

Myatt Garden Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100713
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	354521
Inspection dates	18–19 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Kevin Hodge

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	386
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jayne Day
Headteacher	Glenys Ingham
Date of previous school inspection	21 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 20 lessons and 10 staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at planning, monitoring information, information sent to parents and a range of pupils' past work. Inspectors also looked at 150 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and also those returned by staff and a sample of pupils. They met with governors, staff, and groups of pupils.

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

- the school's response to the recent dip in test results in Year 6
- how well pupils achieve in Years 3 to 6, particularly in their writing
- how senior leaders are improving aspects of the school, particularly community cohesion and teaching
- how well the school promotes care, guidance, support and curriculum provision.

Information about the school

The school is twice the size of typical primary schools. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average. The largest include those with a Caribbean and/or African heritage. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is well above average, although most are fluent. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. These pupils have behavioural, speech, language or specific difficulties. The school has awards for promoting pupils' healthy living and in promoting art and cultural work. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a purpose-built unit Nursery and two Reception classes.

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

2

Main findings

Pupils enjoy and benefit from the very wide range of opportunities provided in this good school. Most parents echo the enthusiasm shown by pupils, prompted by the excellent curriculum on offer and the very effective way that the school engages with parents and the local community.

Children start well in the Nursery and settle to school life quickly, aided by exciting activities pitched at the right level. This good start is continued in the Reception classes so that most reach, or exceed, the levels expected when they start Year 1. Pupils' good progress, including some excellent progress, continues in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is typically good through the school although it varies in quality and this accounts for some differences in the rate of pupils' progress. Writing has been a recent focus for improvement and although older pupils write with some confidence and flair, the quality is hampered by their weaker spelling and grammatical skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well, keeping up with classmates. Pupils in different groups, such as those from African or Caribbean backgrounds, now achieve better, making up for some past underachievement. By the time pupils leave, they achieve well in their academic and personal outcomes. Their attainment in basic skills, while rising recently, is broadly average.

The school promotes excellent levels of spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Not surprisingly pupils behave well as relationships in this socially and ethnically diverse school are very harmonious. Pupils have a high regard for each other, and their involvement in helping within the school and the local community is excellent. Their knowledge of others living much further from the school is not as well developed which limits the effectiveness of the school's promotion of community cohesion. All pupils really benefit from the excellent range of curriculum activities which foster brilliant artistic skills, sporting abilities and cultural experiences. A very wide range of extracurricular clubs, ranging from growing vegetables and learning Chinese to knitting and sport, broaden their experiences and enable pupils to have high levels of physical activity. The pupils respond extremely well to the school's promotion of healthy living. Senior leaders have a clear view of the school's strengths, but are also addressing areas requiring improvement, including those relating to the dip in test results last year. Initiatives to improve writing and promote community cohesion further have been started; however there is still more to do in both areas. Nevertheless, the school's good capacity to improve is underpinned by senior leaders, middle managers and governors using self-evaluation, which although occasionally on the generous side, accurately identifies weaker areas of provision to remedy. For example, the school is promoting the more effective use of assessment information, having identified inconsistencies in this

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area. The senior leaders have been particularly effective at promoting excellent partnerships with others to boost provision. Governors give good support and regularly visit the school to gauge how well improvements are taking shape.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and the consistency of pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 in the coming academic year by:
 - giving pupils more guidance on spelling and grammar to improve the quality of their writing
 - embedding the use of information on pupils' progress to pinpoint those lagging behind or those needing to be challenged further in their learning.
- Extend the pupils' understanding of those living much further from the school by:
 - extending links with another school in this country to more classes or in developing alternative links with other schools
 - building on the pupils' good class-based work on other countries by developing a more direct link with a community or school they study.

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

Pupils' good behaviour and enthusiasm help them reach particularly good levels in their artistic skills, sporting abilities and their information and communication technology skills (ICT). All groups of pupils achieve equally well. African and Caribbean pupils now achieve better as they were rightly identified as needing extra support. Class work helps motivate pupils' interest as the curriculum is so good. In Year 6, pupils provided sensible words and phrases to describe their feelings and moods, prompted by watching excerpts from Shakespeare's Hamlet. Younger pupils in Year 2 had a clear knowledge of similes and metaphors as they really enjoyed their imaginative story used well by teachers. Despite the complicated nature of the school site, pupils play safely at play and lunchtimes. Most say they feel safe within school, know who to go to for help and the □Myatt Mentors' are very well thought of by classmates. The school council likes its role and, according to other pupils, is very influential in shaping new initiatives such as recent significant playground improvements. Links with the local community are excellent as pupils regularly take part in extensive community events covering sporting, social and cultural events such as singing at the Millennium Dome. Pupils' preparation for their next school is aided by developing good social skills, gaining awareness of environmental issues and the secure levels of their basic skills. Pupils' attendance levels are average rather than good due to some specific pupils' absence levels. Recent efforts to boost the attendance of these pupils, aided by the school working closely with parents, are just beginning to improve them.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The vibrant and wide-ranging curriculum helps teachers plan exciting and interesting topics which range from studying Japanese art work to field work on the Greenwich peninsular. Pupils' comments, such as, 'I like doing lots of different topics,' and, 'I like school because I do lots of different things,' were typical. Excellent links with local schools and colleges help develop sporting, drama and musical activities while several residential trips a year broaden pupils' horizons. To help engage the interests of boys and some specific groups, relevant teaching materials have been introduced which reflect their cultural backgrounds and interests.

Typically good teaching makes the most of the excellent curriculum on offer in many lessons. Pupils' broader skills are very well catered for and recent dips in results for the oldest pupils in their English skills are just starting to be reversed. Increasingly pupils are benefiting from clearer marking and targets that pupils know and use to guide their improvement. There are some variations in the quality of teaching. In a very well taught lesson, pupils' mathematical knowledge and skill developed at a high pace as the teacher had excellent subject knowledge and demanded much of the pupils' thinking skills. In otherwise well-taught lessons, teachers' explanations are occasionally overly long or do not fully capitalise upon pupils' opportunities to contribute their ideas or demonstrate their understanding. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution, often helping those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to keep up with

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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classmates. The school's care and guidance to pupils are good and the support given to vulnerable pupils is often excellent. Induction arrangements and welfare routines are very well established. Vulnerable groups are identified clearly and recent efforts to ensure they reach their potential are starting to pay off.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders promote good levels of team work and, despite a number of staff changes which had an impact upon attainment levels, have maintained the positive ethos of the school and continued to drive the school to maintain its very good ethos. They recognised the decline in recent results and have set in place initiatives to reverse the trend to help it improve its overall effectiveness. Senior leaders have recently introduced new assessment systems which are yielding clearer information upon which to direct efforts for improvements and in providing more realistic information to inform their self-evaluation. The school's safeguarding arrangements are good, particularly those relating to the selection and vetting of staff. Governors' visits include scrutiny of safety issues. The school is proactive in undertaking risk assessments relating to its large site and is currently reviewing this aspect of its safety provision. Equal opportunities are promoted well in terms of pupils being able to participate equally in all activities and to eradicate discrimination. The school's closer examination of information to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they can now figures highly in school priorities. The very harmonious relationships evident within the school and in the local community are due to the excellent relationships the school has with the vast majority of parents, local colleges, other schools, sporting venues and cultural centres such as museums. While these are developed to a very good degree, community cohesion aspects fall short of being outstanding as pupils' knowledge and understanding of those people and communities much further from the school are not fully developed. Governors give good support, visit the school regularly and make the best use of the expertise of its members. Their willingness to meet parents, foster their involvement, seek their views and act upon them are strengths. Their new 'strategic group' promises to help the school focus upon longer-term priorities, but is a relatively recent initiative.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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	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

The Early Years Foundation Stage successfully lays the foundation for pupils' future learning. Good induction arrangements ensure children settle quickly into the well-run Nursery where activities are pitched at the right level. Relationships between adults and children are strong and teamwork is good throughout the Reception and Nursery classes. As a result, children are happy, feel safe and are keen to learn. They make up for their starting points, which are below expectations, so that by the time they reach Year 1 many are ready to access the National Curriculum, having made good progress in their learning. This is particularly noticeable in their language, personal skills and number knowledge, which are often weaker aspects on entry. In Reception classes, teaching provides structured activities to develop children's language, number and social skills. Teachers skilfully ensure a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children. However, occasionally there are insufficient interventions to extend learning when children are engaged in activities. Although staff make best use of the constrained space outside the Reception classes to make it inviting, more extended physical and some creative activities are less easy to plan for. Exciting displays fill the walls, stimulating children's imagination with a desire to learn and to talk about their surroundings. They enjoy making imaginary cakes for their party, making large three-dimensional objects outside or role playing in their play house. The good progress children make is indicative of the good quality of leadership and management of the setting, although assessment information is not always used to best effect in gaining a bigger picture of the children's progress over time to modify the school's provision. Welfare arrangements are very good and parents commented very favourably about how much their children enjoyed their start to school life.

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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 majority of those parents and carers returning questionnaires indicated their positive appreciation of the school. About half of those returned contained comments. Around two thirds of the comments were positive and the remainder contained areas for possible improvements. These parents often included positive comments as well. Parents liked the ethos of the school, the effectiveness of senior leaders and how much their children liked the school. The improvements suggested were varied, but there were some common themes such as the slower progress some pupils make, some site safety aspects, the amount of homework, communication and occasionally the varying quality of teaching. The inspectors investigated these concerns and did find some evidence that teaching and pupils' progress do vary in quality. The site does present challenges to keep it safe but senior managers are well informed and take all aspects of safeguarding very seriously. The level of homework appears to be typical of many schools, and while it is difficult to comment upon individual parents' experiences, the school engages with the majority of parents very well via websites, texting, regular newsletters, curriculum meetings, face-to-face meetings and whole-school events such as a health fair and international day.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Myatt Garden 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 150 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 386 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	92	61	55	37	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	91	61	58	39	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	76	51	67	45	6	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	80	53	58	39	10	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	96	64	50	33	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	75	50	67	45	7	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	69	46	78	52	3	2	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)	78	52	55	37	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	76	51	62	41	5	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	71	47	64	43	7	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	67	45	68	45	4	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	102	68	44	29	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	110	73	39	26	1	1	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.



20 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Myatt Garden Primary School, London SE4 1DF

I am writing to let you know about the findings from the inspection we carried out recently. The vast majority of your parents and carers think your school is good and we agree.

Here are some of the things we found out

- The youngest children settle in the Nursery and Reception classes well and are enjoying all of the activities that take place. They enjoy using their outside areas.
- All of you behave well and try hard in lessons.
- You reach the expected levels in your work when you leave and achieve particularly well in artistic and musical activities.
- You are excellent in keeping yourselves fit and in eating very sensibly.
- The staff really make your parents and carers feel part of what goes on in the school and your contributions to school and the local community are excellent.
- The range of things you do, such as French and sports competitions, sound exciting. Well done on winning the cricket trophy at Lords recently!
- The school helps those of you who sometimes find work difficult or have a particular physical difficulty to achieve well.
- The teaching is usually good which helps you to learn well.
- Most of you said that you can ask for help because staff care about you well. We agree with you!

We have asked the school to do three things to help it improve further

- Give those of you in Years 3 to 6 more help to improve your writing by helping you more with spelling and grammar.
- Use information on your progress to make sure that the work you are given always meets your learning needs.
- Develop more links with other schools in this country and abroad so you get to find out about other children who live in a contrasting area and may have different interests to you.

You can help too by continuing to get on really well with each other so your school remains a happy place to learn.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge

Lead inspector

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