

# Prendergast Vale School

Elmira Street, Lewisham, London SE13 7BN

## Inspection dates

30–31 January 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Governance is a strength of the school. Governors are clear about their strategic role. They are highly ambitious for pupils and very active in driving improvements in standards.
- The experienced executive headteacher and the governors provide effective support and challenge to school leaders.
- Leaders have successfully introduced new systems that are having a rapid, positive impact in many areas. For example, pupils' behaviour is improving rapidly in key stages 3 and 4.
- In the secondary phase, some systems are not yet fully embedded. For example, new reading strategies have not yet engaged older pupils. Middle leadership is not yet fully consistent. Leaders are not consistent in checking some administrative tasks.
- In the primary phase, systems are well established. Pupils' outcomes in key stages 1 and 2 are exceptional because of this.
- Pupils' outcomes in key stages 3 and 4 are good and improving.
- Leaders have a strong vision for the curriculum. It prepares pupils well for life-long learning. The curriculum is broad and balanced. It enables all pupils, especially those with low starting points, to make strong progress.
- Across all key stages, teachers use their strong subject knowledge to develop pupils' learning. As yet, however, in the secondary phase, there is some inconsistency in teachers' use of assessment information to plan lessons effectively to meet the needs of particular groups of pupils.
- Leaders and teachers have worked effectively to support pupils in developing good habits for learning. Most pupils' behaviour across the school, in lessons and at social times, is good and improving. A small minority of pupils still present challenging behaviour.
- Pupils say they are safe and well looked after at the school.
- Teachers in the early years expect all children to attain very high levels of development, regardless of their starting points. Teachers track children's progress and personal development rigorously with support from parents and carers. This culture ensures that all children are now making very strong progress.

## Full report

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

- Leaders should ensure that staff implement school policies and procedures consistently by:
  - checking teachers' use of assessment information to plan lessons which challenge pupils to make outstanding progress
  - continuing to support pupils whose behaviour is challenging to help them manage their behaviour
  - promoting the culture of reading for pleasure across the school
  - carrying out regular checks on medical needs in key stages 3 and 4 so that records are up to date.
- Suitable training should be provided to middle leaders in key stages 3 and 4 so that they are able to raise standards in their areas of responsibility to the same consistently high level.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders at all levels have a strong vision for the school's future development. The headteacher sets high expectations and leads by example. There are strong systems in place to check pupils' progress and support their learning. Pupils now make good progress overall, and younger pupils make exceptional progress.
- The executive headteacher ensures that schools share strengths across the federation. All the schools support each other in areas that they have identified for development. Staff enjoy the opportunities for collaboration between the schools. Middle leaders use this exchange of ideas and skills to check their judgements on pupils' progress.
- Leaders track all pupils' progress carefully. They work hard to remove any barriers to learning and they involve parents in the process.
- Teachers, including those who are new to teaching, find the training and development provided by leaders very useful. Teachers who have difficulty in managing pupils' behaviour receive training and support. This contributes to pupils' good behaviour in lessons.
- Lessons, assemblies and social times are used effectively to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. For example, leaders introduced a charity to the school that provides young mentors who work with the most vulnerable pupils. Mentors encourage them to take full advantage of all the opportunities in school. Pupils now make better use of their social time, supported by their mentors.
- Leaders use additional funding, including the pupil premium and the sport premium, well. Primary leaders use the sport premium funding to introduce extra sports clubs, such as swimming and dance. Leaders use pupil premium funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils, who are now making the same good progress as their peers.
- Secondary leaders provide additional reading and numeracy lessons using Year 7 catch-up funding for those pupils who start school behind their peers in English and mathematics. These Year 7 pupils are making improved progress, although their progress is stronger in mathematics than in English.
- Leaders use funding effectively to support pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. These pupils are tracked carefully, and teachers and teaching assistants give them very specific support based on personal profiles. As a result, these pupils make good progress in lessons.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and includes creative subjects. Pupils receive helpful guidance when they make choices of GCSE subjects and parents are well informed and involved in this process. There is a wide range of extra-curricular provision which includes visits to museums, galleries, theatres and places of interest in London.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is promoted well. Younger pupils are taught to understand the difference between right and wrong. Assemblies provide opportunities for reflection. Pupils understand that they should treat all people

equally, as well as the importance of working collaboratively and in teams. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- There is some inconsistency in the effectiveness of middle leaders in holding their teams to account. They check the progress of individual pupils and whole classes but are not as effective in analysing differences between groups of pupils. Middle leaders said they would like more opportunities for leadership development training.

### **Governance of the school**

- A review of governance took place in April 2016. Governors responded with a rigorous action plan which they keep under review. The governors form an effective team and are very clear about their strategic role.
- Governors and the executive headteacher hold the headteacher to account for all aspects of pupils' progress and development.
- Records are kept of all governor training to make sure that governors have the skills they need.
- Governors meet regularly with the headteacher, executive headteacher, staff, parents, and pupils to ensure that they have the information they need to fully discharge their roles.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders make relevant checks on staff prior to their employment in the school. This includes additional checks for staff working with primary pupils. Staff receive regular training. They act promptly when there are any concerns that pupils may be at risk of harm. They identify vulnerable pupils and support them effectively, often using external agencies.
- A few pupils report that they do not feel safe in the local area. Staff are working with these pupils to give them the knowledge, skills and support to avoid potential dangers such as gangs and self-harming.
- Leaders carry out risk assessments for the considerable number of trips and outings that pupils undertake. They also monitor pupils with medical needs. However, a few of the support plans for pupils with medical needs were not up to date; the executive headteacher and the headteacher rapidly addressed this oversight during the inspection.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The school's teaching and learning policy reflects leaders' expectations and values in developing pupils' learning. Teachers strive effectively to meet these expectations. They have strong subject knowledge. They are effective at using questioning to deepen pupils' learning. Where pupils need extra help, teachers break the work down into smaller parcels. As a result of this good teaching, most pupils make strong progress in the secondary phase. In the primary phase, teaching is excellent, promoting stunning

outcomes for pupils.

- The teaching is mostly effective in setting work at an appropriate level for pupils. Teachers have detailed information on pupils' starting points, their needs, and their progress over time. Even so, planning does not yet consistently meet the needs of all groups of pupils. Occasionally, in key stages 3 and 4, there is not enough challenge for the most able pupils.
- Pupils with lower starting points and those who have SEN and/or disabilities receive very effective support from teachers and teaching assistants.
- Teachers carry out regular checks on pupils' attainment and progress, and when pupils fall behind, give them support to catch up. This is particularly effective in the primary phase.
- The teaching of phonics is of very high quality. Children make excellent progress in their understanding and use of phonics. This is evident in the children's development of writing as well as reading.
- In key stage 4, the teaching helps pupils develop exam technique and revision skills. Teachers give pupils opportunities to review their work to deepen and develop their understanding. Pupils' outcomes in GCSE examinations are improving because of this.
- Teachers encourage pupils to read. All tutor groups have a box of books for pupils. Younger pupils have developed a love of reading for pleasure, although this is not yet strongly evident with older pupils.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Younger pupils are very self-confident. They enjoy their learning immensely and are keen to talk about their work. They are very proud of their school and have a powerful sense of belonging. Pupils in key stages 3 and 4 are developing greater self-confidence because of the pastoral support they receive. They are developing a pride in their school. Most pupils say they enjoy their learning and that teachers listen to them and help them.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to keep safe. They are aware of the dangers of the internet and social media. They know who to talk to when they have concerns. The vast majority of older pupils who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire say they feel safe and that teachers help them develop healthy life styles and mental health.
- Teachers care about pupils. They teach pupils about bullying, social media, the dangers of extremism, and other risks. They provide pupils with the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour is improving because teachers celebrate good behaviour and use effective

strategies to manage pupils' behaviour. Pupils usually respond to instructions from adults without question. Although there is some low-level disruption in lessons, it is rare.

- Exclusions are reducing and are lower than last year, although their continued use reflects leaders' intentions to enforce increasingly good standards of behaviour. Leaders are now focusing on helping a small group of pupils manage their own behaviour; the occasional use of derogatory language sometimes provokes conflict between some pupils. Teachers are helping these pupils reflect on their behaviour and are giving them strategies to express their opinions in a manner which is acceptable.
- There are strong systems for tracking pupils' attendance. Attendance is improving and is now average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing. Many of these pupils are mid-year entrants to Year 10 who arrived in school with attendance issues.
- Leaders in key stages 3 and 4 have put a range of systems in place to support pupils' personal development, including the mentoring programmes. These systems are not yet fully embedded and have not yet had the impact leaders had hoped for in improving the behaviour of a small group of disaffected pupils. The school uses a range of alternative provision for pupils who find school difficult. Many of the pupils have a history of poor attendance, which improves in their new environment. In the last year, several pupils improved their behaviour and were able to return to the school successfully.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- In key stages 1 and 2, the proportions of pupils attaining the expected and higher standards are well above those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. This reflects pupils' strong progress. Pupils leave key stages 1 and 2 exceptionally well prepared for the next key stages.
- In 2017, pupils' attainment in GCSE English and mathematics was broadly average, reflecting rates of progress that were in line with national averages. There were no marked differences in the progress made by different groups of pupils, including the most able. Outcomes for pupils in key stages 3 and 4 are now good and improving. Pupils from all starting points are making strong progress in English and mathematics, particularly lower-attaining pupils.
- Pupils' outcomes in GCSE modern foreign languages were well below national averages in 2016. However, there was a slight improvement in 2017.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress because of the support they receive in lessons.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress in English and mathematics in all key stages, but their progress is not as strong in humanities in key stage 4. Leaders are working to share good practice across all subject areas.
- Pupils make choices about their GCSE courses in Year 8. As well as the help they receive from teachers, there is a wide and developing careers advice and guidance programme to prepare pupils in key stage 4 for choices after they leave school.
- All pupils in Year 10 have the opportunity for work experience and they are well

prepared for interviews. Pupils say they would like more guidance on further education choices. Information provided by the school shows that the vast majority of pupils go on to further education and training when they leave school.

## Early years provision

## Outstanding

- Leaders and teachers have very high expectations of pupils, irrespective of their starting points. Teachers track children's development rigorously. They use this information very effectively to accelerate children's progress.
- Staff have a deep understanding of children's learning in the early years. They set and achieve the highest standards for children in their development. Children from all starting points are ready to learn in Year 1 because of this very strong start in their school lives.
- The classroom environment in the early years is very exciting, rich and vibrant. Teachers use space well and there are excellent resources. Children really enjoy learning because of this and are extremely proud to share their work with adults.
- In the Nursery and Reception areas, there are many learning opportunities available for children to try at any one time. Teachers and their assistants guide children very well in their choices and develop their learning very effectively.
- Children's behaviour is excellent. They are confident and show high levels of self-control and respect for each other and their environment.
- Children have a well-developed understanding of how to keep safe. For example, children wore safety goggles to use hammers in a safe and competent manner with careful supervision.
- The health and welfare of children is a high priority. Staff put policies into practice robustly. Statutory requirements are met.
- Parents speak highly of the provision in the early years. They are strongly involved in tracking their child's development. Teachers provide training for parents to help them support their children with confidence. From their starting points, children make consistently strong progress.
- Leaders use funding very effectively so that provision meets the needs of children who have SEN and/or disabilities, and those of disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have embedded excellent systems and practices in the early years. All staff are confident and experienced in their practice. The impact of these systems and strong practice is evident in the outstanding progress children make.

## School details

Unique reference number	135843
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10041969

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	850
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Rothery
Headteacher	Duncan Kamyra
Telephone number	020 8297 3540
Website	<a href="http://www.prendergast-vale.com">www.prendergast-vale.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@prendergast-vale.com">admin@prendergast-vale.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	15–16 December 2015

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, reviews of governance and pupil premium funding have taken place.
- The school uses three alternative providers. They are Lewisham Young Women’s Hub, New Woodlands, and Abbey Manor College.
- Prendergast Vale School is part of the Leathersellers’ Federation of Schools. There is one governing body for the schools in the federation.
- The school is a partner in the Lewisham Secondary Challenge Project.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed part-lessons in the early years and all key stages. They visited all subject areas. They attended tutor groups and an assembly. They met with pupils, parents, staff, middle and senior leaders, and governors.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' books and scrutinised a range of documents which related to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and academic progress.
- The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with the local authority representative.
- There were 36 responses to Parent View and 38 free-text responses. One inspector met with a group of parents from the primary school.
- There were 40 responses to the staff questionnaire and 44 responses to the pupil questionnaire. Inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons, meetings and around the school.

## Inspection team

Dame Joan McVittie, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Dr Okolo-Angus	Ofsted Inspector
Vikram Gukhool	Ofsted Inspector
Lascelles Haughton	Ofsted Inspector

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