

The Village School

Grove Park, Kingsbury, London NW9 0JY

Inspection dates

5–6 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher is dedicated and highly regarded as a leader of learning within the local area. She has established a successful and highly effective team of leaders, where everyone's role is clear.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well catered for. Pupils experience a wide range of cultural activities embedded in a rich curriculum.
- Pupils make excellent progress from very low starting points because there is no ceiling placed on what they can achieve.
- Leaders have introduced accurate and validated methods for recording the small steps of achievement that pupils make. As a result, teachers and other adults are very skilled in planning activities which promote maximum progress.
- Provision in the early years is of the same high quality as in the rest of the school. The small number of pupils in this group make an excellent start to their schooling because of the highly individualised approach and accurate assessment process.
- Pupils behave extremely well. They enjoy learning and are keen to do their best. Pupils with a wide range of complex needs and from very diverse cultural and faith backgrounds work and play well together.
- Students aged 16 to 19 make outstanding progress. They achieve recognised qualifications. Students are exceptionally well prepared for their future placements because leaders work effectively with other providers and make sure that transitions are smooth.
- Strong, effective partnerships with local schools and colleges result in highly effective provision which enables pupils to be included in other educational settings.
- Leaders, teachers, therapists and support staff work seamlessly to promote the well-being of individual pupils.
- Governors are experienced and knowledgeable. They undertake structured visits to the school and hold leaders to account for improvements. They are proactive in seeking training to develop their skills further.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by checking that behaviour incidents are precisely recorded and usefully referenced so that the analysis of behaviour trends can more accurately inform future practice.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher has established a culture in the school firmly embedded in its motto, 'it takes a village to raise a child'. Each pupil's strengths and needs are assessed accurately so that teachers and therapists can implement programmes that are highly individualised. Consequently, pupils make excellent progress.
- Together with the governors, the headteacher has created a leadership structure that is highly effective. Each leader has clear, well-established roles and responsibilities which are understood by all staff. Education and health professionals work seamlessly together to make sure that pupils' needs are met.
- Alongside the national curriculum subjects pupils experience a broad curriculum including a wealth of cultural experiences which enrich their lives. Visits to the opera or theatre, sometimes alongside mainstream peers, mean that pupils meet others socially while enjoying a new environment. Pupils learn about different faiths. They reflect on different aspects of their own learning. As a result, the curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.
- Leaders make sure that staff are well trained in all aspects of their role. A wealth of various professional development opportunities are provided within the school. Leaders also tailor support for members of staff with particular training needs, such as those new to teaching. As a result, teaching is highly effective.
- Additional funding provided through pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up is spent wisely and with a focus on all areas of pupils' development, for example support with transport for pupils, after-school clubs, and extending the behaviour support team. As a result, the difference between outcomes for these pupils and others is diminishing. Sport premium funding is also spent appropriately.
- Leaders make regular checks on the effectiveness of the school's work to ensure that it is of a consistently high quality and continues to improve. They recognise that some records of behaviour incidents lack precision or are categorised as being more severe than was actually the case. They do not currently identify how many incidents relate specifically to discriminatory behaviour or language. Consequently, leaders' analysis of improvements in behaviour is not as useful as it could be.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school very well. This is because each governor is linked to a specific area of the school's work. Meetings are held between each link governor and the relevant leader on a termly basis, and governors visit the school to see its work for themselves. Governors provide detailed written reports following these visits, which are presented at governing body meetings. As a result, governors are able to hold leaders to account for improvements in the school.
- Governors have checked that they have appropriate skills and experience to provide effective strategic leadership in this school. They have successfully recruited new governors with skills which are relevant to the context of the school. Where recruitment has been more difficult they are not complacent but commission external reports to check that they are fulfilling their duties well.

- Governors attend training events both within the school and externally to make sure that their knowledge remains up to date. The chair of governors meets individually with each governor to identify any training needs.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders maintain clear, detailed records of any concerns raised regarding the safeguarding of pupils. They keep a log of any emerging issues so that this information is available if concerns escalate. Consequently, all the relevant information is held in one place and is accessible if needed.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. A group of pupils told an inspector about staying safe online: '(we) are not allowed to see some things so the computer stops'. Pupils say that they feel safe because teachers look after them. Parents also consider that their children are kept safe by the staff team.
- Leaders make sure that all members of staff receive information and training relating to safeguarding. New members of staff describe the emphasis placed on this area during their induction. Leaders ensure that there are regular updates to training, covering issues such as the 'Prevent' duty and female genital mutilation. Leaders check that staff members have read the material they are given as part of this training.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Inspiring, colourful and thoughtfully resourced learning environments motivate pupils to achieve extremely well. Indoor and outdoor space is used effectively so that pupils can move around and access the whole curriculum. Classrooms at the local further education (FE) college and neighbouring high school are equally inviting.
- Pupils enjoy learning and demonstrate a tremendous sense of delight as they learn new skills. For example, one pupil repeatedly used a head switch to request 'more' of her favoured sensory activity, despite realising that the teacher had moved on to a different task. Her sense of amusement was palpable and she continued to pause, wait and then request once again.
- Leaders, teachers and therapists make detailed and accurate assessments of what pupils can do. They then use them to plan exciting and challenging activities on an individual basis.
- Teachers plan very effectively, with a sharp focus on what each pupil is capable of. Targets set are challenging yet realistic. In each lesson there is a focus on communication and social development which enables pupils to interact with their community at school and at home.
- Information technology, including the use of communication devices, is used extremely well to promote learning. During the inspection, pupils demonstrated their ability to construct sentences and respond to questions using tablet computers specifically adapted for their individual needs.
- Adults consistently use a range of strategies to communicate effectively with pupils. These include sign, objects of reference, gesture and symbol communication. These are adapted for each pupil to precisely meet their level of understanding. Very occasionally, too many symbols were used on displays or signs provided for the wider school community.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Teachers, therapists and support staff work very effectively together to promote pupils' well-being and personal development. They make sure that pupils have fun and thoroughly enjoy their time at school.
- Staff pay a high level of attention to meeting individual pupils' needs. Therapists work closely with other members of staff to make sure that pupils' health needs are met. They provide training for support staff so that therapy continues once the therapist has left the room. As a result, all the needs of each pupil are met throughout the day.
- Adults take every opportunity to encourage pupils to engage in healthy lifestyles. Basic hygiene routines, such as hand-washing before meals, are encouraged, including for those who are unable to feed themselves or who are tube-fed. Trampolines and treadmills are provided close to classrooms so that pupils who need to punctuate their learning with bursts of activity are able to do so.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming. They were eager to communicate with inspectors. A group of pupils excitedly invited an inspector to come and see their swimming lesson because they were proud of their skills.
- Very strong, positive relationships with staff enable pupils to conduct themselves well because they feel secure and are well understood. Adults support pupils to interact with each other and work well together. Any challenging behaviour is dealt with calmly and consistently by adults. As a result, pupils' behaviour improves significantly over time.
- Pupils attend well. Most absences are due to significant bouts of illness which are related to pupils' individual needs. Any absences are followed up swiftly. Occasionally, when an absence is prolonged, home visits are made so that learning can continue. In other instances, leaders make alternative arrangements for pupils so that they return to school after an absence as quickly as possible.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils make outstanding progress from very low starting points. They have a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities but all groups make excellent progress because of the highly adapted and skilfully planned curriculum.
- Leaders have ensured that a very high level of consistency is in place. Therefore, pupils continue to make strong progress as they move up the school to different classes and key stages.
- A high proportion of pupils make more progress than would usually be expected from their starting points, particularly in English and mathematics. Leaders use a variety of tools to check that assessments are accurate, and that pupils are making as much progress as they can.

- Teachers and therapists work together to set challenging targets for pupils. This means that they can plan activities which promote academic learning while, at the same time, meeting the therapy needs of pupils.
- Targeted use of pupil premium funding has had a positive impact. The proportion of eligible pupils making more than expected progress increased significantly in 2016 and is now similar to that of other pupils.
- The proportion of pupils making more than expected progress has increased from 2015 to 2016. Leaders consider outcomes of a range of groups, relating to gender, ability or key stage. The proportion of pupils making more than expected progress rose in 2016 in every identified group. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for their next placement.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Pupils in the early years foundation stage make excellent progress. They are accurately assessed when they arrive at school and are provided with precisely focused activities which promote their next steps in learning.
- The learning environment is vibrant and well resourced. Adults use song and dance to engage pupils and encourage them to communicate simple choices. For example, in a music lesson young pupils were captivated as the teacher picked instruments out of a bag and exposed the group to new sounds. Pupils then chose an instrument to play for themselves.
- The early years leader checks that pupils are doing as well as possible by meeting regularly with class teams to discuss individual pupils. Pupils' progress is carefully recorded using photographs, adults' notes and pupils' work.
- A comprehensive training programme for adults is in place to make sure that staff are well trained in meeting the wide range of needs that pupils present. This includes manual handling training, feeding training and implementation of therapy programmes.
- Other pupils in the early years are placed in classes alongside pupils at key stage 1. This means that they learn alongside others who have similar strengths and needs to their own. As a result, pupils in the early years benefit as much from the very high quality of teaching as do others in the school.
- Pupils in the early years provision behave very well. This is because their needs are understood and staff are skilled in making sure that they feel safe and secure from their earliest experiences of school.
- There are usually only a few pupils in the early years provision. In September 2016 leaders admitted an additional class of Reception children to the school whose needs are currently being assessed.

16 to 19 study programmes

Outstanding

- The quality of provision for students aged 16 to 19 is outstanding because they are provided with accredited courses which challenge them and a curriculum which is highly individualised and suited to their needs.
- Leaders consider each student's strengths and needs before identifying the best learning environment for them, where they will flourish. Some attend the classes based

at the neighbouring high school where they can, if possible, access GCSE and other courses. This means that the very few students who are able to access higher-level courses do so successfully. Other students attend classes based within the local further education (FE) college. A third group, who generally have the most complex health needs, stay within the main school building where therapists and school nurses are based.

- Students make excellent progress and receive appropriate accredited qualifications, dependent on their interests and abilities. They also make admirable progress in life skills and in developing independence skills. For example, students visit the school shop and café to develop their queuing skills, use of money and social skills. They are then able to extend these skills in the busier environment of the coffee shop within the FE college.
- Students on all three sites conduct themselves very well because they are provided with an interesting curriculum which promotes very strong progress. The consistent approach and high expectations of staff result in a calm and orderly atmosphere.
- Students are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education. Students and parents are provided with advice and guidance and supported as they make choices. Leaders work hard to make sure that parents have confidence in their child's future placement. If necessary, school staff will visit identified placements to ensure that there is a smooth transition, providing advice and training. Leaders keep in touch with those who have left the school to make sure that their next placement is sustained.
- Some students aged 16 to 19 work in classes alongside key stage 4 pupils. Leaders carefully place each student so that their strengths and needs are met extremely well. Older students benefit from the excellent practice prevalent throughout the school.

School details

Unique reference number	101583
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10008733

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	268
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	54
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Kabir
Headteacher	Kay Charles
Telephone number	020 8204 5396
Website	www.tvs.brent.sch.uk
Email address	office@tvs.brent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 April 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The Village School caters for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most pupils have severe or profound needs. Many have additional needs such as medical conditions or are on the autistic spectrum.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan or a statement of educational needs.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, cultures and faiths, reflecting the local community.

- The proportion of pupils who are supported through the pupil premium is above average.
- Generally, the proportion of pupils in the early years foundation stage is small. However, in September 2016 the school admitted an additional 'bulge' class of Reception pupils who have autism. This was because of an increased need for this type of provision within the local area.
- Five classes are based at the neighbouring Kingsbury High School, and two at the College of North-West London (FE college). The school does not place pupils in alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook observations of teaching and learning in lessons. Many of these visits took place jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors visited the classes based in Kingsbury High School and in the College of North-West London, and the school café.
- Inspectors scrutinised the work and records relating to a group of pupils of different ages and with a range of needs.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, governors, members of staff and parents. An inspector met with a group of pupils. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- A wide range of documentation was considered including that relating to safeguarding, pupils' outcomes, pupils' behaviour and checks made on the quality of teaching.
- There were 24 responses to the online survey Parent View and 24 responses to the staff survey which were considered by inspectors.

Inspection team

Gaynor Roberts, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Penman	Ofsted Inspector
Joan Deslandes	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Geddes	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Cox	Ofsted Inspector

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