

Vale View Primary School

Mill Lane, North Reddish, North Reddish, SK5 6TP

Inspection dates 20–21 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher has very skilfully built a school with an ethos in which all pupils are known as individuals, nurtured and supported to enjoy learning. Together with senior leaders and governors, she has improved teaching so that it is consistently good.
- There has been strong improvement in pupils' achievement since the previous inspection. Progress is good for the large majority of pupils, including pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs.
- The pastoral team works creatively with families and outside agencies to overcome what for some are considerable barriers to learning.
- The specialist-resourced unit is an integral part of the school. Skilled diagnosis and effective teaching enable pupils to be fully included in all aspects of school life and make good and at times outstanding progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe in school. They are proud of their work, keen to learn and treat others with respect.
- Children get a good start to school in the early years. Their experiences are characterised by strong leadership and exciting learning.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils embrace diversity within their school, reflect deeply on values and make a positive difference to others in their lives.
- A strong staff team shares the same ambition and desire to provide pupils with the best possible education. Leaders across the school have secured good leadership of teaching through regular training and professional development.
- The headteacher is supported by a dedicated governing body. Together, they offer the school a good capacity to improve further in future.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Expectations for the most-able learners across the school are not consistently high enough.
- Pupils could do better in writing, because they have too few opportunities to write imaginatively and writing does not have a sufficiently high profile in classrooms and around the school.
- The pupils' achievement in mathematics is held back, because pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their basic skills to solve problems.
- Attendance is below average, in particular because some families insist on taking holidays during term time.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 lessons, including three observed jointly with a senior leader.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading and reviewed the work recorded in their books over time. There were meetings with the school leaders, four governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors spoke with many pupils during lessons and at social times, as well as meeting representatives of the school council.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, those leading the early years and also staff responsible for managing provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs. A meeting was conducted with a group of support assistants.
- The inspection team considered the views of staff given in 38 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- There were 23 responses by parents to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View, which were considered alongside a meeting with four parents and an analysis of the school's most recent survey of parents' opinions.
- The inspectors examined a number of documents. These included the school's records of the progress of pupils currently attending the school, records of the school's checks of teaching and the annual review of the performance of staff. The school's evaluation of its own strengths and weaknesses was evaluated as were minutes of meetings, notes made by governors visiting the school and reports from the local authority and external consultants on the quality of the school's work.

Inspection team

David Byrne, Lead inspector	Lead Inspector
Rosemary Batty	Additional Inspector
Nigel Cromey-Hawke	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. It opened in September 2011 and is an amalgamation of four schools.
- The school includes resourced provision for supporting up to 12 pupils with a wide range of severe learning needs. Nine pupils were receiving such support during the inspection.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in the main school is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and therefore eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion from ethnic minorities is increasing quickly and the proportion who speaks English as an additional language is average. The number of languages spoken at home has risen swiftly to 25, including English.
- The school population is constantly changing. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils join the school at times other than expected, particularly in Key Stage 2, and some stay for a short time only.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a significant number of planned and unplanned staff changes. In September 2014, five new staff joined the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement from good to outstanding by strengthening teaching so that:
 - there are consistently high expectations for the most-able learners across the school
 - more opportunities are given for pupils to write imaginatively and the profile of writing is raised in the school
 - pupils develop their skills in mathematics by applying them to solve problems a wider variety of contexts.
- Improve attendance, particularly for those who are persistently absent from school by focusing closely upon the issue of families taking holidays during term time.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good.

- Since the school opened in 2011, the school's leaders have worked very hard to secure a safe, happy and very inclusive school. All staff are focused on raising standards while maintaining the ethos of care and support, for which the school is rapidly gaining a reputation. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, leaders are very optimistic and ensure that staff morale is high, and teamwork exceptionally strong, particularly given the many staff changes. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's development and works collaboratively with staff to develop this through well-considered policies.
- Accurate plans for moving the school forward, coupled with specialist support and advice, have ensured that the quality of teaching and the performance of pupils have improved since the previous inspection. The local authority has been instrumental in supporting the school through the amalgamation process and has contributed well to its continuing improvement.
- Middle managers, including subject leaders, work well together and play an important role in improving outcomes for pupils. Some are new to post and benefit from good leadership from experienced staff to develop and improve their skills. Regular observations of teaching, checking on the quality of pupils' work and sharing outcomes with colleagues drive forward improvement. Regular pupil progress meetings enable teachers to identify any pupils who may be falling behind and tailor support to meet their needs. The targets for the annual performance of all staff are precise and linked directly to raising levels of achievement of pupils in all year groups.
- The leadership of the resource units and of wider special educational needs within the school is very effective. The precise identification of pupils' needs, effective programmes of support and partnership working with external agencies mean that pupils make good and, at times, outstanding progress.
- Equality of opportunity is embedded within the policies and practice of the school. The needs of pupils of different backgrounds, including disadvantaged pupils, are identified in all classes. Some pupil premium funding is used to ensure that all pupils have access to all elements of the curriculum, including visits and special events.
- The school is making good progress in adapting its curriculum to meet the new requirements. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The curriculum promotes in pupils a secure knowledge of various faiths and traditions within Britain and of British values. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to engage in extra-curricular activities. These include a range of sports clubs and opportunities to learn subjects beyond the standard curriculum. The impact of the sport funding has widened the range of sporting opportunities for pupils to engage in good quality physical education, participate in inter-school competitions and encouraged a focus on the importance of health and well-being.
- The majority of parents who gave an opinion are very positive about the school and its improvement since the previous inspection. Staff work hard to build warm and constructive relationships with families. A group of parents were very keen to say how much they feel valued and that staff are approachable. Family involvement in school life is encouraged, for example by joining in challenges such as the 'Great Vale View Bake Off', entering decorated egg competitions and attending events at school to explain the expectations for children in the national tests.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is evolving as the school develops and grows. It is in the process of being reorganised. Governors bring a wide range of expertise to their role and understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They support and challenge the school to get even better. Governors keep themselves well informed by checking the school's assessment and performance data. Some members make frequent visits to the school and listen to the views of staff, pupils and parents.
 - The governing body ensures that safeguarding requirements are met. It takes part in a wide range of training to maintain its effectiveness. Governors are involved fully in driving improvement. For example, their skilful management of finances includes checks on the impact of the pupil premium on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. The tracking of assessment data for these pupils is currently under development to illustrate more effectively how the achievement of these pupils compares with similar pupils nationally as well as within the school. Governors have an informed view of the quality of teaching and have worked hard to stabilise the staffing team after a considerable time of change. They are involved in setting targets for the headteacher and check on how well staff are improving their expertise; they ratify or reject applications for progression of staff along the pay scale.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most parents are of the opinion that their children are safe in school and pupils report that bullying is rare. This is very much due to the good efforts of staff to enable pupils to manage their own behaviour and understand how to deal with others with personal difficulties.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and show a willingness and eagerness to learn. Pupils work together well, and share resources and discuss together their ideas, for example about the book they are reading.
- The school's diverse community is celebrated regularly. During the inspection, there was a sense of excitement about the forthcoming multicultural fair that would involve pupils exploring a range of activities. Their knowledge of the impact of discriminatory behaviour is good and is promoted throughout the school with events such as Anti-Bullying Week and Black History Month.
- Pupils develop a mature and responsible approach to others who differ from themselves. For example pupils support their peers who have physical disabilities and also help pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour.
- Pupils' opinions are valued; pupils proudly represent classmates on the school council. Older pupils willingly help younger ones at playtimes and some read books with children in the Early Years and Key Stage 1. Pupils are proud of their efforts to protect the environment and have gained the Green Flag status for the school.
- Attendance is below the national average, although in line with similar schools. This is despite the tenacious efforts, including legal action, of senior leaders and the pastoral team to encourage families to send their children to school every day. Some families choose to take holidays during term time which affects the continuity of pupils' education and attendance figures.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils have a good understanding of cyber-bullying and know that this can take place online and on mobile phones. They know how to avoid the potential dangers of using the Internet and say that they would never give their personal details out to anyone while online.
- Staff and governors discharge their duties with regard to safeguarding with great rigour. Staff receive regular training on child protection and there are clear processes in school to deal with any concerns that may be reported. Site safety has a high priority and is secured by the vigilance and actions of the site manager and caretaker.

The quality of teaching is good.

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils benefit from high levels of adult support from a staff team that combines experienced and relatively new practitioners. Their good subject knowledge and dedication to meeting each pupil's needs ensures that good progress occurs and standards rise.
- Children with disabilities and those with special educational needs benefit from a team of teachers and assistants with just the right skills to move forward in their academic and personal development. There is still more to be done to ensure that the most-able pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are exceptionally strong. Teachers in Years 5 and 6, for example, encourage pupils to take a mature and sensible approach to their work and have increasingly high expectations as to what they can achieve. This has helped to ensure improvements since the previous inspection. The improvements are ongoing as staffing settles and the school establishes and embeds crucial routines to underpin good learning.
- Pupils are encouraged to take care with the presentation of their work and benefit from tasks and activities that they find both interesting and challenging. Pupils in all year groups know exactly how to improve their learning.
- The basic skills of mathematics are taught well, although pupils do not get enough time to develop and apply these skills enough in, for example, solving problems. The classroom environment helps pupils to work and learn well together. Wall displays celebrate pupils' work and offer guidance through number tables, wall charts and information about activities for different ability groups. Pupils report that they enjoy mathematics and see its potential for problem-solving, but that they are not as confident as they would like to be to do this.

- Pupils enjoy writing, especially when it is linked to a visit, or a school visitor. This was the case in a Year 6 English class where pupils produced short pieces of very well-presented writing of high quality based upon a visit to an outdoor pursuits caving experience. In some classes expectations for writing imaginatively are not high enough, which limits progress. In some classes, the importance of writing is not emphasised highly enough. Reading has a high priority. Pupils are enabled to make choices about what they think are good books. The reading skills of pupils at the early stages of learning English and for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs are assessed quickly and reading programmes are adapted to secure good and, at times, outstanding progress.
- Pupils' work is marked and up to date. Pupils understand the quality of their work and how to improve it. Homework is a strength that supports the improved learning that is occurring across the school. There are clear systems for pupils to take their work home and so that they improve it.

The achievement of pupils is good.

- Progress is accelerating quickly because of the impact of strong leadership, improved teaching and high levels of care. The large majority of pupils make good progress and achieve well, irrespective of their wide and varied starting points.
- Pupils enter Nursery with skills that are well below those typical for their age. They make good progress which continues in Key Stages 1 and 2. Progress at Key Stage 1 is good. Published data indicate that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has risen quickly over the last three years and in 2014 rose to average overall in reading, writing and mathematics.
- A consistently structured approach to the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) has led to more pupils making early and sustained progress in decoding words. In 2014, results in the national screening test for Year 1 showed a marked improvement and were broadly in line with the national results.
- Standards at Year 6 are improving, but there is little consistency in results from year to year because of the wide variations of abilities and needs in each different year group. In 2014 attainment in reading was average which, given the low starting points for many pupils, constituted very strong progress. In mathematics standards also improved and moved closer to the national average. Although standards in writing were lower, most pupils made at least the progress expected of them, given their individual starting points.
- In Key Stage 2, progress is improving quickly. The progress of pupils between Years 2 and 6 in 2014 improved and was in line with expectations. The school's tracking and inspection evidence from observing learning, scrutiny of books and discussions with pupils and staff show that currently pupils are making good and improving progress across all classes.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils enjoy reading and benefit from regular opportunities to do so during the school day and at home. This is a key factor in the rapid progress that is taking place. In writing, pupils at both key stages are benefitting from an increased emphasis to teach the basic skills of accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar, but pupils are not always encouraged to develop their skills by writing in an imaginative and creative way. Standards in mathematics are rising securely, largely due to teachers' focus on pupils securing good basic mathematical skills. Pupils are less adept at applying these skills to solve problems, which limits the proportion reaching above-expected standards.
- The school often has little or no attainment information about those pupils who arrive at the school between Years 3 and 6, increasing numbers of whom speak English as an additional language. Nevertheless, the school integrates them successfully, assesses their needs accurately and provides effective support that enables them to make good progress.
- The pupils supported from resourced provision, all of whom have education care plans, make at least good, and in some cases, outstanding progress, even though they may not reach the nationally expected levels of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2. The pupils with English as an additional language receive good support and where possible benefit from bi-lingual help. The majority reach high standards compared to other groups in the school.
- The achievement of the most-able pupils is improving securely. A growing proportion attains above expected standards for their age; however, inspection evidence suggests that such pupils could still achieve even more.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is improving and the gap between the national figures and other pupils in the school is narrowing quickly year on year, because the quality of teaching has improved greatly. The attainment in reading, writing and mathematics of disadvantaged pupils at Year 6 in 2014 was below that of other pupils both nationally and other pupils in the school by approximately two terms.

The early years provision is good.

- Hardworking staff, effectively led, give children a good start to their school life.
- Pupils enter Nursery with skills that are well below those typical for their age. They make good progress and make a smooth transition into Reception where good progress is sustained. By the end of Reception, children are well prepared to learn at Year 1. The proportion reaching levels of development typical for their age is rising steadily. The proportion making a good level of development is in line with the national picture.
- There is a good balance of activities on offer to children. Play is managed carefully to promote learning. Children benefit greatly from high quality facilities for both indoor and outdoor learning. Children make good progress in developing skills in all areas of learning within a stimulating and imaginative environment.
- A high proportion of children join the Nursery with skills that are significantly below those typical for their age. This is especially so in their communication, social and personal skills, as well as their knowledge of the world around them. During their time in the early years, these deficiencies are addressed well. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. A wide range of activities enable children to play together, share and co-operate and improve their social skills.
- Children are grouped by ability when learning phonics and mathematics, so that each child has the chance to make the progress of which they are capable. Skilled questioning and interactions led by adults develop children's confidence to talk and express their views and feelings.
- The relatively narrow vocabulary of a significant proportion of children is widened successfully. When children have difficulties with their speech and language, effective actions are taken by trained staff to help them to improve.
- Assessment systems have been refined to secure an accurate picture of each child's achievements and progress which are communicated to parents through good quality records.

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	453494

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	530
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ricky Van Deursen
Headteacher	Linda Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	21 March 2013
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