

Lucas Vale Primary School

St Nicholas Street, London, SE8 4QF

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- This school is exceptionally well led by the executive headteacher and head of school. As a result of significant improvements since the last inspection, they have created a school that is outstanding in every aspect.
- Governors are highly effective in carrying out their roles and responsibilities. They have strongly contributed to the school's success.
- Children in the early years get an excellent start. They are extremely happy and enjoy a wide range of exciting and purposeful activities. They make rapid progress.
- Leaders have been highly effective in the way they have spent the pupil premium funding. The gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others have been successfully closed.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they are kept very safe. Attendance is above average because pupils love coming to school.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is excellent. Outstanding teaching enables pupils to make exceptional progress in all subjects.
- Pupils' attainment in national tests has improved rapidly since the previous inspection. It is now significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. Pupils appreciate the values of tolerance and respect for others and are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout the school. Some lessons were jointly observed with the head of school. Also, inspectors looked at a range of pupils' work from all year groups.
- Inspectors met with members of staff with key responsibilities, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- A brief visit was made to New Woodlands Primary School, which provides alternative provision.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of the school's documentation including information on pupils' attainment and progress, minutes of the governing body meetings, the school's own evaluation of its performance, and documents relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day and took account of the 23 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also considered the 45 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Sharona Semlali, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Fiona Robinson	Additional Inspector
Jackie Edwards	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Grinling Gibbons and Lucas Vale Federation, which is led by the executive headteacher. The executive headteacher is a national leader of education. She supports Adamsrill Primary School.
- The head of school for Lucas Vale took up her post in January 2012. There have been significant changes to the membership of the leadership team, governors and teachers since the previous inspection.
- There is a part-time, morning and afternoon Nursery class and three full-time Reception classes. There are three classes in Year 3 and two classes in all of the other year groups.
- Most pupils are from Black African and Caribbean backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for those in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with 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 in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school manages its own breakfast and after-school clubs.
- A few pupils attend New Woodlands Primary School as part of an alternative provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more effective use of the best teachers in the school to support those in the early stages of their careers so that pupils in all classes can continue to make exceptional progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The exceptional and visionary leadership of the executive headteacher, in partnership with a highly accomplished head of school, has helped to make Lucas Vale a very successful school. Improvements made by the senior leadership team, supported by a highly committed staff, since the last inspection have enabled pupils to reach the highest standards.
- Pupils' achievement is scrupulously tracked, giving the school's leaders a wealth of information to inform the next plan of action. This planning, based on a detailed knowledge of pupils, ensures that all pupils have an equal opportunity of making exceptional progress regardless of their starting points. The school does not tolerate any form of discrimination.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is excellent. All teachers are diligently held to account for their pupils' performance. They are given very precise areas to improve and they respond quickly. At the same time, the executive headteacher encourages new leaders through careful coaching and mentoring. Although newly qualified teachers are well supported, the school does not sufficiently utilise the skills of the best teachers in the school to support those who are at the early stages of their careers.
- The team responsible for pupils with special educational needs is exceptionally well led and uses data well to plan how best to support these pupils. The very strong working partnership with New Woodlands Primary School ensures that pupils registered at both settings do well.
- Excellent use and very careful monitoring of the pupil premium funding has helped disadvantaged pupils to make the same exceptional progress as their classmates. Part of the funding helps these pupils to extend their experience beyond the local area. As a result, they have excelled in writing because they can write about their first-hand experiences in different places. The school was awarded a prize and congratulated for its work with disadvantaged pupils by the Department for Education.
- The curriculum prepares pupils extremely well for life in modern Britain. This is strongly evident through the stimulating displays around the school. Pupils also have the opportunity to express opinions through the school advocates, helping them to learn about the values of democracy. The application focus weeks encourage pupils to apply the skills they have learnt in different subjects within a relevant and interesting theme. The curriculum provides ample opportunities for pupils to excel academically and technically and in sports.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is skilfully built into the curriculum. For example, their participation in the school's carnival and international days helps pupils to gain a good understanding of, and respect for, different religions and cultures. The excellent provision in the breakfast club helps to give pupils a very healthy, settled and prompt start to the school day.
- The primary sports funding has been highly effective in helping to increase teachers' skill and confidence in teaching sports. Pupils now enjoy high quality lessons in physical education and there has been an increase in the proportion participating in a wider range of after-school clubs.
- Staff go out of their way to foster positive relationships with parents and help them to support their children's education at home. Parents are particularly appreciative of the coffee mornings that are led by governors. They said that these occasions help them to get to know other parents.
- All aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures are rigorous and highly effective and meet statutory requirements. Governors are meticulous in their health and safety checks. The school responds promptly to any safeguarding issues that may arise.
- The local authority provides very light touch support because it is confident that this is an outstanding school that does not need any help.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is fully involved in the strategic direction of the school and in evaluating its performance. It has a good balance of experienced and new governors with a high level of expertise. Governors rigorously challenge the school and ask leaders pertinent questions about their decisions because they want the best for the pupils. Governors understand the school's performance data and know how Lucas Vale compares with other schools. All governors are linked to a particular year group and stay with them until the pupils leave the school. As a result, pupils know the governors extremely well. Governors know what the quality of teaching is like throughout the school. They ensure that the staff appraisal process sets high standards for the executive headteacher and all other staff. They insist that no financial rewards are given to teachers if they do not meet targets linked to pupils' attainment and progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They arrive promptly at lessons ready and eager to learn. Pupils are keen to tackle challenging work and they work extremely well in groups. Staff are excellent role models for pupils and have high expectations of them. As a result, pupils' attitudes towards teachers and towards each other are outstanding. Parents said that the school is a 'harmonious community'.
- Outside the classroom, pupils socialise well and enjoy each other's company, particularly at the picnic tables. Pupils from different age groups and backgrounds integrate extremely well.
- Pupils feel strongly that their opinions are valued by staff. Pupil advocates, who are representatives from older groups of pupils, present reports to the governors. Some of their responsibilities include helping with the summer fair and they were involved in decisions about the purchase of new equipment for the playground.
- The few pupils who attend the alternative provision are very settled and behave well.
- Attendance has significantly improved since the previous inspection and is now above average.
- All areas of the school are kept extremely tidy and pupils said that they are very proud of their school. Staff, parents, pupils and governors agreed that pupils behave exceptionally well.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Stringent checks are made on all visitors to the school and the nursery building and visitors are always shown what to do in the event of an emergency. All staff and visitors wear some form of identification so that pupils know that these adults have been appropriately checked.
- All training for staff in relation to child protection is up to date and they know how to keep pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism. As a result, pupils say they feel extremely safe.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of bullying. They were adamant that bullying is not tolerated and felt sure that if there was an incident, adults would deal with it promptly and effectively.
- The 'citizen today' course is effective in helping pupils to understand how to keep safe when using the internet. Pupils who become digital leaders advise others about how to stay safe when using computers. There are regular reminders in assemblies and in lessons about how to keep safe beyond the school day, such as information on 'stranger danger'.
- Pupils attending the alternative provision are also kept safe. They played well together in the outside area during the inspector's visit and were very well supervised.
- Parents, staff, pupils and governors feel that the school keeps pupils extremely safe.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding because teachers set work that is highly engaging. Their detailed planning meets the needs and interests of all pupils. As a result, pupils make exceptional progress.
- Teaching assistants make excellent contributions to pupils' learning. When questioning them, teachers and teaching assistants often do not take pupils' first answer but continue to probe their thinking until they reach the end of their logical reasoning. During the inspection, some teaching assistants successfully took leading roles in the classroom.
- The teaching of mathematics is excellent. Teachers make sure that pupils have lots of practice at applying their mathematical skills in other subjects. Writing is also extremely well taught. This is reflected in the high quality written work in pupils' books, in displays and in their final drafted pieces of work. The work scrutiny found that all teachers comply with the school's marking policy.
- Reading is strongly promoted throughout the school and pupils develop a strong love of reading. Teachers encourage pupils to read for a purpose, for example when they are researching as part of their topic work. Those at the early stages of reading are taught well to work out unfamiliar words.
- Teachers' careful planning makes sure that all groups of pupils are suitably challenged. They also devise stimulating activities to develop a range of different skills. For example, inspectors observed groups of pupils taking on different responsibilities in teams. This included being team leaders, resource managers or time-keepers. This exercise was highly effective in helping pupils to understand working to deadlines and the importance of organisation and was one of the many ways in which they are prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Teachers set stimulating homework that is well received by pupils and their families. For example, pupils

thoroughly enjoyed creating their own innovative and eye-catching projects at school and at home.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- In 2014, the proportion of pupils who made more than the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly above average. Pupils continue to make rapid progress in all subjects in every year group.
- Pupils' attainment in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 has continued to improve year on year since the previous inspection. In 2014, their attainment was significantly above average at the end of both key stages.
- In some year groups, disadvantaged pupils are outperforming their classmates. In 2014, this group did better than others in the school and nationally in all subjects. In reading, disadvantaged pupils were almost one and a half terms ahead of other pupils nationally and almost one term ahead of their classmates. In writing, they were just over one term ahead of others nationally and just over half a term ahead of their classmates. In mathematics, they were just over one and a half terms ahead of others nationally and about half a term behind others in the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least good progress from low starting points. This is similar to that of those pupils attending the alternative provision. The needs of these pupils are assessed regularly and excellent links have been made with external agencies for support and advice when needed.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers. Teachers act as good role models for these pupils by showing them how to construct language when they talk and all classrooms display a variety of languages.
- The school caters extremely well for the most able pupils. Strong links with Goldsmiths University and student engineers from Rolls Royce have helped to broaden their confidence and experience. The most able pupils in Year 5 coached and supported pupils in Year 2 as they competed in, and won, the Lewisham Mathematics Challenge. The proportion of pupils achieving the highest Level 6 in mathematics and writing in 2014 was above average.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children make fast progress in relation to their starting points in the Nursery and Reception classes. They are extremely well prepared academically, socially and emotionally to start Year 1. All groups of children, including those with special educational needs and those at the early stage of learning English, make excellent progress that leads to outstanding achievement.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is outstanding. Teachers' planning is highly creative and responsive to all children's needs. Teachers have created a highly stimulating environment and a rich curriculum that captures children's interests and imagination. For example, at the time of the inspection, a combination of well-planned resources and clever questioning from the teachers helped children to experience in their imaginations an aeroplane journey to Sri Lanka. They even made their own passports and completed safety checks on the imaginary aircraft.
- High levels of care ensure that children feel extremely safe at all times. Children develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and manage risks. Children's behaviour is exemplary because they are highly engaged in, and motivated by, their learning and staff have high expectations of them.
- The leadership of the early years provision is outstanding. The early years leader has established highly supportive relationships with parents. Workshops for parents take place regularly and there is good participation in the reading mornings. The early years leader has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision.

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	100695
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	448167

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	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Smith
Executive Headteacher	Cynthia Eubank OBE
Head of School	Tina Harracksingh
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 March 2010
Telephone number	020 86924660
Fax number	020 83058619
Email address	admin@lucasvale.lewisham.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

