaching that is consistently good or better by:
 - raising teachers’ expectations for all pupils in terms of the quality of their work, the standards they attain, and the pace at which they learn.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Since the last inspection, there has been an improving trend in the number of pupils who achieve their expected levels and above. Pupils leave in Year 6 with standards that are broadly average. Given pupils’ below-average starting points on entry to the school, this represents good achievement. Inspection evidence confirms the upward trend is continuing. In most lessons observed, pupils made good progress and sometimes learning was excellent. For example, younger pupils were bursting to talk about the exciting and interesting words they had found to use in their writing. Older pupils were finding inspiration as they discussed a beautiful landscape before putting their thoughts into writing. In these lessons, pupils were highly involved in learning and were engrossed in activities that were well matched to their abilities. In some lessons inspectors observed, pupils prepared to think hard, share their ideas and work together to extend their understanding. Pupils with a statement of educational needs, including those on the autistic spectrum, made good progress because of the focused support provided by skilled teaching assistants. Pupils’ good behaviour makes a valuable contribution to their learning. They have a keen sense of right and wrong and a very good awareness of social responsibility. They make an exceptional contribution to the life of the school, helping to shape decisions about the future of the school. They are very perceptive about the differences between their own and other cultures and show an excellent understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy; most participate fully in physical activities and they make healthy choices at school meal times. Given these strong qualities and the improving standards in basic skills, pupils are well prepared for their future life and learning.

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	3
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

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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Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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 Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Good and sometimes outstanding teaching was observed. Most lessons were well planned with a clear focus on what pupils were expected to learn. Other strengths noted were the very positive relationships between pupils and adults, and the way assessment is generally used effectively to support learning. However, some inconsistencies remain and there are relative weaknesses within this strong and still improving picture of teaching. Weaknesses were noticeable when work wasn't matched closely enough to pupils' abilities. Sometimes the pace of lessons was too slow so that pupils were not moving on as quickly as they might in their learning.

The curriculum is successfully helping pupils to develop their knowledge and skills, with an increasing emphasis on well-thought-out links between subjects. Careful planning ensures breadth and balance. A very good range of sporting and interest clubs, visits and visitors, together with participation in additional outside school provision, successfully extend pupils' learning and personal development.

A very careful and methodical analysis of information on pupils has enabled staff to arrange closely targeted support to meet pupils' individual needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This very well-organised support means that all pupils receive excellent care and attention. Many parents and carers confirmed that the outcome of this outstanding provision is that their children have very positive attitudes to school and are developing a love of learning. Parents and carers also commented that the school takes their concerns and suggestions on board and acts on them. The school works very well with outside partners to support the most vulnerable pupils. Both the breakfast club and after-school club are well attended. Because of this and pupils' general enjoyment of all that is on offer in school, attendance levels are rising.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2

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	
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The success of the school stems from the inspirational and innovative leadership provided by the headteacher. She sets the tone and has high expectations of staff and pupils. Everyone at the school is focused relentlessly on further improvement. The school knows itself well and sets the right targets to become better. All subject leaders and governors are closely involved in monitoring the school’s work. Systems for safeguarding and child protection are practical as well as robust. Leaders and managers are very successful in promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination. Everyone is valued and supported to achieve their best, because the school successfully removes barriers to learning for all pupils. Parents and carers confirmed the inclusive nature of the school for both themselves and their children. The school has carried out a suitable audit of its contribution to community cohesion and is implementing its subsequent action plan. Opportunities that develop pupil awareness of other faiths and cultures in their own country and further afield are sensitively and meaningfully taught across the curriculum. For example, there are special themes, celebrations of different faiths and links with other schools. The governors hold the school to account in a challenging and constructive manner. Their outstanding work is helping to ensure that pupils gain the skills that give them a strong start in their lives.

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	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress during their Reception year. They enter the school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are below the levels expected for their age, especially in writing and language. By the time they enter Year 1 the majority achieve the expected levels. Many exceed the levels for personal, social and emotional development because of good, and at times outstanding, teaching and support by well-informed teaching assistants. Children settle into Reception well because of good transition arrangements with pre-school providers, parents and carers. The school recognises, however, that links with pre-schools could be developed even further. Most children quickly learn to cooperate well with each other and with adults. The very welcoming learning environment is resourced and organised well to provide a mixture of interesting and stimulating indoor and outdoor activities, where children are able to make independent choices to initiate their own learning. They work very well together and independently, and can sustain full concentration on one activity. There are good opportunities for creative play. For example, during the inspection children were observed in the role-play 'Garden Centre', where they bought and sold plants and produce. This also supported their good understanding of the need to eat healthily, through growing their own watercress and strawberry plants. Behaviour and relationships are excellent. As a result, children enjoy learning, are proud of their work and are very eager to talk about it. All staff engage children in conversation and this helps develop children's speaking and listening skills. As a result of outstanding leadership by the newly appointed leader, there has been rapid development in the provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is very strong teamwork and very cohesive planning. Extremely comprehensive ongoing assessment, especially of child-initiated activities, is used very well to plan for individual children, and supports the recent focus on providing meaningful opportunities to engage boys in their writing.

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	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive about the school. Some wrote in detail about the way the staff, under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, ensured their children received outstanding care. They also commented on the good progress pupils make and the significant improvement made as a result of the changes the

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headteacher and governors had implemented. A few parents and carers had minor concerns about their children's education which are being dealt with by the school. A very small minority of parents and carers are concerned about behaviour in the school. The inspection team did not agree with them, finding that pupils' behaviour is good and that it is well managed by the staff. Pupils' views confirm this.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Saxon 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 70 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 188 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	63	23	33	2	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	40	57	28	40	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	33	47	34	49	2	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	56	27	39	1	1	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	38	54	28	40	2	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	53	26	37	5	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	39	37	53	2	3	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)	25	36	39	56	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	44	32	46	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	43	29	41	7	10	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	44	33	47	3	4	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	45	64	20	29	1	1	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	59	23	33	2	3	2	3

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.



5 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Saxon Primary School, Shepperton, Surrey TW17 0JB

We really enjoyed our visit to your school this week. You will not be surprised to hear that we judged your school to be good. Since the last time inspectors came to the school, many things have got better and from your work in books, we can see that the standard of your work is continuing to improve.

All the adults in the school look after you really well and keep you safe. You were very polite and we did enjoy talking with you. We noticed when we shared lunch time with you how much you understand about leading healthy lifestyles. We were also impressed with the many ways you contribute to school life and how you look for ways to help others. I know that many people in and around the area enjoy hearing you sing. It must have been exciting to be invited to sing in Guildford Cathedral. You have lots of other opportunities that help you enjoy your time at school with special projects, visits and visitors, and I know how some of you are really enjoying learning to knit.

We know that your headteacher and staff and governors are working very hard with you and your parents and carers to make Saxon a happy learning community. To make things better, we have asked your headteacher and teachers to help all of you to raise standards and make even better progress by giving you work that is neither too easy nor too difficult and ensuring that you get on with it quickly. You can help by coming to school every day, on time and ready to start work.

I hope you continue to enjoy your education.

Yours sincerely

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Lead inspector

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