

# Inspection of Valley Primary

Old Lode Lane, Solihull, West Midlands B92 8LW

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Inspection dates: 1–2 October 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a welcoming school where pupils feel safe and valued. Caring relationships exist between staff and pupils and amongst pupils. Pupils say, 'People are really friendly here and we care about each other.'

Leaders and staff want pupils to do well. This has resulted in some recent, positive changes across the school.

In a short time, leaders and staff have worked effectively to develop aspects of pupils' learning. However, the school has more work to do in this area.

Behaviour is mostly positive around the school. However, pupils do not always listen well in lessons. This happens too often. This slows down pupils' learning. Some pupils do not always focus well on their work. This is partly because the work they are asked to do is not well matched to their ability.

Pupils understand what bullying is. They say that there is very little bullying at the school. Pupils say that when it does happen, staff deal with it straight away. Pupils say that they would like to go on more trips to make their learning more interesting.

Most parents are positive about the changes in the school. They, like pupils, would welcome a wider range of trips and clubs.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

In some areas of the curriculum, including mathematics, learning is well planned. Teachers are clear about what pupils need to learn. This helps teachers to plan lessons that build on what most pupils have learned before. This helps most pupils to achieve well in these subjects.

In other areas, including English, the order of learning is not as well planned. Lessons do not build on what pupils have learned before. Teachers have to go back and fill gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. Consequently, pupils are not achieving as well as they could across the curriculum. Leaders with responsibility for these areas of the curriculum lack the essential knowledge and expertise to make sure that the sequence of lessons progressively build on what pupils know and can do.

Teachers set work that is matched to the needs of most pupils. Consequently, these pupils can complete work independently with an appropriate level of support. However, teachers do not always set work that is matched to the needs of pupils who require additional support and the most able. As a result, these pupils find the work either too difficult or too easy. These pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

When children join the Nursery and Reception classes they are ready to learn. This is because the school works closely with families before their children start school.

Staff maintain strong links with families throughout the early years. Parents value this. The classrooms and outdoor areas are colourful, stimulating and well resourced. Children enjoy learning lots of new things indoors and outdoors. Relationships between staff and children are positive. Children are happy and cared for. Teachers plan lots of interesting activities. However, at times, staff tell children the answers, rather than guiding them to work things out for themselves.

Pupils enjoy sharing stories with each other and with their teachers. Most pupils read confidently and with expression from an early age. However, not all staff teach phonics well. Consequently, some pupils fall behind with their reading and require extra help to catch up.

Staff plan focused one-to-one and group activities to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Nevertheless, the work that teachers set in lessons for pupils with SEND is sometimes too difficult. At these times, the pupils rely too much on adult support.

Pupils who attend the additional resource centre (ARC) benefit from focused support to improve their speech and language skills. These pupils enjoy the time they spend in the main school, which improves their confidence, independence and social skills.

Teaching assistants support groups of pupils or individuals in lessons. Where this is effective, pupils are clear about what they are doing and are prompted when they are stuck. However, some teaching assistants do not pick up errors or intervene quickly enough when pupils need help.

Pupils and staff speak confidently about the school's values, which include 'respect' and 'kindness'. Pupils learn about healthy eating and exercise from an early age. Older pupils understand how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the work of the school council. Pupils have a developing knowledge of other cultures and religions.

The new headteacher, supported by staff and governors, has worked hard to improve the school. Governors challenge and support the headteacher to bring about improvements. Staff value the training that they now receive. They agree that the new leadership team is considerate of their workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping pupils safe at all times is the school's highest priority. Pupils say that they feel safe because their teachers look after them. Inspectors agree that pupils are safe. Pupils are confident to talk to staff if they have a problem. Staff know what to do when this happens because they are well trained. Leaders check staff's suitability to work with children before they start work at the school. When required, the school works with external agencies to provide additional help and support for pupils. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when in school and when not in

school.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school's curriculum is not planned and sequenced well enough in some subjects, including English. This means that teachers are unclear about what pupils have learned in the past. Consequently, teachers are having to backtrack and fill gaps in pupils' knowledge, which they assumed had already been taught. In these areas, staff need to be clear about what it is they want pupils to learn. They then need to plan a curriculum that progressively develops pupils' knowledge and skills over time.
- Curriculum leaders, who have responsibility for these subjects, do not currently have the subject knowledge, skills and expertise required to lead their curriculum areas effectively. Therefore, they are unable to support the whole school development of their subject. The school needs to provide the relevant leaders with the training and support they require. This will develop their subject knowledge and leadership skills.
- Work set by teachers is not always closely matched to the needs of pupils. Staff need to make sure that the work planned consistently meets the needs of pupils who require additional support and is suitably demanding for the most able.
- Low-level, unacceptable behaviour disrupts the quality of teaching and learning too often. The school needs to further develop consistent, positive attitudes towards learning. This will ensure that all pupils can learn, and all teachers can teach without interruption.
- The contribution made by teaching assistants to pupils' learning is variable. Some teaching assistants provide good levels of support, but others lack the expertise to aid pupils' progress. The school needs to ensure that teaching assistants have the necessary skills and knowledge to support pupils with their learning.
- The quality of interactions between staff and children in the early years is inconsistent. Not all staff use clear explanations and skilful questioning effectively. The school needs to ensure that all adults in the setting have the necessary knowledge and skills to support and deepen children's learning and development.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104052
<b>Local authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	10088593
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	679
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Emma Clark
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Milewski
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.valleyprimaryschool.co.uk">www.valleyprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16–17 June 2015

## Information about this school

- The school is situated on two separate sites.
- The school has an additional resource centre (ARC) that supports pupils with speech and language difficulties. The centre can cater for up to 16 pupils. Pupils spend some time in the centre and in the main school.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school club, which operates on the school site. This provision is managed by the school.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- The lead inspector held meetings with the headteacher. He met with four members of the governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors held meetings with the special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) and the early years, attendance and behaviour leaders.
- Inspectors focused on reading, English, mathematics, history, art and physical education (PE) as part of the inspection. They looked at other subjects on the

second day of the inspection.

- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, curriculum leaders and teachers to talk about the quality of education at the school.
- The inspectors made visits to classrooms. Some of these visits were with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- An inspector listened to several groups of pupils read.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school. They looked at their work in a range of different subjects to see how well the curriculum is applied. A group of pupils accompanied an inspector on a walk around the infant site and a separate group of pupils accompanied another inspector on a walk around the junior site.
- Documents relating to safeguarding were checked, including the checks that leaders make on staff's suitability to work with children prior to employment. Inspectors checked that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively across the school.
- The inspectors talked to parents before and after school. The lead inspector considered the 129 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 129 free-text responses received during the inspection.
- The lead inspector considered the 42 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation provided by the school. They looked at the school's self-evaluation, school development plan, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, published information about pupils' performance, behaviour records, attendance records and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The lead inspector looked at published information on the school's website.

### **Inspection team**

Wayne Simner, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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