

Vauxhall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100588
Local Authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	346443
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Kekshan Salaria HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tim Kearns
Headteacher	Mr Christopher Toye
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2009
School address	Vauxhall Street London SE11 5LG
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) who visited nine lessons and observed nine teachers. HMI held meetings with the Chair of Governors, a representative from the local authority, staff, a group of parents and carers, and with pupils. HMI 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 and minutes of meetings.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at the following:

the achievement of pupils in mathematics and science

the effectiveness of teaching in ensuring that it challenges all learners

the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in contributing to the school's improvement

the impact of the school's work in addressing the key issues for development from the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Vauxhall Primary is smaller than average. It serves a diverse area of inner London. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak a first language other than English. The proportion of pupils who have statements of special educational needs is much higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils who have moderate learning difficulties, speech, language and communication difficulties, and behavioural and emotional difficulties. When this school was inspected in October 2009, it was judged to require special measures. Since the previous inspection the school has formed a soft federation with a nearby primary school for three years. The headteacher of this school has become the executive headteacher of both 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 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school no longer requires special measures. Vauxhall Primary has made significant improvements and is now providing a good quality of education. At the time of the previous inspection in October 2009, standards overall were below average and pupils were not making enough progress. This is no longer the case; pupils' achievement has significantly improved and is now good overall. Pupils are making good progress and, as a result, the standards that they are attaining are rapidly improving: unvalidated test results for 2010 at the end of Year 6 suggest that attainment is well above the national average. Underpinning improvements is the good leadership and management of the executive headteacher and his senior team. The resources, expertise and experience available from the partner school within the federation have been wisely utilised. The headteacher provides a very clear direction. He has set high expectations and, along with the senior leaders, has worked tirelessly and to good effect to improve this school. The determined drive to raise achievement has yielded impressive improvements in a very short space of time. The school's outstanding capacity for further improvement is underpinned by a shared and challenging culture of accountability which has, during the past few months, delivered rapid progress in the areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection.

Governors and senior leaders have invested significant resources and time in improving provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Much thought has gone into developing the outside area and this is now a natural extension of the classroom, which the children happily use. Teachers have readily taken on board new initiatives. A striking feature of practice is the higher expectations of the children. The curriculum enables children to learn from first-hand experiences. For example, HMI observed children happily counting and recording the number of wet sponges they could land on their target in the outdoor area. Members of staff work together closely and share their expertise. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are now good.

Children enter the school with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below those usually expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They settle well and make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the good teaching and provision they receive. In Key Stage 1, pupils of different backgrounds and abilities achieve well due to good teaching and learning. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with the national average. Given pupils' very low starting points and the significant numbers who join the school at different times, often with weak skills in English, this represents good progress. Pupils make increasingly good progress as they move through Key Stage 2. Unvalidated data in Key Stage 2 for 2010

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suggests that standards overall have continued to rise, with significant proportions of pupils attaining the highest levels in mathematics and science.

Good teaching has been the key factor in accelerating pupils' progress and improving attainment. Teachers have become increasingly skilful in ensuring lessons are more creative. They use interactive whiteboards confidently to motivate and engage pupils. However, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons is underdeveloped. The school is aware that both provision and the leadership of this subject need to be prioritised. Increasingly, teachers are ensuring that work is matched to the differing needs of pupils in their lessons. However, this practice is not fully consistent; some teachers are not as adept at making full use of assessment information about what pupils already know and are able to do. Most teachers use questioning well; this often draws the pupils into discussion. However, a few teachers do not use questioning well enough to gauge the extent of the pupils' understanding and then modify the lesson to ensure that they make good progress. The school has useful systems in place that help pupils understand how to improve their work, including targets in English and mathematics.

The school has successfully created a learning atmosphere in which pupils are confident and secure. The strong care provided for pupils has a positive effect on their personal development, which is good. Pupils enjoy school, are enthusiastic learners and behave well. However, they report they would like to have greater involvement in the decision-making processes of the school. 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information more consistently to provide a better match of tasks to pupils' ability
 - ensuring that explanations and feedback to pupils are clear and fully understood by them.
- Improve the leadership and management and provision of ICT.
- Involve pupils in the decision-making processes of the school more systematically.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

From a below-average starting point, pupils make good progress because they are well taught and are 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 who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because of the extensive support provided for them. A greatly increased focus on gearing teaching to learners' needs has secured good progress for most pupils. During this inspection, the progress

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made by all groups of pupils, including those from different ethnic heritages or at an early stage of learning English, was good in most lessons, and in some it was outstanding. As a result, attainment is rapidly rising.

Pupils' great enjoyment of their education is illustrated by the enthusiastic way they talk about all aspects of school life. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils behave very well and those who present challenging behaviour are helped to cope successfully by staff and pupils, who are very supportive of one another.

Consequently, by Year 6, pupils are sensitive, thoughtful and responsible young people. Members of the school council take their role seriously. They would like to be consulted more in the strategic decisions that the school makes. Attendance is satisfactory and improving; particularly noteworthy is the reduction in persistent absence which has been reduced as a result of the co-ordinated effort by a team of staff. Parents and carers report their children are much more eager to come to school. They attribute this to the improvements in the learning at the school.

The school works very closely with the children's centre on the same site to identify any emerging speech or communication difficulties so that support can be provided and referrals to a specialist service can be made promptly. Pupils support their understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle by participation in the range of clubs and physical activities on offer. There are good levels of racial harmony, and pupils respect the school's cultural diversity. Through good teamwork, the development of social and personal skills and good progress in basic skills, pupils are prepared well for the next phase in their education.

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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3

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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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?

Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and manage their classes effectively. They introduce lessons well, often making good use of ICT. They make the purpose clear, building well on previous learning. Teachers encourage pupils to share their ideas, and this helps them to develop their speaking and listening skills and articulate their thinking. The school is well resourced with support staff who make a good contribution to the quality of education. Classrooms provide the pupils with stimulating and well-organised conditions for learning. Expectations of what pupils should achieve are high; consequently, the progress that pupils make is rapidly increasing. Lessons are well planned, but the success with which these plans are implemented is sometimes hampered by shortcomings that curtail progress. For example, some teachers' explanations lack sufficient clarity to ensure that the pupils gain a very clear understanding of what they are learning.

The curriculum is based around themes that are designed to be relevant to pupils' lives and cultural backgrounds. This has been successful in enhancing pupils' motivation and skills. Additionally, the curriculum has a rigorous focus on literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils have sufficient opportunities to write in a range of contexts and to carry out investigations in mathematics and science. The curriculum is also enriched through a variety of additional activities in the arts and music, for example, as well as visits and visitors. There is a good range of strategies in place to support pupils who are falling behind and those who are learning English. The school is aware that improvement in the provision and leadership of ICT is needed.

Care, guidance and support are good and enhanced by the well-established links with a range of external agencies and with parents and carers. Staff know individual pupils well. An appropriate range of different intervention strategies are used to support pupils' different needs, including their social and emotional development.

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership provided by the executive headteacher is very strong and reflects dedication and commitment. He has quickly established his vision and leads the school in close partnership with a dedicated and talented leadership team to ensure that pupils develop a deep love of learning and school. The resources of the federation have been sensibly used to draw together a team of committed staff who now feel empowered to make improvements to the quality of provision. Of particular note is the way the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been developed imaginatively to provide a rich and stimulating learning environment for children. Senior leaders know the school very well and this is evident in the high quality of the school's own self-evaluation. This is comprehensive and rigorous, clearly identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

Senior and some middle leaders ensure robust and regular monitoring of teaching and learning, targeted support and coaching, and increasingly regular sharing of good practice. The development of a new system for monitoring pupils' progress, together with well-focused support to meet the needs of all pupils, is having a very positive impact on pupils' progress. Senior leaders have ensured appropriate training for staff, resulting in teachers having a clear understanding of the standards required for each National Curriculum level.

The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and has a sound understanding of the next steps for the school. They demonstrate a clear commitment to raising standards and a willingness to take part in training which will further enhance their role.

Procedures to ensure the safety of pupils meet government guidelines. At the time of the inspection, there were, for example, effective procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils through the checks made on all adults who work in the school.

The school is strongly committed to equality of opportunity and removing barriers to success. For example, nurture groups support and enable the most vulnerable pupils to make good progress from their starting points. Discrimination is not tolerated. Provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. There is a strong cohesive community within the school. However, senior leaders acknowledge that promotion of cohesion within the wider community is at an early stage. Parents and carers with whom HMI spoke report they feel welcomed and increasingly involved in the life of the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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

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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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start in the Nursery with skills and understanding that are well below those expected for their age. They quickly settle into the warm and welcoming learning environment. Parents and carers comment favourably upon the good links which exist between them and the school and which underpin the good provision for children's welfare from the time that they start school and throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.

They are well cared for and become eager and confident learners. Under good leadership, adults work together closely to ensure that children make a smooth transition from the Nursery to Reception. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, the lively curriculum provides children with varied opportunities, both inside and out, to learn through the direction of the adults and by choosing activities for themselves. Adults are now constantly helping children to develop their speaking and listening skills through skilful questioning. Children make good progress from their low starting points and are well prepared for the transition to the next phase of their learning.

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

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed by Ofsted for special measures monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so. The parents and carers with whom HMI spoke report they feel welcomed and increasingly involved in the life of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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.



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2 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Vauxhall Primary, London , SE11 5LG

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your school. As you know, I have visited your school previously and have always enjoyed talking to you. I shall not be returning to your school, because of all the improvements the school has made. I particularly enjoyed this visit and thought you would like to know what I liked about your school and how I thought it could be even better.

Many of you told me that you really enjoy school and you showed this by your good behaviour and hard work. The school is a happy place where you enjoy your lessons and get on well with each other. You are always polite and welcome visitors warmly into your school. You feel safe at school and know that if you have a problem there is always an adult to talk to. You are very proud of your school.

The school is working hard to make sure you all make good progress and you are now reaching higher standards in your work.

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.

I have asked your school to work on a few things to improve things even more by: making sure that there is a member of staff leading information and communication technology so that you have regular access to computers

ensuring that you are all regularly consulted and involved in the decision-making processes of the school

making sure that teachers give you work that is pitched at the right level for you - not too easy and not too hard!

ensuring you understand when teachers explain things and feed back to you.

I know that you will play your part in helping your teachers to keep improving the school and hope that you continue to enjoy coming to school, work hard and do well in the future.

Yours faithfully

Kekshan Salaria

Her Majesty's Inspector

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