

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Valley Nursery School

Blakenall Heath, Blakenall, Walsall, West Midlands WS3 1HT

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Inspection dates:

5–6 February 2020

## **Outcome**

Valley Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

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

Valley Nursery is a wonderful place for children to learn. Each morning, staff welcome the children and their families with a warm smile. Children enter classrooms with confidence and curiosity. This is because they know that a range of exciting activities await. Leaders and staff expect every child to excel. Children concentrate and have fun. They sing, retell stories, build models, climb, bake, count objects and paint.

Children acquire the knowledge and skills that prepare them well for primary school. They do so because staff have an impressive understanding of each child's development and learning needs. This understanding helps staff to plan high-quality learning experiences.

Leaders, teachers, assistants, the office manager, lunchtime supervisors and site staff are excellent role models. They work well as a team to create a calm environment where children are safe, behave well and are respectful. Incidents of unkind behaviour are infrequent and handled sensitively and quickly by staff.

Valley Nursey is a school where every child flourishes and has the chance to shine. 'Staff show a genuine interest in my child's individual needs', was a typical comment made by parents.

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

The focus on communication, language and literacy is commendable. Staff inspire children to take an interest in reading. They share a variety of books and rhymes during story time. Children of all ages pay close attention and enjoy joining in. Children learn rhymes, songs and traditional stories by heart. This supports their speech and language development. Stories, information books and word labels are strategically placed in different areas. These books and labels extend children's vocabulary successfully. I saw a group of children taking on different roles in the 'doctor's surgery'. They pointed to word labels as they explained why they were using a thermometer. They also showed me their prescriptions and notes from telephone conversation with 'patients'.

The mathematics curriculum is aspirational and well planned. Children learn to count in the correct order and to recognise and describe shapes. I saw the most able children explaining how many objects were left when some were taken away. They also used words such as 'long' and 'short', while building models with different-sized boxes.

Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from all that the nursery has to offer. They achieve well. Staff know what each child needs to learn and how best to support them. They plan work and use resources that help to build children's knowledge and skills. The children with very specific needs receive very effective one-to-one personalised support.

Leaders have devised a curriculum that helps children learn about their local community and beyond. Children go on outdoor adventures. They learn about people who help them, other countries and cultures. As part of the 'travelling around the world' theme, for instance, children told me about their 'journey' to Jamaica. They spoke about the Jamaican flag, traditional foods and celebrations.

Carefully planned activities make an excellent contribution to children's personal development. Children learn and play together really well. They use their imagination, show an interest and ask questions. For instance, after reading the story of the 'Gingerbread Man', the children baked gingerbread men. However, when their teacher opened the oven door, the gingerbread men had gone. The children followed the trail of crumbs into the playground where they met a fox. They followed the fox's instruction and went in search of the gingerbread men in the local area. The children also designed and created 'missing' posters.

Valley Nursery is exceptionally well led. The headteacher, other leaders, staff and governors have high aspirations for the children. They all make sure that children become confident learners by the time they leave the nursery. Staff told me that they feel valued and that they appreciate being part of a supportive team.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children's safety and welfare are of high importance for all staff. The curriculum is carefully planned so that children learn to be safe and to take risks. For example, children learn to cross the road, climb large play equipment and cut vegetables safely.

Leaders, staff and governors keep themselves up to date with the latest safeguarding guidance. Staff keep a watchful eye on the children. They take appropriate and swift action in response to any concerns. Leaders work with a range of agencies to keep children safe and to help families get suitable support.

## Background

When we have judged a maintained nursery school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Valley Nursery School to be outstanding on 8 March 2012.

## 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 are the school and you are 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>	104137
<b>Local authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111815
<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	206
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Barry Dutton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dawn Kelly
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.valleynurseryschool.co.uk/">https://www.valleynurseryschool.co.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 October 2015, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school has provision for two-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the teacher who oversees the school's provision for pupils with SEND and a range of other staff.
- I took account of staff views following discussions with them.
- Subjects considered in depth as part of this inspection included reading, mathematics and understanding the world. I visited lessons, looked at examples of children's work and spoke with leaders and staff.
- I met with members of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with a local authority adviser.
- I met with some parents throughout the two days and I considered six responses to Ofsted Parent View and four free-text responses.
- I reviewed a range of documentation, including records of safeguarding training. I spoke with staff about safeguarding and asked them how they teach children to be

safe. I looked at the records for safeguarding training. I also checked the procedures for recruiting staff.

### **Inspection team**

Usha Devi, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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