

Inspection of Valley Primary

Old Lode Lane, Solihull, West Midlands B92 8LW

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Valley Primary School. They show positive attitudes to their learning, and they are polite and well mannered. Pupils are fully included in everything that the school has to offer.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils. Pupils live up to these expectations and achieve well. Pupils are taught to be aspirational from the outset. They rise to the school's vision of growing and learning together to be the best that they can be.

Pupils show thoughtful acceptance and understanding of others. They value and embrace difference and, as a result, new pupils are warmly welcomed into the school.

Leaders provide a rich range of after-school activities to broaden pupils' interests and enhance their learning. Pupils relish the many opportunities to make important decisions about their school. This teaches them to be responsible and make a difference. They talk enthusiastically about the actions they have taken. This includes introducing recycling projects, carrying out charity work and running community events.

Adults keep children safe and support them well to manage their feelings. Leaders make sure that pupils, parents and carers have someone to talk to if needed.

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

Reading is a priority for the school. Leaders have ensured that adults teaching phonics are well trained. Their effective work enables pupils to learn to read well and with good fluency. Adults quickly identify any pupils who start to fall behind. They provide extra support, which helps pupils to keep up. Adults read to pupils frequently. These engaging sessions inspire pupils to enjoy reading.

Teachers sequence learning towards clear, ambitious outcomes, from early years to Year 6, in mathematics. Leaders ensure that resources are used well to support pupils' learning. Teachers provide focused support to pupils where necessary. In English and mathematics, teachers check and revisit previous learning. These checks are most effective where leaders have identified the key knowledge and vocabulary pupils need. However, this is not the case across all subjects.

The wider curriculum is interesting and varied. Leaders have put in place a curriculum that precisely identifies the skills and knowledge that pupils will be taught. However, in some subjects, there are inconsistencies in how teachers deliver the curriculum. Some teachers do not always check that pupils remember the knowledge and skills from their previous learning. This means that some pupils do not always apply their learning as well as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in lessons and all aspects of school life. Teachers know these pupils well. As a result, they identify pupils with SEND accurately. Teachers consider the needs of pupils when they plan learning activities across the curriculum. Extra learning resources and additional adult support are on hand when required. These help pupils to get on well with their learning.

Children in Nursery and Reception settle exceptionally well from the day they join the school. They enjoy rich, highly considered, and exciting activities to develop their speaking and listening, physical movement and early mathematics knowledge well. Adults make learning fun, and children develop positive attitudes to their learning.

Leaders have established high expectations for pupils' behaviour. This means that pupils learn without disruption and show positive attitudes to their learning. This starts with children in Nursery, who learn to be resilient. Although pupils report that bullying does sometimes happen, they are confident that leaders address this swiftly to ensure that it stops.

Leaders place great importance on pupils' personal development. Promoting fundamental British values, including respect and tolerance, is part of the school's ethos. Pupils know and understand why these are important in life. Leaders develop an open and safe learning environment in which pupils can express their views and practise moral decision-making.

Pupils learn to care for and respect themselves and others. They benefit from extra-curricular activities and trips, including theatre visits and trips to local areas of interest linked to their learning.

Staff work as a team and are proud to work at this school. Leaders are considerate of the workload and well-being of all staff. Relationships among pupils and staff reflect a positive, respectful culture.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff and governors are well trained on how to keep pupils safe. Staff know their pupils well and are quick to pick up on any concerns. They report concerns quickly, and leaders take swift action to keep pupils safe. Leaders work effectively with pupils and families who need extra help and support. Leaders have rigorous processes and policies in place for staff recruitment and dealing with any allegations against staff.

The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to learn how to recognise risks and keep safe, including online safety and the importance of healthy relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not check sufficiently well that pupils remember the precise knowledge that they need to know in some foundation subjects. This prevents teachers from having an accurate understanding of what pupils can do and remember. Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment strategies effectively in all subjects to inform pupils' next steps in learning.
- Teachers' delivery of the curriculum in some foundation subjects does not fully enable pupils to recall key knowledge securely and accurately. This leads to pupils not remembering knowledge over time and limits their opportunities to make connections between knowledge. Subject leaders should ensure that teachers implement their subject curriculum consistently well so that pupils are well supported to remember key knowledge in the longer term.

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	104052
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10268339
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	629
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Geoff Harley-Mason
Headteacher	Susan Milewski
Website	www.valley.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 and 2 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has an additional resource centre that supports pupils with speech and language difficulties. The centre can cater for up to 16 pupils. This provision is managed by the local authority.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- The headteacher was not present during the inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 met with the acting headteacher, senior leaders and inclusion support workers. They met with staff from the speech and language provision.

- The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in English, early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. Inspection activities in these subjects included lesson visits, discussions with staff and pupils, meeting with subject leaders, scrutiny of samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also met with the curriculum leader and examined work for art and design, as well as design and technology.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Minutes of governing body meetings and reports from external reviews were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors looked at records of attendance and behaviour. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and talked to them informally about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader, examined the single central record, as well as discussing the school's record of safeguarding cases.
- The inspectors talked to parents at the start of the school day and considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also reviewed the responses to the staff and pupil surveys and gathered the views of staff and pupils through discussion.

Inspection team

Catherine Young, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Eve Morris	His Majesty's Inspector
Sian Williams	Ofsted Inspector
John Bates	Ofsted Inspector

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