

# Inspection of a good school: Valley Primary School

Beckenham Lane, Shortlands, Bromley, Kent, BR2 0DA

---

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 March 2024

## Outcome

Valley Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Stephen Jackson. This school is part of Connect Schools Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Andrea Harris, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Scott Pinder. There is also an executive headteacher, Wendy Giles, who is responsible for this school and four others.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are joyful and prosper in this calm, warm and welcoming school. They are happy and kept safe. Pupils are confident that adults in school will help them if they have any worries or concerns. This comment from a parent and carer echoed those of many others: 'The school works over and above to support my child and I feel happy that the school has his best interests at heart'.

The school wants its pupils to 'learn together and aim high'. Pupils rise to these aspirations. They work hard in lessons. By the end of Year 6, they achieve standards significantly above those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's on-going work to strengthen the curriculum shows its commitment to making sure that pupils achieve just as highly in other subjects.

Pupils work and play together sensibly. Pupils talk about how behaviour rules in this school are clear. In and out of lessons, they follow the school rules: be ready, be kind and considerate, and be safe. The school does everything it can to support the few pupils whose attendance is not as high as they could be.

The school makes full use of the local community to provide high-quality wider opportunities to pupils, including through partnerships with sports and arts groups. Visitors from the emergency services, talks from religious leaders as well as school events celebrating different cultures all enrich pupils' experience of school.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school has planned a comprehensive curriculum which is carefully arranged. It is sequenced in a way that supports pupils to build on previous learning and remember knowledge over time and in a wide range of subjects. In science, for example, pupils in Year 1 explore the basic parts of the human body. This prepares them for when they study the digestive system in Year 4. By the time pupils get to Year 6, they have a deep understanding of how diet, exercise, drugs and lifestyle can impact on how the human body functions.

Pupils learn the curriculum well, especially in English and mathematics. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), whose needs are identified at the earliest opportunity. They are supported with appropriate adaptations in lessons. Subject matter is introduced clearly by staff. Teaching uses models and examples effectively to help pupils, including those with SEND, to understand and remember new concepts.

The school wants its pupils to develop a wide range of vocabulary to support their learning of key ideas in a subject. Children in Reception, for example, begin to understand the passage of time when they use words such as 'today', 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow'. They learn about how these words link to the concepts of past, present, and future. In turn, this increases children's preparedness to develop their understanding of chronology later on in the curriculum. Approaches to promoting pupils' language and vocabulary are working very successfully in many curriculum areas, such as geography. Sometimes, however, the curriculum in a few subjects does not ensure that pupils' understanding of subject-specific vocabulary is as accurate and secure as it should be. In these instances, pupils can find it harder to fully master and recall the important subject content set out in the school's curriculum thinking.

Pupils love reading and books. Their confidence in reading begins early as they learn phonics as soon as they start school. The school has trained all staff as expert teachers of reading. The phonics curriculum is delivered to a very high standard. Pupils practise their phonics knowledge often by reading books which contain the sounds that they already know.

The school's assessment information is used very effectively by leaders and staff to promote high-quality learning for all. In phonics, for example, pupils falling behind the programme are promptly identified. They receive effective support from knowledgeable staff, and they catch up quickly.

Disruptions to learning are rare. Pupils collaborate well with each other as they complete tasks in lessons. They follow adult instructions promptly. They display positive attitudes towards their learning.

The school offers many opportunities for pupils to develop beyond the formal, academic curriculum. Pupils are proud of their many leadership roles and how they get to have a say in school life, for example through voting for their school council representatives. Following thorough training, pupils become peer mediators, performing their

responsibilities effectively and respectfully. There is a wide range of after-school clubs on offer and the take up of these is high. The school uses resources and funding strategically to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have equal access to these opportunities.

The trust provides effective support and oversight. The local governing body performs its delegated responsibilities diligently. The school uses advice and purposeful challenge from trust experts, as well as collaboration with other trust schools, to improve the education that pupils receive even further.

Staff appreciate the training that they receive to develop their professional practice. They said that leaders are open and approachable. Leadership takes steps to streamline some of the processes in school to help to reduce workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Sometimes, the curriculum is not helping pupils to acquire a secure and accurate understanding of the subject-specific vocabulary needed to learn key concepts. This results in some pupils not knowing and remembering more of the intended subject content. The school should refine the curriculum so that it consistently supports pupils to gain a deep understanding of the subject-specific vocabulary that is necessary to meet the aspirational curriculum goals for all subjects.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2014.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137242
<b>Local authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10313896
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	438
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of Trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Scott Pinder
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Andrea Harris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephen Jackson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.valleyprimary.co.uk/">www.valleyprimary.co.uk/</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	20 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector also met with the chair of the board of trustees and the chair of the local governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were considered as part of this inspection.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first. The inspector also considered the views of parents through their responses to Ofsted's surveys.

## **Inspection team**

Edison David, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024