

# Valentine Primary School

Valentine Avenue, Sholing, Southampton, Hampshire SO19 0EQ

## Inspection dates

9–10 November 2016

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not ensured that pupils make good progress in key stage 2 and that they are well prepared for their next stage of education.
- Leaders do not use self-evaluation rigorously enough to identify how to improve pupils' progress quickly.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good. Teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough and vary from class to class. Often, the most able pupils find the work too easy.
- Since the last inspection, the school has expanded. This process has taken time to complete and leaders have not yet secured good outcomes for pupils when they leave in Year 6.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not make enough progress from their starting points. Their achievement is below that of other children.
- Staff do not consistently follow the school's policy for helping pupils to be aware of what they may need to learn next.
- Subject leaders do not oversee or check teaching and pupils' learning effectively. They do not evaluate how well different groups of pupils make progress.
- Staff do not consistently expect that pupils' written work is well presented.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the early years as activities are well planned. The teaching of phonics is good. Pupils in Year 1 have good reading skills.
- Pupils behave well. They feel very safe in school and attendance is above average. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are good. Staff are particularly good at helping pupils develop secure relationships.
- The headteacher has led staff and pupils skilfully in forming a new school community who work well together.

## Full report

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, by:
  - improving the rigour of self-evaluation to help identify those actions that will improve pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6
  - ensuring that subject leaders are more effective in their roles.
- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes so they are consistently good or better, by:
  - ensuring that all teaching challenges pupils' learning, especially for the most able, so that pupils achieve as well as they can
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do, regardless of their starting points
  - teachers giving pupils effective guidance in how to improve their work
  - teachers having high expectations of pupils' writing abilities, handwriting and presentation.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have not secured sufficient improvement to ensure pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are good. In part, this is because recent changes in bringing two groups of staff together have taken time to complete.
- The headteacher and her senior team evaluate teaching and ensure that pay and promotion are linked to performance; however, this has not ensured that teaching is consistently good or that pupils' progress compares well to similar pupils across the country.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is not rigorous enough. Leaders carry out regular checks on how well teaching is improving learning. Sensibly, they check a wide range of pupil information. Inspectors agree that there has been improvement, but this has been slower than the school believes. Leaders' judgements about the impact of their actions are not based clearly enough on how well pupils are progressing from their starting points.
- There have been a number of changes in leadership roles. Subject leaders have expertise and enthusiasm for their subject responsibilities. However, they do not effectively check on how well pupils make progress or how well lessons are taught.
- The support from the local authority has been variable because a lack of focus on the progress of pupils across the school has limited their ability to influence greater improvement.
- Leaders have not been successful at using additional funding to diminish the difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils at the school and their peers nationally. Funding is used to develop a range of personal and educational opportunities. These include additional learning support, educational visits and provision in the breakfast club. As a result, current disadvantaged pupils are making better progress and they are beginning to catch up quickly with their peers in school.
- Since her appointment, the headteacher has skilfully brought everyone together as a team with a shared vision for success. Staff are enthusiastic and reflect the energy of the senior team's determination to improve. All staff have a clear understanding of the goals which the school aims to achieve and they feel supported working in the school.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is effective in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The curriculum is enhanced by music, Spanish and outdoor learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about investigations in science, for example, and they enjoy developing their curiosity of the world around them.
- Adults are positive examples as they show empathy, respect and kindness. As a result, pupils are considerate and thoughtful. They have extremely positive relationships with adults and one another.

- Pupils' understanding of fundamental British values of democracy, respect and the rule of law is good. Pupils are encouraged to value diversity and to respect others. For example, the school takes positive steps to widen pupils' understanding of different beliefs and helps to prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- There is a clear commitment to equality and ensuring that there is no discrimination. All pupils, whatever their ability, background or beliefs have the opportunity to take part in the school's activities.
- The school uses the additional sports funding effectively. There is a wide range of clubs and staff sport training. The school provides activities that include football, bench ball and gymnastics. Many pupils enjoy attending these activities and this helps promote healthy lifestyles for all.
- The school's breakfast club and after-school club are well led and managed.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are committed to the schools' success and visit the school to talk to pupils about their work.
- Governors bring a range of expertise and experiences to the school. The full governing body knows that the provision is not yet good. Governors ask challenging questions at meetings, reflecting their determination to seek better outcomes for all pupils.
- Governors have worked well with school leaders and have supported them with improvements to behaviour and safety, as well as communication with parents.
- Governors are fully aware of the management of teachers' performance and this helps to not only reward better teaching, but also to ensure teaching is not inadequate.
- Governors carefully monitor the use of additional funding, both for pupil premium and the sports grant. Governors ensure that the pupil premium funding is beginning to diminish the difference in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils. However, they recognise that there is still more to do to ensure that they compare favourably with other pupils nationally and between different groups in the school.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff are routinely trained in safeguarding procedures and know how to keep pupils safe. Staff have a good understanding of how to identify and protect pupils who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism. Members of the governing body attend training to make sure that they are well informed about current safeguarding training. The school sensitively deals with parents and families that may need extra support and advice. There are effective relationships with other agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and their welfare needs met well. Parents and staff agree that the school keeps pupils safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Requires improvement**

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because they are not consistently good in all classes. As a result, pupils' progress is inconsistent.
- Teaching does not provide tasks that offer sufficient challenge, especially for the most able. This is because some teachers' expectations are not high enough, especially in key stage 2.
- The most able pupils do not make as much progress as they should because the work provided for them is often too easy and provides too little challenge. Work in pupils' books shows that the most able pupils often complete the same work as other pupils and this limits how much they can achieve.
- Most teachers follow the school's marking and feedback policy. The quality of support varies from class to class and from subject to subject. Some feedback enables pupils to understand how they are achieving; however, pupils are not consistently clear how to be successful in other subjects.
- Teachers' expectations of the pupils' presentation skills are inconsistent and pupils do not always use their developing handwriting skills in their everyday written work.
- The teaching of mathematics is not yet consistent throughout the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is variable but leaders have identified this as an area requiring more improvement and have put in place a range of training to address this. Early indications show that these strategies are having a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. As a result, a solid foundation is built, from which pupils can develop into confident, fluent and expressive readers. Teachers and support staff use a range of strategies to instil a love of reading and these help develop pupils' skills in reading for meaning and comprehension. One child said, 'I love reading.'
- Good teaching in the Reception classes ensures that children get off to a good start. Activities are well planned to develop their knowledge, skills and routines. These help children to become independent and learn confidently.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and are particularly effective in supporting disadvantaged pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are taught well. Teachers work closely with support staff to ensure that pupils' needs are met.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Supporting the personal development of pupils is at the heart of the school's work. All pupils, including those whose circumstances mean they are disadvantaged, are treated as individuals and their specific needs are well supported. One parent said, 'The school looks after my child well.'

- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They know that name-calling, inappropriate language or any form of discrimination are not acceptable. They say that they feel very safe at school. They told inspectors that on the few occasions bullying occurs, staff deal with it quickly.
- Pupils are very knowledgeable about how to stay safe, including road safety, fire safety and safety when using the internet.
- Discussions with staff who support pupils with additional needs show that the school has effective links with external agencies and is very active in supporting children and families who need additional help.
- While most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning through their engagement in lessons, this is less evident in the pride they take in their work. Pupils' application of correct grammar, punctuation and spelling and the quality of their handwriting and presentation varies considerably.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school manages behaviour well. Since her appointment, the headteacher has worked hard to establish a purposeful learning environment. One pupil said, 'we are a good team' and one parent said, 'since the headteacher has taken over, the school has had a massive turn around!'
- Pupils enjoy taking on additional responsibilities. For example, the school councillors try to make the school a better place for all pupils and encourage everyone to respect their community. They work collaboratively together and embrace all of the different abilities and cultures within the school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and teachers use these positive attitudes to encourage progress within their learning. Lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Occasionally, when pupils are not given sufficient challenge, they are less attentive and do not listen as well as they could.
- The breakfast club provides a good, nurturing start to the day for those who attend.
- Attendance has improved over time and is currently above average. Leaders work closely with parents to improve attendance and the school is rigorous in its approach to pupils being taken out of school unnecessarily.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement because the progress that they make across the school is not consistently good. Pupils' progress in 2016 from key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 was not as good as that of other pupils nationally.
- Valentine Primary School was formed by the merger of two schools. When the two schools joined in 2014, the quality of teaching in the junior school was inadequate. One of the key reasons that the 2016 key stage 2 pupils did not make better progress was due to this historical inadequate teaching. This has been successfully tackled by

the headteacher but gaps in pupils' learning remained. While pupils made progress, it was not enough to match pupils nationally.

- This legacy of underperformance meant that pupils who left the school in 2016 were not well prepared for their next stage of education.
- Information kept by the school about the current pupils in Year 6 indicates that they are making better progress than in the past. The work seen during the inspection confirms this. This means that the current Year 6 pupils are better prepared for secondary school.
- Pupils' reading skills are improving. This is because of stronger phonics teaching. The results of the Year 1 phonics reading check have steadily improved and are now above the national average. Current information on pupils' achievement suggests that this trend is set to continue.
- Most pupils make good progress in key stage 1, and in 2016 attained above the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2.
- In 2016, the national tests were evaluating the higher standards of the revised national curriculum. This means that it is not possible to compare 2016 standards with previous years. However, provisional progress measures indicate that pupils' achievement was well below that of other pupils nationally. Some weaknesses in teaching and assessment meant that pupils' past achievements were not assessed accurately.
- Inspectors were able to evaluate the starting points of current pupils and school-based evidence indicates a picture of improving progress.
- The most able pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in writing and mathematics, attaining above the national average. Attainment in reading is in line with other pupils nationally. By the end of key stage 2, the most able do not achieve the higher levels they are capable of. This is because teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough.
- The performance of disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2015 Year 6 national tests indicated that they were just less than four terms behind other pupils nationally. In 2016, unvalidated progress measures indicate that disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as others nationally. School leaders have correctly identified this as a key area for improvement and were able to demonstrate to inspectors that current disadvantaged pupils now make better than expected progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants, which is suited to their specific needs. They currently make good progress from their individual starting points.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Children make good progress and achieve well in the Reception Year. They start with skills and knowledge that are well below those typical for their age. The percentage of children who achieve a good level of development is above the national average. Children are well prepared for their start in Year 1.
- The early years is well led and managed. The leader has a good understanding of how children develop and learn. There is a good balance between activities led by the teacher and those they choose themselves.
- Teaching is typically good. Teachers make good use of assessment so that the work meets the children's needs well. Staff provide an interesting range of activities for children to select, and engage their interest and enjoyment well. For example, children were learning about space and the range of activities enabled them to develop their problem-solving and questioning skills.
- Children behave well. They work well together and enjoy taking turns equally. Staff have created a caring and positive environment where children feel secure and able to engage in their learning.
- Support for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. Funding is used to provide additional staff who work with these children individually and in small groups, ensuring that they access the same range of experiences as other children. This ensures that they achieve in line with their peers.
- Parents told inspectors that they find it easy to communicate with the adults, and that their children are happy and safe.
- While children make good progress, outcomes are not outstanding because not enough children capable of harder work exceed a good level of development.



## School details

Unique reference number	132025
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10019830

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	720
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Felicity Martin
Headteacher	Liz Filer
Telephone number	02380 448944
Website	<a href="http://www.valentineprimary.co.uk">www.valentineprimary.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@valentineprimary.co.uk">info@valentineprimary.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	7–8 July 2010

## Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British with very few who speak English as an additional language or come from ethnic minority groups.
- The proportion of pupils supported by funding through the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in the early years are taught in four full-time Reception classes.

- The school offers a breakfast club and after-school club.
- There have been considerable staff changes since the last inspection, with the appointment of a new headteacher and two new deputy headteachers. The governing body has changed considerably with several new members and a new chair of the governing body.
- Since the previous inspection, the school converted from an infant school to a primary school in January 2014. Valentine Infant School merged with Heathfield Junior School and was named Valentine Primary School. Since January 2014 the school has continued to expand and now has 25 classes.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 45 lessons; 13 of these were joint observations with the headteacher and one of the deputy headteachers.
- Discussions took place with several groups of pupils, as well as informal conversations with other pupils during lessons and at playtimes. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about books they enjoy.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance and pupils' work in books.
- Meetings were held with school staff, four members of the governing body, parents and carers.
- Inspectors took account of the 39 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, as well as one written contribution from a parent.
- Inspectors took into consideration 109 responses to the online staff questionnaire and 65 responses to the online pupil questionnaire.

## Inspection team

David Harris, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Martin	Ofsted Inspector
Becky Greenhalgh	Ofsted Inspector
Deirdre Crutchley	Ofsted Inspector

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