

Paxton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100577
Local Authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	343733
Inspection dates	27–28 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Kekshan Salaria

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	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Pervin Sivanathan
Headteacher	Ms Lucy Robins(Head), Mr Craig Tunstall (Executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed nine teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including teachers' planning, pupils' books, the school improvement plan, assessment records, individual education plans, minutes of meetings and the report of the School Improvement Partner. The responses from 100 parents' and carers' questionnaires were also analysed.

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

- the progress of pupils in English and mathematics
- the effectiveness of teaching in ensuring that it challenges all learners, including higher-attaining pupils
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in contributing to the school's improvement.

Information about the school

Paxton Primary is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly above the national average. The majority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Over a quarter of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, predominantly linked to difficulties in communication or behavioural, emotional, social or physical needs, is similar to the national average.

At the last inspection in February 2009, the school was issued with a Notice to Improve because senior leaders were failing to ensure that significant improvements were being made in relation to standards, achievement and the school's self-evaluation. It was monitored by Her Majesty's Inspector in October 2009. The governors at Paxton Primary and the Federation of Kingswood and Elm Wood Schools agreed to a 'soft' federation in November 2009, with a view to consulting for a formal federation in spring 2010. The three schools are working in partnership under the title 'The Gipsy Hill Federation of Kingswood, Elm Wood and Paxton Primary Schools'.

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

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school no longer requires significant improvement. Paxton Primary is a good and improving school. It has a number of outstanding features. Pupils are now making good progress. As a result, they are attaining standards that are rapidly improving, although remaining in line with the national average. These changes have been brought about for several reasons. Underpinning the transformation is the outstanding leadership and management of the executive headteacher and his senior team. The resources, expertise and experience available within the federation with two local schools have been wisely utilised. The executive headteacher, staff and governors have embarked on a quest for excellence and what they have done already suggests that they will succeed in their aim.

The school improvement plan sets out a clear way forward for the school. Together with the many recent improvements, this demonstrates the school's outstanding capacity to improve further. As one parent noted, 'There has been an enormous uplift in morale. The children seem more motivated, the staff are more energised and we, the parents, are secure in the belief that our children are being educated carefully and prepared for an enjoyable future in school.'

The executive headteacher and his senior team have established a clear, successful vision for the school and a determined drive to raise achievement which has yielded impressive improvements in a very short space of time. Senior and middle leaders ensure robust and regular monitoring of teaching and learning, targeted support and coaching, and increasingly regular sharing of good practice. They are particularly aware of the need to ensure consistency across the federation in using assessment to support learning to make sure teaching meets the needs of all pupils.

From a below-average starting point, pupils make good progress because they are well taught and given good support to enhance their learning. As a result, they enjoy lessons, participate with enthusiasm and, by the end of Year 6, achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because of the extensive support provided for them.

The continued drive for improvement has resulted in much good and at times outstanding teaching. This good teaching has been the key factor in accelerating pupils' progress and improving attainment. Teachers have become increasingly skilful at accelerating the progress of pupils. In lessons, teachers are creative, ensure activities engage all learners and make good use of information and communication technology (ICT). Increasingly, teachers are ensuring that work is matched to the differing needs of

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pupils in their lessons. However, this practice is not yet fully consistent and lessons do not always challenge the more-able pupils in particular. In addition, in some lessons, mostly in mathematics, teachers do not always build opportunities to develop pupils' investigation skills. A greater focus on developing literacy has had a significant impact on pupils' achievement, although there are missed opportunities for extending pupils' writing further, particularly at the top end of Key Stage 2. Pupils now receive good, and in some classes outstanding, guidance from teachers on how to improve their work.

The school is a happy, safe place where staff take pride in caring for the pupils. Consequently, all pupils, regardless of ability, ethnicity and mother tongue, are successfully supported, enabling them to access the learning opportunities the school provides. Pupils' personal development and well-being are real strengths. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They feel safe at school, have a good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and their improving literacy and numeracy skills are preparing them well for the next stage in their education. As one pupil's questionnaire noted, 'Since November, the senior leaders have made a big difference to our school; so thank you.'

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress by:
 - ensuring higher-ability pupils are consistently challenged
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their investigation skills in mathematics
 - providing further opportunities for extended writing, particularly in Years 5 and 6.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils' attainment is average. Pupils are making increasingly good progress as they move through the school and are achieving well. This is because their progress is very carefully monitored and they are increasingly involved in their learning. Older pupils discuss their work and progress with teachers and are given very clear guidance on what they need to learn next. In the lessons observed pupils worked with diligence, purpose and full engagement. Their behaviour is outstanding and they are very supportive of each other. For example in one lesson, pupils in Year 6 worked in groups with an excellent teaching assistant to think of strategies for working out the area of shapes. The teacher's carefully designed activity enabled pupils to demonstrate their good reasoning and thinking skills, while acquiring new knowledge.

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils are friendly, confident and enthusiastic about their school. They have a strong understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and to stay safe. Pupils show a willingness to take on responsibility by raising money for several charities and by being elected to the school council. Members of the school council take their role seriously in thinking about ways to

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improve the school. Pupils know that their contribution matters and take a lively interest in different places, people and customs. As a few families do not send their children to school often enough, attendance is no better than satisfactory. However, the school has worked successfully to reduce the levels of persistent absences by introducing a rigorous monitoring and reward system. The head of school meets with parents and carers to offer support and first day absence calls are made and recorded centrally.

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

How effective is the provision?

Lessons ensure a strong focus on key vocabulary, explaining terminology and providing visual props and prompts. Additionally, teachers use open-ended questions well to allow pupils opportunities to develop their understanding. Most lessons provide a variety of tasks and so pupils remain attentive and involved in their work. However, at times, the higher-ability pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable because teachers give them work that is not challenging enough.

Teachers are increasingly effective in using assessment information to monitor pupils' progress. Termly review meetings of pupils' progress help to identify speedily those at

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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risk of falling behind and to deploy effective support. Learning support assistants are well trained and work in strong partnership with teachers. For example, support is in small groups or within the classroom and involves the teaching of reading skills, spelling and punctuation.

The curriculum is balanced and flexible in responding to pupils' needs. Pupils learn well because they are presented with a range of different experiences. The use of ICT helps to make learning stimulating. A range of visitors and visits enriches pupils' understanding of the wider world and helps bring learning to life for the pupils. Pupils speak very enthusiastically about their music and physical education lessons. They enjoy the instrumental music lessons thoroughly, which have been introduced into Years 1 to 6 to supplement enrichment opportunities further.

Care, guidance and support are the core of the school's work and the welfare and safety of pupils are demonstrated in the considerate and thoughtful way that staff talk to and about the pupils in their care.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The executive headteacher and his senior team have worked tirelessly and to very good effect to improve this school. They have wisely used the resources of the federation to create a shared and challenging culture of accountability, resulting in a collaborative and cohesive school community. All staff at Paxton Primary have a strong commitment to raising attainment; senior leaders know the priorities for the future and what needs to be done to transform their vision for high achievement into action. Management systems enable them to have open discussions about professional development and the school's progress. The school improvement plan has initiated effective strategies to raise standards and this has resulted in rapid improvement.

During the past six months, governors have developed a more rigorous approach towards their key task of keeping the school under review. They have a good understanding of the barriers that the school's pupils face, and of the strategies that have been put in place to overcome those barriers.

The Federation website offers open communication to parents and carers and a highly positive relationship with most groups of parents and carers has been developed. Parents and carers are very pleased with what the school provides. As one parent commented, 'I have watched my children move from strength to strength, developing

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their talents, confidence and education.'

Procedures to ensure the safety of pupils meet government guidelines. There are, for example, good procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils through the checks made on all adults who work in the school and risk assessments are routinely carried out.

The school promotes equal opportunities well in ensuring, for example, that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities participate fully and make the same progress in their learning as their classmates. There is a strong cohesive community within the school and the promotion of cohesion within the wider community is developing well.

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	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	2
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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children prosper in the Early Years Foundation Stage in response to a very well-organised learning environment. Needs are identified very quickly through a combination of partnership working and home visits. As a result of good teaching, secure assessment procedures and an interesting curriculum, children make good progress. Staff use exciting and plentiful resources to plan a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities to develop children's self-confidence and independence. Opportunities for extending learning, such as developing children's speaking and vocabulary skills, are planned well, particularly for those children who are learning English as an additional language. Staff consistently encourage children's literacy skills by modelling language so that they learn how to speak in correct English. Topics are

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planned in detail and the individual needs of children are considered very carefully. Children are happy in their activities and sometimes display sustained levels of attention. Outdoor learning has been much improved in the Nursery and there are similar plans for the Reception class. The team is very well led by the team leader, who has an excellent grasp of how to improve provision further.

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

The vast majority of parents/carers who responded to the questionnaires are positive about and appreciative of the work of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Paxton Primary 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 100 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 231 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	68	32	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	74	74	24	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	48	48	51	51	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	40	60	60	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	52	52	46	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	44	51	51	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	39	52	52	8	8	1	1
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)	37	37	48	48	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	37	62	62	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	50	50	44	44	3	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	45	47	47	3	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	49	49	49	49	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	55	45	45	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 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. 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.



28 April 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Paxton Primary School, London SE19 1PA

Thank you very much for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We really enjoyed our visit, particularly the chance to have lunch with you and to talk to so many of you during the two days. I am writing this letter to tell you what we found out about your school. You go to a good school that looks after you extremely well.

These are some of the things we liked about your school.

- We think you are getting on well in your learning. You particularly enjoy the range of clubs and other activities on offer.
- You feel safe at school and know that if you have a problem there is always an adult to talk to. You make healthy choices and make visitors to your school feel very welcome.
- We were very impressed with your politeness and outstanding behaviour and how hard you work.
- You are taught well and this is helping you to make good progress.
- The headteacher, governors and other staff work really well together to make your school successful. They are working hard to make it an even better place to learn.

We have asked your school to work on a few things to improve things even more.

- Make sure that teachers have the right kind of information to help them plan even more challenging lessons.
- Make sure that you have more opportunities for extending your writing and investigation work in mathematics.

We hope you keep on trying hard and enjoying all of the interesting activities which help you learn and play.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria

Her Majesty's Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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