

Valley Primary School

Beckenham Lane, Bromley, BR2 0DA

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good		2
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Early years provision	Good		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Valley Primary School is a happy, hard-working and inclusive school.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well. They make excellent progress in mathematics. Attainment in mathematics is much higher than the national average.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make excellent progress. Pupils' needs are quickly assessed. Teaching assistants provide skilful and effective support.
- Children make good progress during the Reception year. They are enthusiastic about learning and happily join in with the wide range of activities.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. There is a strong culture of mutual respect between pupils and their teachers. Pupils are quick to support and praise each other for doing their best, and teachers and teaching assistants respect pupils' views.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide excellent leadership for the school. They have an accurate view of the school's performance and know precisely what needs to be done to move the school forward.
- Leaders have high expectations of staff and pupils and provide strong role models. Effective teamwork is at the heart of the school's success. Leaders have secured important improvements in aspects of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils learn a broad range of subjects, including a wide range of sporting, creative and musical opportunities, which contribute well to their enjoyment of school.
- The governing body plays an effective role in supporting and challenging school leaders. Governors are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and bring a wide range of skills to the school.
- The school's key values are widely promoted and understood. Relationships in the school are strong.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally the work set for the most able pupils is not sufficiently demanding.
- There are variations in the quality of marking between different subjects.
- Opportunities for teachers to learn from existing excellent practice in the school are not yet fully developed.
- Some aspects of pupils' understanding of internet safety are not as well developed as other aspects of safety.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or part-lessons. They also observed small groups of pupils working with an adult other than their teacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, members of staff, parents and pupils. A meeting was also held with a group of governors, including the Chair of Governors.
- Inspectors took account of 110 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). In addition, they considered the views expressed by a number of parents who spoke with inspectors informally at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and considered a range of documents and policies, including the school's improvement plan, information about pupils' progress, attendance records and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' work provided by the school, as well as looking at pupils' work in lessons. They also listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Richard Boswell	Additional inspector
Naomi Leaver	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Valley Primary is larger than the average-sized primary school. The school converted to become an academy school on 1 August 2011. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is average. . This is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action plus or with statements of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move teaching from good to outstanding by making sure that:
 - opportunities for teachers to learn from outstanding practice in the school are strengthened
 - the work set for pupils is demanding enough, particularly for the most able
 - the existing good-quality marking in English and mathematics is consistently applied in other subjects.
- Strengthen pupils' understanding about the risks of using the internet.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school has used rigorous analyses of performance information to accurately identify aspects of the school which need further improvement. Initiatives are carefully considered and well focused, with a sense of urgency about school development. This means that they are already making a difference and improving achievement.
- The headteacher has skilfully developed a team of knowledgeable and effective leaders who work together very well. Subject and other leaders play an effective role in supporting the school's development. They are very clear about what is working well in the teaching of their subject and where improvements can be made. They work closely with senior leaders to check the progress different groups of pupils make and to improve aspects of teaching.
- The school has introduced regular opportunities for subject leaders to work alongside senior leaders in observing and discussing the quality of teaching in the school. This approach is proving to be a powerful tool in developing subject leaders' role in school development.
- Leaders have improved procedures to manage staff performance, with a sharper focus on pupils' learning and progress. The school has identified that there is not enough sharing of existing outstanding practice in the school, but there are plans to develop this aspect of teachers' professional development.
- The school has secured improvements in the way subjects are taught. Teachers are encouraged to use their professional judgement to teach them in a lively and engaging way so that there are more opportunities for pupils to be creative.
- The range of subjects and topics promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. For example, pupils regularly learn about different faiths and beliefs and music is given a high priority, with many pupils learning to play an instrument.
- Sports funding is used effectively to increase pupils' participation and performance in sport. Parents spoke about their children's increased enthusiasm for sport. Pupils' participation in sports clubs and competitive leagues has increased. Leaders carefully check the difference initiatives are making to teachers' expertise in the teaching of physical education and their effect on pupils' motivation.
- The breakfast club provides a healthy and enjoyable start to the school day and the after-school club gives regular opportunities for pupils to socialise, exercise and play games.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know about the quality of teaching because they regularly visit the school and have discussions with leaders about what they have seen. They know about the management of teachers' performance and how pay is used to reward the best teachers. Governors have attended training which has helped them to get to grips with performance data. As a result, they have a clear view of how well the school is performing in relation to other schools nationally. They know how additional funds are spent and have a view about the impact these funds are having on pupils' achievement. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and meet statutory requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning and present their work with care. They behave extremely well during playtimes and when moving between lessons.
- Pupils are proud of their new school uniform and look after their surroundings. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in attendance rates, which are consistently higher than the national average.
- The school is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all its pupils. The school keeps detailed records of any behaviour incidents and these indicate that pupils' behaviour over time is good. Discrimination is not tolerated and incidents of bullying are rare. Almost all parents who responded to Parent View consider pupils to be well behaved in school.
- Developments in the way subjects are taught have helped to improve pupils' concentration and attitudes in lessons. Most pupils behave very well and are keen to get on with their work. However, behaviour is not yet outstanding because, at times, a very few pupils lose concentration and become restless during lessons. When this is the case, their learning is disrupted and their progress slows.
- The family worker plays a valuable role in supporting pupils' emotional well-being, behaviour and attendance. She works closely with the inclusion leader and attendance officer. This means that the school has a full picture of pupils' needs and a better understanding of how they can help. The team provides

highly effective support for pupils and their families.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Events such as 'anti-bullying week' contribute well to pupils' awareness of how they can help to keep themselves safe. As a result, pupils understand why bullying is wrong and about the different forms bullying can take. However, some pupils are not quite as knowledgeable about some of the risks associated with using the internet.
- Pupils of all ages take their responsibilities seriously and make an important contribution to the school community. For example, pupils commented on how helpful they find the 'anti-bullying ambassadors' if they have a concern. Pupils told inspectors that they are confident about talking to an adult if they have any worries and feel their teachers deal quickly with any issues.
- Almost all parents who responded to Parent View say that their children are safe in school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers plan lively, engaging and interesting lessons, so that pupils are excited about learning and want to find out more.
- Teachers use daily reading sessions very well to develop pupils' reading skills, with plenty of opportunities for pupils to talk about a wide range of texts. Teachers' high expectations mean that pupils are encouraged to reflect deeply about their reading. The school's library is well organised and efficiently run. It provides a welcoming area for reading, so that pupils regularly visit to browse or to change their books.
- Teachers are more confident about the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) than previously and regular phonics lessons are used well to target pupils' needs. The school is helping parents to support their children at home through successful initiatives such as workshops. The school has increased opportunities for pupils to use and practise their writing skills in different subjects and to write at length so that their writing is purposeful.
- Regular mathematics lessons are planned well to build on pupils' learning. Pupils are taught a range of calculation skills which they confidently use to solve mathematical problems and investigations. Pupils' work is neatly presented, so that pupils and teachers can clearly see the steps in pupils' working out. Teachers' feedback to pupils during lessons helps them to correct and learn from any mistakes or misunderstanding.
- Teaching assistants play a confident and effective role in the school. They provide quiet, unobtrusive and skilful support for pupils in lessons. As a result, the pupils working with them, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, feel secure and make good progress.
- Pupils from different ethnic groups are well included. A specialist teacher provides good support for those pupils who speak English as an additional language, and pupils are quick to support each other.
- At times, the work set for pupils is not challenging enough, particularly for the most able pupils, so that their progress slows.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' English and mathematics work and provide pupils with useful pointers about how they can improve their work. However, this good-quality marking is not yet used more widely in other subjects to increase pupils' progress.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils enjoy learning and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, standards are above average by the end of Year 6. Improvements in the quality of teaching during the past two years mean that pupils' progress is more even across the school than previously.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is outstanding. Pupils make very rapid progress to reach levels which are much higher than average by the end of Year 6, including the proportions attaining the higher levels.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. Pupils are interested in books and are able to discuss books confidently and articulately. Developments in the teaching of phonics have improved pupils' ability to read and write, particularly at Key Stage 1. The results of the Year 1 phonics check increased considerably in 2014.
- Pupils make slightly slower progress in writing than they do in other subjects. Pupils' attainment in writing dipped to average levels at the end of both key stages in 2013. The school has taken prompt action to reverse this situation. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are making faster progress as a result. Pupils' attainment in writing increased slightly in 2014, including the proportions of pupils attaining the higher levels.
- In 2013, disadvantaged pupils' overall attainment was below other pupils' nationally and those in the

school. They attained below other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics by about four months, and in writing by about 14 months. When compared with other pupils in the school, their attainment was about a year behind their classmates' in reading, 16 months behind in mathematics, and about 18 months behind in writing.

- The school has taken robust and successful action to ensure that additional funding is used more effectively, and disadvantaged pupils' progress is checked rigorously. As a result, these pupils are rapidly catching up with their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. School information indicates that the gap between their attainment and that of their peers, both nationally and in school, narrowed considerably in 2014.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve particularly well because teachers have the same high expectations of all pupils. Pupils' needs are identified early and the success of extra help is regularly checked.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, and those from different ethnic groups, make good progress and sometimes better. This is because teachers and leaders regularly check how well pupils are learning and make changes to the help provided if it is not working well enough.
- The most able pupils make good progress and achieve well. The work produced by these pupils is often of a very high standard and reflects the pupils' love of learning. Occasionally, however, they make slightly slower progress when the work set for them during lessons is not sufficiently demanding.

The early years provision

is good

- Warm relationships and clear routines help children to settle quickly in the Reception year. A strong focus on the development of reading and writing skills helps children to rapidly gain confidence in writing and in choosing and enjoying books.
- Children's skills and understanding when they join the Reception year are typical for their age. They learn quickly and make good progress so that, by the time they reach the end of the Reception year, most are well prepared for Year 1.
- Improvements in teaching, including better use of the outdoor area, mean that the proportions of children reaching expected levels by the end of Reception year increased substantially in 2014.
- Children thoroughly enjoy their time in school. Teachers provide a wide range of good-quality activities which interest and enthuse children. For example, during the inspection children eagerly joined an adult to go on a 'bear hunt', which caused much excitement and lots of purposeful talk.
- Children behave very well because they are interested and involved in learning. Adults help children to learn important social skills, such as sharing and being kind to each other, with sensitivity. As a result, children feel secure and comfortable about asking adults for help.
- Adults use questioning skills very well to check and add to children's understanding. For example, an adult helping children to make a sandwich used the opportunity to develop children's number and counting skills.
- The early years provision is well led and managed. Adults quickly identify children who are finding learning more difficult and involve specialist advice and support where this is needed. This means that disabled children and those who have special educational needs receive prompt help and make good progress.
- Leaders have a clear view of the contribution the early years makes to whole-school priorities. For example, they are sharply focused on developing writing skills and on closing the achievement gap between disadvantaged children and their classmates.

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	137242
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	449391

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	William Mitchell
Headteacher	John Brown
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 8460 1121
Fax number	020 8460 8121
Email address	admin@valley.bromley.sch.uk

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