

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Vale School

Trulock Road, Tottenham, London N17 0PG

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 April 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are valued, nurtured and thrive in the school's compassionate and supportive environment. The school shows an unwavering commitment to placing pupils at the centre of everything it does. Educational and pastoral support are seamlessly integrated throughout the school's practice. This enables an individualised approach to each pupil's development. As a result, pupils are happy and achieve highly.

The school has exceptionally high expectations for pupils. They benefit from very purposeful and engaging learning opportunities, starting in the early years. Children explore sensory materials and high-quality resources that foster curiosity and creativity extremely effectively. Staff are highly skilled and demonstrate a deep understanding of pupils' specific needs. They provide expert support, embedding communication skills at the heart of all learning and interactions with pupils.

Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and during social times, responding positively to the consistent and caring approach of staff. They take deep pride in roles of responsibility, such as being school councillors. These opportunities help to develop their confidence and sense of belonging extremely well. Through positive relationships with staff and well-established daily routines, pupils are supported to manage their emotions very effectively. They learn to show respect to others and play an active role in the school community.

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

The curriculum that pupils follow is ambitious, well structured and underpinned by high expectations from the early years through to age 16. The holistic development of pupils is purposefully at the heart of its design. It is exceptionally well tailored to meet the wide-ranging and individual needs of pupils. There is a strong and highly effective emphasis on building knowledge, skills and vocabulary. Teachers know what to teach, when to teach it and why. They tailor learning carefully to each pupil. This careful attention to pupils' needs shines through in the way that pupils demonstrate strong recall of prior knowledge. Staff expertly foster pupils' understanding, for instance, by linking learning to real-world experiences. For example, in the early years, children explore mathematical ideas by recognising when a cup is empty, half full or full. As they move through the school, this develops into recognising halves and quarters, such as by cutting up toast to explore parts of a whole shape. These experiences help pupils to apply their knowledge in practical contexts very successfully. This builds confidence and prepares them exceptionally well for the next stage of education.

The school develops pupils' communication skills very effectively. Staff work closely with families and external therapists to fully understand each pupil's individual needs. From the early years onwards, children are supported to use a range of resources, such as visuals, objects and switches, to aid expression and interaction. Pupils benefit deeply from academic, social and therapeutic curriculums that come together so each complements the other and, in turn, supports their overall development precisely. This collaborative approach also ensures that pupils' views are heard and they can contribute to school life.

Reading is a high priority and is promoted diligently from the moment pupils start at the school. In the early years, children develop a love of books through regular one-to-one reading sessions. Pupils not yet ready for phonics are supported to recognise and respond to sounds as a foundation for early reading. When ready, they access daily, structured phonics lessons tailored to their individual needs.

Behaviour in lessons is exemplary, supported by clear, well-established routines. This creates an extremely calm and purposeful learning environment. Pupils understand and embrace the school's ethos and values, showing high levels of respect and kindness. They accept each other's differences and are consistently supportive during lessons and social times. For example, during social skills sessions, pupils show genuine excitement when their peers successfully steer balls into hoops.

The school's high-quality and rich personal development programme is embedded across all aspects of school life. It supports pupils to manage their own emotions, independence and communication. Pupils are encouraged to identify and express how they feel through structured, personalised approaches. They explore friendships, families and relationships. This develops emotional resilience and self-awareness. These skills help pupils to manage their feelings and interact positively with others.

Pupils benefit from a comprehensive and meaningful careers education programme. Staff work very closely with pupils to explore possible pathways, linking learning to real-world

aspirations. Pupils express ambitious goals for their future, which reflects the school's success in nurturing confidence and high aspirations.

Staff take immense pride in working at the school. They value the support that they receive for their professional development.

Governors are deeply committed and, working closely with leadership, actively ensure that pupils flourish. Parents and carers express strong support for the school and immensely appreciate the education and care it provides.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2019.

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	102176
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10345786
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Phil DiLeo and Emma Spiers (Co-chair of governors)
Headteacher	Dawn Woodcock
Website	www.vale.haringey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in September 2023.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school caters for pupils with a range of profound and multiple learning difficulties. This includes pupils with speech, language and communication needs, autism, physical disabilities, moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The 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 all senior leaders, a number of teaching and support staff, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school, at playtime and at lunchtime.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and pupils. They also took into account the views of parents and carers using Ofsted's online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Karen Kent, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Una Buckley

His Majesty's Inspector

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