

Inspection of an outstanding school: The Village School

Grove Park, Kingsbury, London NW9 0JY

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 June 2023

Outcome

The Village School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are extremely happy and well cared for. They are kept safe by a highly dedicated team of staff, who greet and check on them every morning. Staff enable pupils to self-regulate and manage their behaviour exceptionally well. This leads to a nurturing school environment, where everyone is expected to treat each other kindly.

Pupils are encouraged to be curious about the world and to be as independent as possible. The school sets out highly ambitious goals for pupils. This helps pupils to achieve very well in line with their individual needs.

There are many opportunities for pupils to take on leadership responsibilities. Pupils are actively involved in improving their community through debating issues, organising events and raising money for charity.

Teachers prepare pupils diligently for adult life. Consequently, they feel ready and excited for their next steps. Pupils at this school have access to a range of facilities to support them to learn and develop. These include access to sensory sessions, a therapeutic swimming pool, soft-play spaces and a well-stocked library and playground.

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

Leaders have designed a well-constructed and sequenced curriculum to ensure that pupils can achieve well. They have identified key knowledge and the order it is learned so that pupils remember it over time. End points are ambitious for all pupils and appropriately adapted to their needs and aspirations. For example, in mathematics, pupils learn about money and percentages early on. They apply this knowledge when they learn to read payslips and identify how much will be deducted for tax.

In line with pupils' different starting points, leaders' curricular thinking is very flexible and bespoke. Leaders identify key priorities for each individual pupil carefully. For some pupils,

this might be recognising sight vocabulary or learning important language, whereas for others, this could be reading a book, solving mathematical problems, or debating what is right or wrong.

The reading curriculum is ambitious, comprehensive and thoughtful, adapted to the needs of different pupils. Staff are well trained and, where possible, follow the agreed phonics scheme with fidelity and precision. Where they need to make adaptations or move to different resources and tools, they do this with consideration and expertise. This is due to staff's high level of training to understand pupils' speech and language needs. Staff place a high importance on developing pupils' communication and language skills. All pupils receive highly effective support to develop and make progress in a range of communication methods, such as using objects, images and words.

Teachers' subject knowledge is highly developed. They also have a wealth of expertise in how to help learners access the curriculum and embed knowledge. Staff work with a large team of therapeutic and health professionals, which ensures that they know about pupils' different needs and how to support them.

Teachers use a range of techniques, including songs, repetition, gesture, games and images, to deliver material and make learning memorable to support pupils' understanding. Staff make very good use of the wider curriculum to embed and reinforce learning. For example, following a visit to an aquarium, pupils in Years 1 and 2 learned about the sea and its inhabitants. Teachers used these experiences expertly to deepen pupils' sensory knowledge.

Assessment is used judiciously by class teachers to ensure that they know what pupils have learned and understood. They use this information to develop precise plans for what pupils need to learn next.

Staff support those pupils who are entered for a range of accreditations and exams, including some GCSEs. This prepares them well for college and their next steps. Leaders work very well to expand on pupils' interests and support them towards achieving different qualifications.

There is an exceptionally calm and purposeful learning environment. Staff help pupils to manage their own emotions extremely well. This helps pupils with complex needs to improve their behaviour considerably over time.

Pupils' wider development is enriched through a well-planned programme of activities, visits and clubs. For example, pupils work with a local football club, and they participate in workshops run by a nationally recognised dance company. They engage in different sports, such as archery, when they attend residential.

Staff are rightly very proud of the work they do. They feel that communication from leaders is clear, and they appreciate how leaders consider their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a highly trained team of safeguarding leads in place from across the school. They work together very closely to support pupils' complex needs carefully. Leaders ensure that all staff are trained to identify and report any concerns they have in a timely manner.

Leaders have implemented robust record-keeping systems and referral processes. This ensures that those at risk receive the support they need, including from external agencies working with the school.

Leaders ensure that pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online, physically and mentally, through a carefully designed curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, The Village School, to be outstanding in October 2016.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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

Unique reference number	146212
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10268460
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	311
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Helena Morris
Headteacher	Andrea George-Samuels
Website	www.tvs.brent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The Village School converted to become an academy school in March 2019. When its predecessor school, The Village School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The Village School is part of the Compass Learning Partnership Multi Academy Trust.
- All pupils at The Village School have education, health and care plans.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading and communication, physical education and personal, social and health education. To do this, they met with subject leaders, held discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection.

- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, a selection of subject leaders, teachers, and support staff.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the trust and the chair of the local governing body and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents, and staff were considered through discussions and reviewing responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Una Buckley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Janice Howkins

Ofsted Inspector

Deborah Walters

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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