

Vale View Primary School

Mill Lane, North Reddish, SK5 6TP

Inspection dates

21–22 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils in Key Stage 2 do not achieve well enough. They do not make rapid progress in reading, writing and particularly mathematics. This is because there is not enough good teaching.
- The work set for pupils does not consistently provide the appropriate level of challenge for all pupils, particularly the more-able.
- Teachers sometimes talk too much and do not give pupils sufficient time to work independently.
- Teachers do not always check on the pupils' understanding early enough in lessons.
- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to practise and develop the skills they have learnt in English and mathematics in other subjects.
- Leaders do not set clear enough targets for pupils' progress in the whole-school plans.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching is exciting and they enjoy school.
- The school has a very robust system for checking on the progress of pupils. This is used very skilfully to identify pupils who need additional support.
- School leadership is strong. It is honest and accurate in its evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It has high ambitions for the school and the determination to drive up standards.
- The governance of the school is good. Governors are well informed and hold the school robustly to account.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, of which three were joint observations with the headteacher and members of the leadership team. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and made a series of brief visits to look at the wider curriculum and to observe behaviour. Pupils work in books was scrutinised in lessons and a specific scrutiny of the pupils' work in books of Year 2 and Year 6 was carried out.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, a group of parents, senior leaders and other members of staff.
- Inspectors took account of 42 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as a confidential telephone call and also the 180 responses to the written parental survey of opinion, carried out by the school in March. They also took account of 50 questionnaires completed by the school staff.
- The inspection team observed the work of the school and looked at a wide range of documents, including information on pupils' progress, the school's view of its own performance, the school improvement plan, records of checks made on teaching, pupils' attendance, behaviour logs and documents relating to safeguarding and child protection.

Inspection team

Peter Martin, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Gillian Hunter	Additional Inspector
Bimla Kumari	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Vale View is a brand new, purpose-built, primary school opened in September 2011 following the amalgamation of four schools: Fir Tree Nursery School, Fir Tree Primary School, North Reddish Infant School and North Reddish Junior School.
- It is an above average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average and the proportion supported at school action plus or with statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2012, which set the minimum expectations of attainment and progress

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is good or outstanding and achievement is at least good, particularly in mathematics and in Key Stage 2, by ensuring that:
 - the work set for all pupils, particularly the more-able, is at just the right level
 - teachers check on pupils' progress at an early stage in lessons to clear up any misconceptions and adjust their plans as necessary
 - teachers provide a better balance between activities led by the teacher and the time given to pupils to work on their own.
 - teachers provide pupils with more opportunities to work independently and pursue their own interests
 - pupils are given more opportunities to use the skills they have learnt in English and mathematics in other subjects.
- Make leaders' checks on the accuracy of their plans and teachers' work more effective by setting clear and measurable objectives related to pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children enter the Nursery with skills and understanding that are well below those typical for their age. They leave Year 6 with attainment that is significantly below the average for pupils nationally. Consequently the achievement of pupils requires improvement.
- Because of good teaching and a well organised Early Years Foundation Stage children settle quickly, enjoy their learning and are now making good progress in Nursery and Reception.
- Progress is also accelerating in Key Stage 1 and pupils are now making above average progress in reading and writing although progress in mathematics is still average.
- Progress in Key Stage 2 is slower, particularly in mathematics, and is only average. However because of improvements being made in teaching there are signs now that progress in Key Stage 2 is beginning to accelerate particularly in this last term, when it was above average. However, progress remains inconsistent across year groups because of variations in the quality of teaching. Work set for the pupils in their independent work is not always matched accurately to their ability particularly the more-able.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is good. It is started early in Nursery and is well organised throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Staff have been well trained and because the teaching has been effectively matched to the pupils' abilities, pupils are making good progress and enjoy their phonics work.
- Progress in reading is improving and pupils generally read with confidence and expression. The majority of them are well supported in their reading at home and this is helping them to make better progress. Their good knowledge of letters and sounds is helping them in their reading and writing.
- The school has addressed the underachievement of disabled pupils and those with educational special needs, pupils who have English as a second language and pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. Through well planned use of additional funding and by skilful identification of individual pupils' needs, and carefully planned additional support all these pupils are now making at least the progress expected of them and many are exceeding it. Consequently the attainment gaps in English and mathematics with other pupils in the school and pupils nationally are closing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- School leaders and staff have done a lot of work on improving the quality of teaching and this has resulted in an improving picture. However, not all teaching is good enough and not enough outstanding. As a result pupils' progress remains uneven and teaching requires improvement.
- Where teaching was good the teachers planned their lessons well to provide the right amount of challenge for the different abilities of the pupils. They used good subject knowledge and good questioning skills to develop pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding. They used a range of different methods to keep the pupils' interest and make the learning fun.
- Teaching assistants are very skilled and are used very effectively to support pupils in lessons ensuring that all targeted pupils are fully included and achieve as well as other pupils in the class.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good. Lessons are not always planned carefully enough to ensure that all pupils make good progress in lessons This means that the work is sometimes too hard for some and too easy for others, particularly the more-able.
- In the less effective lessons the balance between the activities led by the teacher and those where the pupils worked on their own was not always right and sometimes teachers talked for too long and this slowed down progress.
- Also pupils are given insufficient opportunities to work independently or pursue their own interests and make decisions about what they learn.

- Teachers do not always check on pupils' understanding early in lessons to enable them to adjust their teaching as needed and to correct pupils' misconceptions.
- Marking is generally of a very good standard although it is better in English than mathematics. In English, it consistently tells pupils how they can improve their work, less so in mathematics. However, pupils are rarely given the chance to reflect on the marking or given time to make improvements to their work.
- The presentation of pupils' work is of a consistently good standard. Teachers model good writing in lessons and in their marking and the school has set consistent expectations which the pupils understand. Pupils take a pride in their work.
- Writing, which has been a priority for the school, has shown a marked improvement this year. However, pupils do not get enough opportunities to use their skills in writing in other subjects. This is also of true of mathematics.
- The teaching of letters and sounds is good and this is helping pupils in their reading and writing especially in Key Stage 1.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour was seen as a problem in its first year by the school and parents. As a consequence the school rightly made the improvement of behaviour a priority. As a result of decisive actions taken behaviour in the school now is good. The improving picture is confirmed by a scrutiny of behavioural records.
- A zero-tolerance of bad behaviour has been established. All incidents are scrupulously recorded, no matter how minor, and a clear system of behaviour management is operated throughout the school.
- Pupils know what is expected of them and what the rewards or consequences of their actions will be. Weekly assemblies reward and celebrate good behaviour and attendance.
- Pupils are now consistently well behaved in lessons. They are eager to learn, listen to their teachers and work well together. Minor misbehaviour is uncommon and only occurs when teaching is not at its best.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school and are well looked after by all the staff. For example, one pupil said typically that 'The two Johns (caretakers) make sure we are safe.'
- Relationships are a positive feature of the school. Staff talk nicely to pupils in lessons and give them praise when they try hard and give answers. Pupils are polite and friendly and cooperate well in and out of the classroom.
- Pupils take on a range of responsibilities in school. The school council is active and organises the fund-raising activities for charities such as 'Red-nose Day' and 'Children in Need'. Older pupils act as 'buddies' for the younger pupils on the playground. They also have monitor roles such as acting as librarians. Pupils take a great pride in these roles and in the money they raise for charity.
- Recently, a group of pupils have been accepted as Junior PCSO's in collaboration with Greater Manchester Police Service. They help, for example, in the distribution of leaflets around the community on issues such as road safety.
- The school is working hard to reduce absenteeism and encourage good attendance. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is falling.
- Pupils are very aware of how to keep themselves safe and, because of the work of the school, have a clear understanding of the dangers posed by mobile phones and social network computer sites.
- The views expressed on Parent View, in the school's own parental questionnaires and by parents spoken to directly show that the vast majority of parents feel their children are safe and well-cared for by the school. Some concerns regarding behaviour were made by a minority of parents. These were looked into but were not supported by the evidence seen.

The leadership and management are good

- The amalgamation of four schools provided a challenge of re-adjustment for pupils, parents and staff. The school leaders and governing body have managed this very well, meeting these challenges head on. In a relatively short time they have succeeded in establishing a settled community of pupils.
 - Staff are united and committed to improving the school, and the large majority of parents are happy with the new school and the education their children are receiving.
 - School leaders know where the school is and what it needs to do to improve. Their evaluation of the school's performance is accurate and robust and identifies which areas need to be the priority for improvement. They are honest and accurate about the school's strengths and weaknesses and have the determination to drive up standards.
 - The school has a very thorough and effective system for checking and tracking the progress of each individual pupil. They use this effectively to organise and plan additional support for pupils who need it and to hold teachers to account for the progress of their pupils.
 - As a result of the effective additional support provided for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs or for pupils for whom English is a second language they are now making at least the progress expected of them and many are exceeding it.
 - Good use of the additional funding provided for the pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is ensuring that these pupils are also making progress at least as good as other pupils in the school and in some case better.
 - Inclusivity is a strong feature of the school. All pupils who have difficulties in their learning now have an equal chance to succeed.
 - A robust system for checking on the performance of its teachers is in place. This involves a well-planned monitoring programme which includes observations of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and pupil interviews. This is also supported by a comprehensive programme of further training to help teachers improve their skills and knowledge. As a result teaching is improving.
 - The school improvement plan is precise. It focuses on the key areas for improvement and its actions are well thought out. However, the objectives which relate to pupils' progress are not clear and measurable enough to help school leaders and governors to check accurately on progress or the success of the planned actions.
 - The local authority provides support for the teaching of English and mathematics and this has helped bring about improvements.
 - The school is working hard to reach out to parents and create a united community around the new school. It provides a range of workshops for parents, regular newsletters and has a parents' focus group to give regular feedback. A result of one such feedback, the leaflet produced for parents by each class giving details of the curriculum the pupils would receive that term has been simplified.
 - Equal opportunity is promoted well and the school does not tolerate any discrimination. The statutory safeguarding requirements are fully met and exceeded and the governing body and all the staff ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously.
 - The school provides a rich range of experiences in the school curriculum and in clubs available after school. Visitors and visits to places of educational interest provide pupils with valuable real-life experiences which support their learning. These experiences, the good provision for example of art and music, assemblies and excellent work done on for example multicultural education, all contribute well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the school is good. The governors are very well informed. They are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and its priority for improvement. They challenge the school robustly on its performance in teaching and pupils' progress. Systems are in place to ensure that teaching performance is linked to pay progression. They fulfil their statutory duties
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regarding school finances and are fully aware of how pupil premium funding is used and the impact it has had on the progress of the pupils for whom it is intended.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	131083
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	400254

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	539
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ricky van Deursen
Headteacher	Linda Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0161 221 0118
Fax number	0161 221 0334
Email address	headteacher@valeview.stockport.sch.uk

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