

Ashburnham Community School

17 Blantyre Street, London, SW10 0DT

Inspection dates 25–26 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Outstanding senior leadership has secured significant improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- The executive headteacher has shared his considerable expertise very wisely. As a result, he and the excellent associate headteacher have very successfully built a team of highly skilled and extremely effective leaders. Together they are passionate about creating a school where aspirations for pupils and staff are high.
- Governors share the same exacting drive for excellence. They took decisive steps to improve their work following the previous inspection, developing into a very effective group. They play their part in supporting and challenging the school's work particularly successfully.
- The rich range of subjects taught in the school, and the additional activities and experiences that enrich it, are helping to ensure that pupils have an excellent understanding of the world they live in.
- Pupils love coming to school. They relish the different activities available and enjoy learning. Their behaviour is excellent at all times.
- The school strongly promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils get on very well together and show great respect towards the faiths and cultures of those from backgrounds different to their own. Racial harmony is a strength of the school. Pupils feel very safe in school.
- Overall, pupils achieve extremely well. Standards have risen considerably across the school. Pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is outstanding.
- Children in the early years classes settle quickly, enjoy learning and are well prepared for starting Year 1. Increasing precision and accuracy in planning their next steps is helping to make sure that they make the same excellent progress as pupils elsewhere in the school.
- Additional funds are used consistently well to help disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as, and often better than, their peers.
- Support provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is very effective; the same is true for those pupils who speak English as an additional language. As a result, these pupils make rapid progress.
- Teaching is outstanding. Rigorous checks by leaders, followed by training and development where needed, mean teachers and additional adults demonstrate high levels of subject knowledge.
- Teachers know their pupils extremely well and use this knowledge particularly well when planning work that motivates, engages and challenges pupils.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent. Teachers set very high expectations for both pupils and themselves, fostering an atmosphere where pupils flourish and are always trying to do their best.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. This included sessions in phonics (the sounds letters make), mathematics, reading, English and physical education. Many of the observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils about their work and the school’s work both informally and as a group. They observed pupils’ conduct during break and lunch times and between lessons. Pupils discussed their reading habits and read to inspectors
- Inspectors looked at samples of pupils’ work across a range of subjects and classes.
- Documents scrutinised by inspectors included the school’s own evaluation of how well it is doing, its plans for future developments and the management of teachers’ performance. They looked closely at the school’s records of performance, behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- The inspectors met with senior and middle leaders. A group of four governors, including the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, discussed their work with the lead inspector. She also held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- Using the online questionnaire, Parent View, inspectors considered the views of 29 parents. They talked to parents informally throughout the inspection and scrutinised the responses to the school’s own parental survey. Staff shared their views informally with inspectors throughout the inspection. Inspectors also considered their comments through the 24 staff questionnaires received.

Inspection team

Jacqueline Marshall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sharona Semlali	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Children attend full time in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Over three quarters of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a large majority of these speak English as an additional language. A higher than average number of pupils join the school part way through their primary education. Many of these pupils arrive with little or no English language skills and some have not had prior experience of schooling.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average, at twice the national figure. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided to give extra support to pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to those who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The executive headteacher is the headteacher of Fox Primary School, judged as an outstanding school by Ofsted. It is part of a teaching school alliance and centre for teachers' professional development. The school is led on a day-to-day basis by the associate headteacher. She is supported in this role by the assistant headteacher.
- Ashburnham and Fox schools currently form a 'soft' federation. They are currently in the process of discussing this becoming a more formal federation from September 2015.
- Almost all the staff have joined the school in the last two years.
- The school meets the government's floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching and achievement in the early years are of similar outstanding quality to that in the rest of the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- A team of senior leaders leads the school extremely well, having built a strong and committed staff team that is determined pupils achieve as well as they possibly can. Parents and the local authority unanimously agree that leadership is outstanding. Staff describe a school with a 'really buzzing, hardworking atmosphere' where they are 'so proud' and consider it a 'privilege to work here'.
- Following the previous inspection senior leaders lost no time in taking swift and decisive action to improve the quality of teaching. Staff benefited greatly from the expertise and support of Fox Primary School, an outstanding teaching school. Regular coaching and the sharing of what constitutes the best teaching enabled leaders to train a highly skilled set of teachers and teaching assistants. These same staff are now themselves able to successfully share their own considerable expertise, for example with newly qualified teachers who say they feel 'thoroughly supported' by their colleagues and the school.
- Leaders at all levels very thoroughly check and recheck on the effectiveness of teaching and how well pupils are learning. Observations in lessons, discussions with pupils, looking at pupils' books and scrutiny of information on pupils' progress are all part of identifying strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers receive very specific targets for improvement and first-rate training and guidance where needed as part of the management of their performance. These procedures are very rigorous and help leaders to make decisions to continually improve teaching and ensure pupils' progress is rising further.
- Middle leaders support senior leaders in the drive for school improvement very effectively. Those with responsibilities for subjects, in particular reading, writing and mathematics, know their areas especially well. The early years leader, who previously led the development of phonics teaching very well, is currently focused on leading improvements in teaching and learning in the early years. These leaders have honed their ability to check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their subjects, learning from the considerable experience and skills of senior leaders. As a result they now play an equal part in identifying what needs to improve, taking actions and checking that these have been successful.
- Senior leaders' and governors' commendable decision to employ additional qualified teachers has borne fruit. These staff demonstrate high quality teaching while being deployed to support groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged. Consequently, gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and their classmates have closed in most classes or are closing swiftly. Pupils of all abilities benefit from the same group of excellent staff on a day-to-day basis, ensuring a very consistent approach to teaching and the management of behaviour.
- A similar, very successful approach has seen funding used to appoint a permanent teacher for physical education. Regular assessment of pupils' catching or passing skills, for example, enables the most able pupils in physical education, as well as their less sporting peers, to receive targeted teaching. Pupils are encouraged to join after-school clubs or the very popular morning exercise club to develop their skills further. A wide range of sporting clubs are very popular and promote excellence as well as successfully developing pupils' awareness of a healthy lifestyle.
- A creatively planned and wide range of subjects ensures that pupils develop key skills, most especially in mathematics, reading and writing. They have many opportunities to practise these skills well in other subjects. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well promoted and this ensures that pupils are fully prepared for life in modern Britain. Visits from their member of parliament and to the Houses of Parliament help pupils gain a very good understanding of how government and the rule of law work. Staff promote British values including freedom, respect and tolerance and do not tolerate discrimination on any grounds.
- Leaders are passionate that Ashburnham pupils should have the same opportunities as other pupils nationally. In a recent 'aspirations week' pupils heard talks from lawyers, doctors, and veterinarians to name a few. Through this, their drive to achieve well, for example, 'because I need science to be a vet', and their own aspirations for their future career rose. The school seeks to ensure each pupil is able to benefit from all it can offer and plans inspirational visits and visitors in order to enhance and enrich learning.
- Safeguarding practices are effective throughout the school. Issues and concerns raised by the local authority are promptly incorporated into the school's policy. Leaders ensure that there is excellent understanding among all staff of these and other aspects of the school's work to keep pupils safe.
- The local authority now provides a light touch as a result of the improvements it has seen over the last two years. Following the last inspection it was instrumental in bringing together the two schools to share outstanding practice, provide training for governors and act as an external check on the school's overall effectiveness.

■ The governance of the school:

- Following the previous inspection, governors took the criticism of their effectiveness and used it to transform themselves into a highly skilled and very effective body. They sought national expertise in governance, as well as training to develop their own skills and now use these to great effect to support and challenge the school. They are fully supportive of the move towards federation as a means to strengthen the school's effectiveness still further.
- Members of the governing body visit the school very regularly, talking to pupils, visiting lessons to observe learning and looking at pupils' work to gain an insight into how the school is working. They then use this information extremely well alongside information on pupils' progress to probe and question leaders' actions to check the pupils are doing as well as possible.
- Governors receive thorough information on the performance of teachers and appreciate fully how the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils affect staff pay increases. They are very aware of what the school would need to do in the event of any underperformance. Governors are rigorous in how they check the school's budget. They are kept informed of how additional funds are spent and can describe the outstanding progress different groups of pupils make as a result of this spending.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school as well as during lessons is impeccable. They are courteous and thoughtful, treating each other and staff with respect. As a result there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the school, both indoors and outdoors.
- Corridors, classrooms and the outdoor areas are treated with care because pupils take great care of their surroundings. They wear their uniform with pride using it as a way of identifying with the school and its values. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and their work which they are keen to share with visitors.
- Attitudes to learning are excellent. Pupils' work on display and in their books demonstrates their pride and effort very well. They talk enthusiastically about what they are learning and are keen to challenge themselves and each other to do even better. Pupils of all ages try very hard to live up to the high expectations that staff set for them.
- The school's records show that any incidences of poor behaviour are rare. Staff use excellent strategies for promoting good behaviour which pupils understand and appreciate. On rare occasions, when it is necessary to take firm action to correct behaviour, they do so with marked effect.
- Pupils are eager to help others within and outside their school. On a recent visit to Whitstable pupils returned keen to raise funds for the Lifeboat Appeal as a result of seeing the impact of its work. Elsewhere 'young interpreters' use their own language skills to very good effect to help those pupils newly arrived at the school who are at the early stages of learning English. They are rightly proud that this helps pupils to settle quickly and make very swift progress in speaking English.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Staff receive regular training and updates on all aspects of safeguarding. Leaders very regularly discuss and check policies and procedures to keep pupils safe to ensure they follow the latest guidelines and issues concerning the local community. Child protection receives the utmost priority at all times.
- Pupils are very clear that they can trust any of the adults who work with them in the school to help if they have problems or do not feel safe. In and around school they are extremely aware of their own safety and that of others. Older pupils show considerable concern for the safety and well-being of those younger than themselves, such as when children from the Reception class joined others on the playground for the first time. They were concerned the younger pupils were not enjoying the experience. They decided themselves that they should create individual 'buddies' to ensure the Reception children felt safe as well as learning and participating in games and activities.
- Pupils are very aware of different forms of bullying, including racist, homophobic and cyber-bullying. They are totally confident that should it occur it would be dealt with very promptly but are equally confident that it does not happen in their school. Pupils respect each other's faiths, cultures and beliefs.

- Parents and staff overwhelmingly agree that the school keeps pupils safe and tackles any incidences of bullying well.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Pupils make outstanding progress because teachers have very high expectations of what their pupils can do and set work that helps them achieve this. Teachers' subject knowledge is very strong and they use this alongside their accurate understanding of pupils' abilities to plan lessons and activities that challenge pupils to do very well.
- Following the previous inspection teachers focused on eradicating any gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills as a result of previous weaker teaching. Leaders took the very successful decision to employ additional teachers to support identified groups of pupils, in particular any pupils at risk of falling behind. Their precisely targeted teaching of small groups is ensuring that these pupils make very good progress.
- Teachers develop pupils' mathematical skills very well. They ensure pupils have plenty of opportunity to practise new concepts before demonstrating they can use the new skills to solve problems. Increasingly teachers are questioning pupils further to explore how well pupils can explain why they have used a certain calculation or come to their conclusion. This is very effectively ensuring pupils have a deep understanding of mathematical ideas.
- Pupils really enjoy learning to read because teachers use a wide range of activities to develop pupils' ability to both read the text confidently and deepen their understanding of the text. Older pupils are able to refer knowledgeably to the text, for example, when discussing the similarities and differences between two of Charles Dickens' novels. Staff teach reading regularly and systematically in order to develop pupils' phonic and grammar skills. Excellent links between writing and reading enable pupils to understand just how their reading can help make their writing even better. In addition to this, visits from and to famous authors including David Walliams and Michael Rosen inspire pupils in both their reading and writing.
- Teachers' marking and feedback of pupils' work are very effective and provide pupils with very precise and helpful guidance. Pupils really appreciate the time they get to make any corrections or develop their work, benefiting greatly from additional adult input explaining where they went wrong or how they could improve. As a result they can easily describe the next steps they must take to improve their work.
- Teachers are very skilled in adapting questions to develop learning for pupils of different abilities. Information about what pupils can already do is used extremely effectively to plan lessons that pupils say are really interesting and exciting, inspiring them to want to learn more.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Overall, pupils from all backgrounds make outstanding progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as achieving extremely well in a range of other subjects.
- Standards are improving rapidly across the school. From the Year 1 phonics check where pupils achieved better than other Year 1 pupils nationally, to Year 6 where standards in 2014 rose to above the national average, pupils' achievement is rising quickly.
- Increasing numbers of the most able pupils are working at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. They make very good progress from their starting points because of high expectations from teachers who plan work that challenges and stretches them very effectively.
- Pupils in all classes in Key Stages 1 and 2 make excellent progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. Improvements to the quality of teaching are successfully increasing the rates of progress in writing so that they now match the excellent progress seen in the 2014 Year 6 tests in mathematics and reading.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their below average starting points. Increasing precision in planning their next steps is beginning to accelerate further the progress they make in all areas of learning. As a result more children now start in Year 1 at the levels expected than in previous years.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve extremely well, as do disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. All make outstanding progress from their starting points because of the level of high quality support they receive. They receive all possible help to achieve their learning targets and as a result become confident learners, very pleased with their levels of success. Those newly arrived at the school receive the same high levels of support and leaders check regularly to make sure they are quickly making the same rapid progress as their peers.
- The school's information shows that disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress in reading, writing and

mathematics. In most classes there is no gap between the levels they reach or their rates of progress and those of other pupils in their class; indeed, in many instances, disadvantaged pupils are doing even better than their peers. In the very few instances where a gap remains the individuals concerned are catching up quickly as a result of highly effective teaching and support.

- In the 2014 Year 6 tests, disadvantaged pupils attained at a similar level to their peers, in both the school and nationally. There was no negative gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others in reading and mathematics. In writing, disadvantaged pupils were behind by less than a term compared to other pupils nationally and just under two terms compared to other pupils in the school. Elsewhere in the school, disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress and, overall, are achieving as well as their classmates.

The early years provision

is good

- Very good leadership and management ensure that teaching in the early years is now consistently good and improving. The leaders' focus on accurately checking and assessing children's progress means staff are able to plan increasingly effectively for each individual's next steps. This is helping to target support and guidance more effectively to raise achievement further.
- Children start in the Nursery with skills and understanding that are generally lower than those typical for their age in most areas. This is particularly the case in their speaking and listening, mathematical, social and physical skills as well as their understanding of the world.
- Teachers plan for children to experience a wide variety of exciting activities that instantly capture their interest and help them to make good progress in their learning. A focus on encouraging children to explain their ideas more fully is successfully helping to develop their speaking and listening skills especially. The early years team is very good at encouraging children new to English to communicate so that they successfully progress in speaking English.
- Staff across the early years are very good at making sure the children's varied backgrounds and heritages are celebrated and respected. For example, Nursery children learn songs in French and Arabic and share books in each other's languages. Parents are increasingly encouraged to share their own cultures and expertise to help teachers.
- Many positive changes have occurred in the early years provision recently. The Nursery now benefits from its own building, providing well-resourced areas to support these young children's learning well. Outdoor areas are being improved and staff are aware that more work is required to ensure this reflects the quality of activities on offer indoors for children to learn from.
- The early years team works very closely with parents. They visit children in their homes before they start school and encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning. This is helping increasing numbers of children to reach a good level of development by the end of their Reception Year and they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children are kept very safe, both indoors and outdoors, and procedures and systems for safeguarding are checked robustly. Staff work well with small groups of children and individuals and model good behaviour and play. Consequently, children learn to behave extremely well, have very good attitudes and share resources sensibly. Adults enthusiastically share children's delight in activities such as painting the fence in the Nursery to brighten up the area and creating puppets following a puppet show by the class teacher in the Reception class as part of World Book Day.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	100477
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	453839

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	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jonathan Heawood
Headteacher	Paul Cotter (Executive Headteacher) Bella Street (Associate Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 April 2013
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