

Prendergast Vale College

Elmira Street, Lewisham, London SE13 7BN

Inspection dates

15—16 December 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders, managers and governors have not sustained good teaching, pupils' good behaviour or good outcomes since the previous inspection.
- The school is not improving securely because in Years 7 to 11, leaders, managers and governors have not tackled effectively the key areas for improvement from the last inspection.
- Leaders have an over positive view of the quality of teaching, pupils' outcomes and behaviour in Years 7 to 11.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and well-being require improvement. In Years 7 to 11, their behaviour varies from lesson to lesson. Pupils do not have consistently good attitudes in the classroom and do not always settle quickly to learning.
- The atmosphere around the school is not always calm in the Key Stage 3 and 4 areas.
- When leaders deal with some incidents of bullying in Years 7 to 11, particularly name-calling, they are not always effective in ensuring that it stops quickly.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable between subjects and teachers, and requires improvement. Teaching in Years 7 to 11 is not always effective in maintaining pupils' motivation and holding their interest.
- Pupils' outcomes require improvement. In Years 7 to 11, leaders have not made sure that all groups of pupils make strong progress. Disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are behind the others in Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Governors do not hold leaders well enough to account. There is insufficient challenge over the performance of different groups of pupils in Years 7 to 11.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the early years make a good start to their primary education. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education when they move to Year 1.
- Leaders, managers and governors have made sure that pupils in Years 1 to 6 continue to behave well and make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 7 to 11 so that it is consistently good or better, by making sure that teachers:
 - engage pupils so that their levels of concentration and enthusiasm are consistently strong
 - set pupils appropriately demanding work for their abilities
 - have consistently high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour in lessons
 - provide pupils with feedback in line with the school's policy, and check that it is helping them to improve.

- Urgently make sure that new approaches to managing behaviour in Years 7 to 11 are applied consistently by all staff so that unsettled and disruptive behaviour in lessons and around the school are eradicated.

- Make sure that any instances of bullying are dealt with robustly and are stopped swiftly so that pupils have complete confidence that staff will always take effective action.

- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, in the secondary phase by making sure that:
 - leaders' actions to improve teaching make a greater difference to positive outcomes for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs
 - leaders place greater emphasis on pupils' outcomes when they judge the quality of teaching
 - governors hold leaders sharply to account so that improvements are secured rapidly.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders, managers and members of the governing body have not maintained the school's good overall effectiveness since the previous inspection. Leaders have not made sure that expectations of how well pupils should behave in Years 7 to 11 are consistently high enough.
- Senior leaders judge behaviour to be better than it is. As a consequence, leaders and managers place insufficient priority on improving behaviour in Years 7 to 11 and disruptive behaviour has not been eradicated.
- Although leaders have improved systems for managing behaviour in Key Stages 3 and 4, new approaches have not led to consistently good behaviour in all lessons and around the school. Leaders and managers have not made sure that all staff follow the school's policies and procedures with unwavering consistency. As a result, sometimes pupils seek to take advantage of weaknesses in applying the rules. At other times, some pupils feel frustrated when teachers deal with similar issues in different ways.
- Leaders and managers have not sustained consistently good teaching and pupils' good progress in Years 7 to 11. Leaders check the quality of teaching and use the information to identify where teaching can improve. However, leaders are not always rigorous enough in measuring teaching by the impact it has on pupils' learning. Evaluations of teaching over time in some subjects are too positive. Professional development and performance targets have not been fully effective in driving rapid improvements. Variability in teaching remains, including in selecting suitably demanding work and in following the school's agreed policies on providing pupils with feedback.
- Leaders have been successful in maintaining consistently better teaching in Years 1 to 6 and in classes in the early years. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and pupils make good progress. Pupils' work in books shows effective learning and it is neatly presented. Outcomes for pupils in these phases of the school are strong.
- The curriculum is appropriately planned and provides pupils with a broad and balanced range of subject choices. There is a very wide range of extra-curricular clubs including debating, cooking, table tennis and art. Pupils have opportunities to take on leadership roles, for example as part of the planning committee for the Christmas fair. High-quality art work shows pupils' enjoyment of the arts is effectively fostered through the curriculum. Through participating in whole-school drama productions and music performances, pupils' confidence and increased self-esteem are encouraged.
- The curriculum is well designed to help pupils develop a clear understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils in Year 6, who were learning about the rights of individuals, thought hard and reflected carefully on their understanding of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is fostered well. Across the school, pupils' work shows they are encouraged to empathise with others and appreciate a wide range of cultures. In food technology, pupils explore cultures through the variety of food and meals they prepare. Listening to talks given by visitors to the school and attending exhibitions help pupils develop respect for and understanding of the lives and experiences of others.
- The school uses additional funding with varying success. Disadvantaged pupils in Years 7 to 11 are not making consistently strong progress compared with the others in order to close gaps in attainment swiftly. In the early years, additional funding provides additional teaching staff as well as support to develop children's communication, language and literacy skills. In Years 1 to 6, leaders have used the funding to successfully tackle gaps in the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.
- The physical education and sport premium funding for primary schools is used well to raise standards and participation rates for all pupils in the primary phase. Pupils benefit from specialist sports teaching as well as popular extra-curricular clubs including in dance, gymnastics and multi-sports activities. Through working alongside specialist sports coaches and visiting dance instructors, teachers and additional adults help make sure that good sports teaching is sustained.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors do not always challenge leaders or hold them sufficiently to account in order to secure rapid improvements where they are most needed. Governors recognise the strengths of the school and are clear that the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes are stronger in the primary years than in the secondary phase. The governing body is aware that pupils' behaviour should be better in the secondary phase, for example, at lesson change time. They know that pupils' progress in Years 7 to 11 is not strong enough. Governors are aware of the gaps in performance between disadvantaged pupils and the others

and have checked that the school has put specific strategies in place to support eligible pupils. However, members of the governing body have not made sure that leaders have addressed these key priorities for development sufficiently rapidly.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Procedures for keeping pupils safe are thorough, up to date and well managed. Staff are appropriately trained and know what action to take to keep pupils safe in different situations that could arise. Training for staff helps make them alert to warning signs that a pupil may be at risk of possible harm from radicalisation, female genital mutilation or child sexual exploitation. The school works closely with specialists outside the school and parents in order to provide the support selected pupils require to keep them safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching is variable throughout Key Stages 3 and 4. It is variable between subjects and teachers. Teaching requires improvement because it does not ensure that pupils achieve consistently well over time. The school has an increasingly sharp focus on the quality of teaching and a programme of training for staff. Pupils' progress is checked frequently. However, variability in the quality of teaching and pupils' work remains because in some subject areas actions to improve weak teaching have not secured improvements rapidly enough.
- When subject work does not reflect pupils' interests or motivate them to work hard, some pupils lose concentration and do not try to produce their best work. Some teachers' expectations of the amount of work pupils complete or the quality of their written presentation are not consistently high. This means that in some subjects, when pupils produce poor quality work they are not required to do better.
- Teachers' feedback on pupils' work in the secondary phase is of variable quality over time and does not consistently follow the school's policy. As a result, pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills further.
- Teachers do not always make effective use of assessment information to set tasks that are suitably demanding to deepen pupils' knowledge and increase their skills swiftly. When all pupils complete the same work despite the range of pupils' abilities, learning is not deep or consolidated. In some subjects such as science, teaching assistants work closely with all groups of pupils. They support pupils well so that their learning moves on swiftly.
- Better teaching in Years 1 to 6 helps pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers plan interesting tasks that capture and hold pupils' interest, and build on what pupils know and need to learn next. For example, pupils in Year 4 listened carefully to the teacher's advice and guidance before settling to work quickly on a writing task. Pupils in Year 2 making Christmas hats used their knowledge of figures of speech when the teacher challenged them to suggest names for their hats.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement overall. Pupils' attitudes to learning vary across the school. In some lessons in Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. In other lessons, pupils' show poor attitudes to learning such as not following teachers' instructions, responding slowly to teachers' requests or not getting on with the work teachers set. Not all pupils are ambitious for themselves to achieve well.
- Some pupils in Years 7 to 11 do not have enough pride in their work. In some pupils' books, presentation and handwriting are untidy or there is graffiti in exercise books. Some pupils do not make sure that they bring all the equipment they need with them to lessons in order to be successful learners.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying and what does not. Discussions, for example, in assemblies and during anti-bullying week, help pupils understand the effects of bullying. Pupils say that there is some bullying, particularly name-calling. Pupils in the secondary phase are not fully confident that leaders and staff always take consistent and effective action that succeeds in making sure any instances of bullying stop quickly.
- In the primary phase, pupils are enthusiastic learners and are keen to do well. They follow teachers' instructions readily and no time is wasted when they move from one activity to the next. Primary phase pupils are typically motivated to complete tasks carefully and present their work neatly. Primary pupils say

that any incidents of bullying are rare. They say there is occasionally some name-calling but they are certain teachers will deal with this effectively should any problems occur.

- Aspects of careers guidance are strong, such as opportunities for all pupils from Years 7 to Year 11 to participate in work experience. Able pupils are encouraged to aspire to continue their education at university through links with a local higher education institution.
- Pupils' personal development and emotional well-being is fostered through opportunities to attend counselling sessions and talk through any concerns they may have with trained counsellors. Pupils are keen to take part in physical activities to keep themselves healthy, for example older pupils particularly enjoy playing table tennis at breaktime. Younger pupils speak with confidence about making healthy food choices in order to lead healthy lives.
- Attendance rates are rising. The school works hard to make sure the whole school community is clear why attending school regularly and not missing valuable learning is important.
- Leaders check daily the attendance and behaviour of pupils at alternative provision to make sure they attend regularly and benefit fully from courses specifically tailored to their needs. The school's records show that any absence is followed up rigorously.
- Pupils are encouraged to understand how they can take positive action to keep themselves safe. Talks on gang culture, visitors from the emergency services and debates on issues such as extremism provide pupils with relevant information about the steps they can take to avoid risks.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement overall because it is too variable across different phases in the school. Leaders have not taken effective action to tackle the behaviour of pupils in Years 7 to 11 who are not well motivated to learn in some subjects. In Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils are sometimes slow to settle, take too long to respond to staff's instructions and work with insufficient urgency to complete all the work they are set.
- Sometimes older pupils lose interest when lessons are not sufficiently engaging. They stop paying attention and start chatting. Low-level disruption, a priority for improvement at the time of the previous inspection, continues to disturb the flow of learning in some classes.
- New approaches to tackling behaviour have been introduced this term. These have reduced the number of fixed-term and internal exclusions between the first half term and the second. However, leaders have not made sure that all teachers follow the school's new systems and procedures consistently to maintain high standards of behaviour in Key Stages 3 and 4. For example, talking in lessons and off-task behaviour are sometimes left unchallenged.
- During lesson change times, some pupils are noisy and need reminders from staff to move sensibly and quickly to the next lesson. Sometimes pupils do not show respect for the school's resources by making sure that the classrooms and communal areas are kept free from litter.
- Younger pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and friendly. Respectful relationships are promoted strongly so that all pupils get on well together.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes for pupils are too variable across the school and require improvement. Pupils do not make strong progress in the secondary phase in key subject areas, including English and mathematics, because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is uneven.
- The strengths in pupils' outcomes identified in the last inspection have not been sustained. The school's assessment information and work in pupils' books show rates of pupils' progress in Key Stages 3 and 4 are variable between subjects and groups of pupils. This variability includes underperformance of key groups. These groups include disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as disadvantaged pupils. Able pupils make the fastest progress, but they are not always given demanding work that challenges them to make even more rapid progress.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision benefit from sessions tailored to their specific needs that help them to develop their personal and social skills, basic literacy and numeracy.
- Because this is the first year the school has pupils in Year 11, it is not possible to compare pupils' attainment and progress with national averages across a range of GCSE examinations. However, the school's assessment information shows pupils' progress overall is not sufficiently rapid to close the gap between

pupils' in-school standards and the school's ambitious targets.

- Pupils in the primary phase make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Provisional results in national assessments at the end of Year 6 in 2015 suggest pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was the highest for the last five years. Pupils are well prepared to start secondary school at the end of Year 6. Outcomes for able pupils are strong. A higher proportion of pupils attained above average standards when compared with the national figures, particularly in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs made similarly strong progress from their starting points as a result of the support they receive in the primary phase. Disadvantaged pupils made equally good progress to the others in reading, writing and mathematics. Gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and the others closed in literacy and narrowed in mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 6 were a term behind the others in mathematics and there was no gap in reading and writing.
- Pupils make good progress in phonics (the link between letters and sounds that they represent) and enjoy reading. In the Year 1 phonics screening check, a similar proportion to the national figures attained the required standard.

Early years provision

is good

- Children make good progress in the early years provision as a result of good teaching. They are well prepared for the start of Year 1 by the time they leave the early years provision. Leaders have been successful in making sure that the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year is above the national average. Additional funding is used carefully for additional sessions to help close the gaps between disadvantaged children and the others.
- Teachers plan interesting activities that capture children's interest so they are keen to learn. Children in Reception working with an adult were practising literacy skills through writing greetings in Christmas cards. In Nursery, children enjoyed using a variety of resources to learn how to wrap presents. Adults support children's learning well and promote children's speaking and listening skills through discussions and questioning. They encourage children to think hard and make decisions for themselves.
- Children work and play well together in the inside and outside areas. They develop positive personal and social skills and behave well. For example, at snack time in the Reception class, children sensibly help one another to put their fruit peelings into the waste bin. Visits to the school before they start help children to settle readily when they join the school.
- Parents are encouraged to spend time regularly at the start of the day in the Nursery and Reception classrooms with their children. Workshops for parents support them well in helping their children's learning at home
- Observations of children's learning are detailed and record the steps that children make in building their skills. However, occasionally the information gathered is not used consistently enough to plan the next steps in children's learning so that they make faster progress.

School details

Unique reference number	135843
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10010135

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	All-through
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3—16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	735
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christopher Barrow
Headteacher	David Sheppard (executive headteacher) Paul O'Neill (headteacher)
Telephone number	020 8297 3540
Website	www.prendergast-vale.com
Email address	s.halm@prendergastvale.com
Date of previous inspection	18—19 September 2014

Information about this school

- The primary phase is of average size compared to primary schools nationally. There is one class in each year from Years 1 to 6 except in Year 2 where there are two classes.
- The secondary phase is smaller than the average-size secondary school. There are four classes in each year in Years 7 to 11. The school has pupils in Year 11 for the first time this academic year. Children attend the Nursery part time, either in the morning or the afternoon. Children in the Reception class attend full time.
- The school uses six alternative providers for a very few selected secondary-aged pupils. These are: Charlton Athletic Charitable Trust; Young Lewisham Project; Lewisham Young Women's Resource Project; Abbey Manor College; New Woodlands and Lewisham Southwark College.
- The school is one of three schools in the Leathersellers' Federation of schools. It opened in 2011 on the former site of Lewisham Bridge School. There have been no pupils in Year 11 before this year, so it is not possible to evaluate the performance of the secondary phase against the government's floor targets. The primary phase meets the current government floor standards.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 62 teaching sessions across a wide range of subject areas in all key stages. A few visits to lessons were conducted together with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the headteacher, senior and middle leaders. Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in lessons and around the school, and looked at work in pupils' books. They also met with groups of pupils from Key Stages 3 and 4, and listened to Key Stage 1 pupils reading. Inspectors met with a representative from the local authority and spoke to the Chair of the Governing body by telephone.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by the school, including assessment information, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's action plans and self-evaluation reports. The school's records relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- There were too few responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, for the inspection to take them into account. Inspectors considered the school's analysis of a recent survey of parent views and of pupil views.
- The inspection was carried out as a result of complaints received by Ofsted. The complaints themselves were not investigated but the inspection team explored the wider concerns surfaced by the complaints.

Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Carmen Rodney	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kirstie Fulthorpe	Her Majesty's Inspector
Martin Roberts	Ofsted Inspector
Jeffery Quayle	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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