

Inspection of Valentine Primary School

Valentine Avenue, Sholing, Southampton, Hampshire SO19 0EQ

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and welcoming school community. Most pupils behave well, making the school an orderly and calm place during lessons. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their own actions and to have respect for each other.

Pupils feel safe. However, they reported to inspectors that bullying does happen sometimes, but that in most cases staff help to sort it out quickly. Parents do not always feel that this is the case. A number of parents believe that bullying goes unchallenged and feel that some pupils are not treated fairly. Leaders are aware of this and know they have more work to do to reassure parents that bullying is not tolerated at this school.

The large school field is a hive of activity at breaktimes. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to be healthy and active. Pupils love the climbing equipment and make the most of the sports equipment, playground chalk and skipping ropes provided. Clubs and activities are popular with pupils, especially the drama club.

Leaders have made improvements to the curriculum, and it is ambitious for most pupils. However, in some subjects, pupils are not learning the curriculum as well as they could. As a result, not all pupils are achieving their best possible outcomes.

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

Leaders, including governors, want pupils to succeed at school. They have made some improvements to the quality of education, especially in curriculum thinking. However, there is still work to do. In some subjects, teachers do not implement the curriculum in the way leaders intend. There is too much variability in the approaches that staff use. Leaders have not yet rigorously monitored the implementation of the curriculum, so they are not always aware of where the strengths and areas for development are. This means support is not given in a timely manner to pupils or staff who need it.

The curriculum in Reception gives pupils a strong start to their time at school. Leaders have designed rich and varied learning activities. The learning environment, both indoors and outside, provides opportunities for curiosity and exploration. The teaching of early reading is strong. Children learn phonics from the minute they join school. Parents speak highly of the work staff do to support their children to learn.

Leaders have not yet thought carefully enough about how the curriculum adaptations enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to achieve their very best. Pupils with education, health and care plans have their needs identified and receive appropriate support. However, changes to the leadership of the SEND department have meant that some pupils with SEND have not received the specific support they need.

In some subjects, for example mathematics, staff use assessment well. They take into account different abilities and starting points. They plan challenging lessons as a result. This means that pupils make strong progress, learning and remembering more in this subject. However, in other subjects, assessment is not used as effectively as it could be. Teachers do not plan activities that take into account what pupils can already do or what they already know. This means that sometimes lessons are not sufficiently ambitious for all pupils.

Pupils and staff know and understand the behaviour management system. However, it is not yet applied as consistently as leaders would like it to be. This means that in some lessons a small number of pupils disrupt the learning of others. Outside the classroom, the behaviour of a small number of pupils is not acceptable. Plans to help these pupils improve their behaviour are not yet appropriate. The plans do not help pupils learn how to make better choices and do not give staff strategies to support the pupils to improve their behaviour. Leaders are aware of this and have very recently begun to address it.

Personal development is a strength of the school. The coherent programme of relationships and sex education is age-appropriate. Pupils learn about democracy and what it means to grow up in modern Britain. They learn about people of other faiths and celebrate differences between people's beliefs. Pastoral support for pupils is strong. Trained staff provide support for pupils when required, and pupils say they all have trusted adults to whom they can talk if they need to.

Staff are fully committed to working here. Morale is high. They appreciate the support given to them by leaders. Staff know leaders are considerate of their well-being and workload and welcome the support given to them by governors. Leaders at all levels are committed and determined to further improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant. They receive regular and detailed safeguarding training. They know how to spot potential signs of abuse and what to do if they have a concern. Detailed safeguarding records demonstrate that leaders are quick to respond to worries or concerns raised.

The safeguarding team works closely with the pastoral team to support pupils. The pastoral team provides extra support to pupils and families when it can. Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online and how to report something if it worries them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the implementation of the intended curriculum is not always consistently or closely matched to leaders' high expectations, due to a variability of approach by some staff. As a result, pupils sometimes develop gaps in their knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that the implementation of the curriculum is consistent across all subjects by making certain that their monitoring and evaluation processes are robust and effective.
- Occasionally, the procedures that staff follow when dealing with the challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils do not always match the school's own policies. This means that the approach to recording challenging incidents is not always as thorough as it should be. Leaders must ensure that everyone understands the policy and that the procedures that staff use match the standards outlined in the school's own policies.
- The support for pupils on the school's SEND support register is not effective enough. Adaptations to help pupils access the curriculum are mostly determined by class teachers, rather than expert leaders who know and understand the pupils' needs well. This means that the adaptations are not always effective. Leaders must ensure that they develop clear and effective systems to plan, support and review the provision for these pupils.
- Leaders know that although they have policies and procedures in place to address bullying, some parents do not understand fully how bullying is addressed by the school. As a result, not all parents have confidence in leaders' abilities to deal with bullying. Leaders and staff need to take further steps to ensure that all parents have a stronger understanding of the school's robust response to bullying.

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	132025
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10241516
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	648
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Penny Hollowell
Headteacher	Steve Summerton
Website	www.valentineprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 July 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher joined the school at the start of this academic year.
- The chair of governors has been in post for just over a year.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff, pupils and parents. Inspectors also met with governors and met online with two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, art and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers,

spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also heard pupils read.

- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents and records, including the school's record of recruitment checks. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with staff, pupils and parents to gather their views. They considered 74 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 52 free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of 48 responses to the staff survey and 41 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sara Staggs	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Hemmings	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Vallence	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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