

Inspection of The Valley Primary School

School Drive, Oakamoor, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST10 3DQ

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

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

The lead teacher of the school is Charlotte Bould. This school is part of The Moorlands Primary Federation trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jarred Eccles, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nick Chesters.

What is it like to attend this school?

The Valley Primary School is welcoming and inclusive. All pupils are highly valued and well cared for. Pupils attend regularly and are excited about coming to school.

The school is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils exemplify the school's motto 'learn to love, love to learn'. They are enthused about their learning. The school has created a curriculum which supports the needs of pupils in this rural community. Pupils actively take part in supporting the local village, such as helping to maintain a clean environment through litter picking. Pupils also regularly attend events beyond their local area, such as residential and sporting events.

Pupils' personal development is exemplary. They are given a range of responsibilities, including being members of the eco council and playground monitors. Older pupils are also 'chicken monitors'. They are taught how to care for, clean and feed the school chickens.

Positive relationships are at the very heart of the school. All staff want the very best for all pupils. The school knows each child and their individual families and carers very well. Relationships and community are important here. All this means that the school, pupils, parents and the local community hold each other in high regard.

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

The school has designed a curriculum which sets out the knowledge they want pupils to learn over time. The curriculum is planned to support learning for pupils within mixed-age classes. This is further enhanced with broader experiences and opportunities for all pupils. The curriculum is well embedded in most subject areas and most pupils learn the intended curriculum securely. However, in the early years this is not the case. The curriculum across nursery and reception is not clearly set out. The important knowledge and vocabulary the school wants pupils to learn over time across the early years foundation stage framework have not been identified. This means that pupils are not building their knowledge as well as they could be. Leaders have identified this as a priority area for development and have started to make improvements.

Reading is top priority. Pupils are taught phonics from the very start. Children in nursery receive a pre-phonics programme to help with language development. Pupils who need extra help are identified quickly and given effective support. The school promotes the love of reading very well. Pupils experience high-quality, diverse texts. These expose pupils to wider cultures and religions. Pupils read widely and often. A library van visits the school often. Pupils also choose books to read for pleasure. Pupils enjoy visiting the school library during breaktimes and lunchtime.

The school has systems in place to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. These are reviewed regularly. Pupils receive support in class, such as additional resources

or adaptations to their learning. Staff work very well with external agencies to offer support for pupils who need this. However, the specific areas of need identified for pupils with SEND are not always precise enough. This means that pupils do not consistently receive the accurate support they need.

Behaviour across school is exemplary. Pupils are courteous and show exceptional manners. Relationships between staff and pupils are very respectful. In the early years, adults interact positively with children. Children are taught routines from the very start and are well settled. Mental health and well-being are taken very seriously here. Pupils are taught strategies to help their mental well-being. The school knows how important attendance is to pupils' education. Pupils attend regularly. Leaders have clear strategies in place to support pupils and their families when support is needed to address attendance. As a result, attendance continues to go from strength to strength for all groups of learners.

Pupils experience opportunities which extend beyond the curriculum. These are exceptional and prepare pupils very well as future active citizens. Pupils are taught first aid, such as the recovery position. Medical students from the local university work with pupils across school. They teach pupils about different disabilities and how they are not always seen. There are a wide range of extra-curricular activities available. The school council chooses the activities. These activities include a newspaper club.

The trust and those responsible for governance have an accurate view of the school. The trust provides an effective training and support programme. The school works collaboratively with other schools from within the trust. Parents are highly supportive of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum across nursery and reception is not clearly set out. These plans are at the very early stages of development. This means that children's learning does not build on prior knowledge effectively over time. The school should identify all the important knowledge and vocabulary they want pupils to learn across the early years and ensure that it is sequenced in a clear, logical order.
- For some pupils with SEND, the precise areas of need and support identified are too broad and not specific enough. This means that some pupils are not consistently receiving the support they need to achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff develop the expertise to precisely identify the specific needs of pupils with SEND and accurately and quickly put in place the support needed for these pupils.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	141848
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10294608
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nick Chesters
CEO of trust	Jared Eccles
Executive Principal	Alex Brayford
Website	www.tmpf.staffs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Moorlands Primary Federation, which consists of seven schools.
- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes to leadership and staffing. The lead teacher of the school was appointed in September 2022 from within the trust. The executive principal was also recruited in September 2022 and oversees three other schools within the trust. The previous headteacher of the school is now the chief executive officer (CEO). All teaching staff are new since the last inspection.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised into three mixed-age classes. There is one additional class for nursery children.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a before- and after-school provision on site.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the lead teacher of the school, the CEO, the chair of the trust, trustees, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally with parents.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, English and languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also looked at additional subjects, including art and design, geography and history.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of individual educational plans for pupils with SEND.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils, formally and informally, about their learning and experiences at school.
- Inspectors observed informal times to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also looked at responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school policies, curriculum documents and SEND records.

Inspection team

Anna Vrahimi, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Heather Simpson

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

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

© Crown copyright 2024