

# Varna Community Primary School

Chisholm Street, Openshaw, Manchester, M11 2LE

**Inspection dates** 19–20 May 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- School leaders have maintained the outstanding quality of education provided for its pupils since the previous inspection.
- The headteacher's long-standing vision that all pupils fulfil their potential is firmly supported by the governing body. The unfailing commitment from all staff to provide the very best for pupils drives the school's work and underpins pupils' outstanding achievement.
- Excellent management of teaching ensures that pupils make rapid progress in their learning during their time in the school.
- Outstanding leadership in the early years means that children make a first class start to their learning, from below typical starting points. They achieve exceptionally well by the end of Reception.
- Pupils' behaviour and provision for their safety are outstanding. Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They feel safe and supported. Their natural politeness and friendly attitudes contribute greatly to the school's positive ethos.
- Pupils enjoy the uniqueness of their school with its many cultures and traditions. They enjoy learning from one another.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Over time it promotes pupils' excellent achievement, both academically and in their personal development.
- Pupils enjoy the challenges that lessons provide. However, written feedback about their work does not always give them clear guidance about how to make it even better.
- Pupils make excellent progress from their starting points. Standards at both key stages are improving quickly. Pupils make rapid progress from whenever they join the school.
- The rich curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their enjoyment of learning, exceptionally well.
- The school's links with parents and the wider community are very strong.

## Information about this inspection

- Information about learning was gathered from a range of lesson observations and from scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Inspectors discussed the school's work with staff members, pupils, parents, representatives from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- There were insufficient responses via Parent View to form an overall picture of parent support for the school. Those who spoke to inspectors, however, were entirely positive. The results of an internal survey of parents' views were overwhelmingly positive. Also taken into account were 27 questionnaires completed by staff members.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a range of documentation including: national assessment data and the school's assessments; external reports on the school's effectiveness; curriculum information; the school's own view of its work and safeguarding documents.

## Inspection team

Kevin Johnson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sandra La Porta

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Kelly

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized primary school.
- Ethnicity within the school is very mixed. About one third of the pupils are White British and approximately one third are Black African. There are small groups from many other White and Asian cultural backgrounds.
- A significant proportion of children speak English as an additional language when they enter nursery or Key Stages 1 or 2.
- Many pupils start or leave the school outside the usual times.
- The school moved into a new building in 2012. The school roll has increased significantly since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is significantly above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Provision for children in the early years is full time in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- A breakfast club is provided during term-time.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all feedback given to pupils consistently reflects the school's marking policy and tells pupils clearly how to improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- Pupils are proud to belong to this thriving community school and take delight in their learning. Leaders provide an ethos in which pupils learn safely, without fear of discrimination, and where behaviour and relationships are excellent. Highly effective leadership of teaching and provision of care ensure that all pupils have the opportunities they need as individuals to achieve their best.
- The headteacher's long established and firm vision that the pupils will succeed in school and as future community members is shared very clearly. All staff members maintain the highest expectations and ambition for their pupils. This mindset is not negotiable and its impact is clearly seen in pupils' attitudes and achievements.
- Local authority support is very light touch because there are no concerns about leaders' ability to maintain the high quality currently seen in the school.
- Senior leaders provide excellent support, and at times challenge, for the headteacher to ensure the right plans are put in place. Their leadership roles and accountabilities are shared so that no aspect of the school's improvement is left to chance. They provide first class role models for colleagues with regard to teaching and professional relationships.
- With the headteacher, senior staff manage an extremely robust schedule for checking the school's work. They have an accurate picture of how well it does. As line managers, they check the quality of teaching regularly and follow up any individual issues quickly to ensure that they are resolved. In-school support and training continually deal with whole school issues. Recent mathematics training, for example, has had a very positive impact on teaching and subsequently on achievement in mathematics.
- Middle leaders, responsible for individual subjects, plan a rich curriculum that pupils enjoy. It is enhanced by exciting opportunities to broaden pupil's horizons. Year 6 pupils, for example, are very much looking forward to going to the Lake District for the first time. Leaders arrange special subject days and whole-school projects to add more interest for pupils. In addition, they keep a close eye on pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum for physical education and pupils' well-being benefit from the school's very good use of the primary school sports funding. The school's clear aims for its use are to increase pupils' participation and health, and to raise achievement. Qualified coaches work with pupils and teachers so lessons are more active and varied, and teachers' skills improve. Pupils comment that there is more sport during and after school than previously.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The teaching of moral and social values has an important place in the school's planning. Pupils share experiences of their own cultures and learn to understand the meaning of tolerance. They learn about British heritage through outings to museums and art galleries. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and know how to behave well in public. They understand that democracy gives them both rights and responsibilities. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared in the social skills and understanding they need to succeed in modern British society.
- School leaders manage the pupil premium funding extremely well and check outcomes. They are very strongly committed to providing equality of opportunity and ensure that spending addresses individual needs. The impact is seen in the rapid progress made by disadvantaged pupils.
- Safeguarding measures are very effective and fully meet statutory requirements. Clear, written guidance is supplemented by a very comprehensive range of staff training. The home-school liaison officer follows up absences and other pastoral concerns sensitively, and maintains the high quality of relationships that parents share with the school. Pupil's attendance is above the national average.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors know the school and its importance within the community very well. They use their knowledge and individual expertise very effectively to set the highest expectations for its success. Governors have undertaken extensive training in their roles. They are familiar with national assessment data, for example, and use this to challenge school leaders on standards. They know what the school does well and provide strong support for it to do better. Governors gain a clear view about teaching quality from information shared by the school and visits they make to classrooms. They fully understand the principles of the school's pay policy and how salaries are linked to teachers' performance. Finances are managed very efficiently to ensure that every pupil has full access to the provision they need to succeed.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding
- Pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school. They dress very smartly in their school uniforms and arrive on time at the start of the day. Their excellent manners and politeness reflect the respect they always show for the school's exceptionally positive ethos and the values it promotes.
- Almost 200 pupils attend the breakfast club, after which many attend a sporting activity or a group with a teacher to boost reading, writing or mathematics before school begins.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and their attitudes to learning are excellent. These contribute very significantly to pupils' outstanding achievement. Pupils are attentive to their teachers, and work very well with each other to clarify their thinking and test out new ideas.
- Pupils work hard. They present their work neatly and are very proud of what they do.
- Behaviour around the school is excellent. Pupils are always mindful of others. Some older pupils take responsibility for making sure that younger ones are safe. Relationships rarely break down and are quickly restored when they do. Pupils manage others' behaviour as well as their own and are not slow to rebuke another pupil if their excellent standards are at risk. What could have led to silliness in the dining room, for example, was quickly halted after a reminder from an older pupil at a neighbouring table.
- Pupils contribute a great deal to the everyday life of the school. Some, who transferred from the old building, can remember having a say in the planning of the new one. They are very proud to see their ideas come to life. The active school council sees that everyone's voice is heard and shows very good initiative in organising fund-raising activities. Pupils have also contributed to environmental projects, such as helping the police to clean up a local tow-path on the canal. Librarians and others make a valuable contribution to the daily routines in school.

## Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding
- Pupils say that they are always safe in school. They are fully confident that an adult will help them if needed.
- They understand the dangers linked to cyber-bullying and about internet safety. Anti-bullying week makes them aware of other forms of bullying and how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils enjoy each other's company and regard their different cultures as something to celebrate. They are adamant that there is no bullying, racist or otherwise, in their school, and the same applies to name-calling. They judge their overall behaviour very highly.
- Parents' views and the school's behaviour records support pupils' views about their behaviour and safety.
- Parents appreciate the additional care and safety provided through the breakfast club. One of the spin-offs from the club is that it contributes to pupils' punctuality and to their attendance, which is consistently above average.
- The care of pupils who are considered to be potentially the most vulnerable is exceptional. Staff watch over their welfare very carefully to make sure that their particular needs are met and that their learning is not interrupted.

## The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The impact of consistently high quality teaching over time is clearly seen in pupils' outstanding achievement and the progress they make while in the school.
- Teaching provision is exceptionally well planned. In addition to class teachers, additional teaching staff with specialist skills support individual pupils and groups such as disadvantaged pupils or the most able. This support is provided throughout the day to make sure those pupils progress as far as they can.
- Teaching assistants are a valuable part of the teaching team. They are trained well, and skilled at supporting groups and individual pupils who need specific help with their learning. They work very effectively alongside class teachers. Overall, the teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is a particular strength.
- Lesson plans are well thought out. Teachers draw on secure subject knowledge and expertise to ensure that pupils are challenged by whatever they have to do. For example, this was evident in an inspirational music lesson in Year 4 as well as when Year 5 pupils performed impressively on steel drums.
- Evidence from pupils' work shows very good depth to learning in history, geography and science, for example, and highly commendable art work is displayed.

- English teaching results in some exceptional writing throughout the school. Pupils practise their writing skills across the curriculum. Writing of exceptional quality was seen in Year 2, for example, when pupils wrote about Remembrance Day. In Year 5, after excellent preparation for writing stories, pupils used a very thoughtful range of vocabulary and sentence structures when planning their fantasy tales.
- Reading is taught successfully. Texts are well chosen to reflect the ethnic diversity in the school to encourage interest and confident reading. The teaching of reading has been a major focus in the school and increasingly pupils are learning higher skills such as working out what is inferred in texts, rather than just what is written.
- The mathematics curriculum has been adapted well to provide new and greater challenge. Pupils gain a secure understanding of number and how number systems, including multiplication tables, can be used to make problem solving easier. Pupils in Year 1 learned about fractions very effectively and made excellent progress because of the helpful practical resources they were given. Challenges were really well matched to the pupils' abilities in Year 6. Some pupils used their understanding of numbers to work out which method they would use to solve problems. Those who were able solved algebraic problems related to triangles. Pupils are given more time to discuss mathematics, and to improve their use of mathematical language and ability to think through problems systematically.
- The school has recently worked on developing new ways of assessing pupils' work, including the use of feedback to pupils. Adults check pupils' work effectively during lessons to correct misconception and move learning forward. Their written feedback, however, does not consistently follow the school's marking policy. Too often, across all subjects, marking is not sufficiently clear to help pupils improve their work even further.

## The achievement of pupils

## is outstanding

- From below typical starting points pupils make excellent progress. Their overall achievement by the time they leave the school is outstanding because of the way the school provides for their varying needs.
- The results of the national screening check on phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) in Year 1 in 2014 was slightly above the national average. Currently, more pupils in Year 1 are already working at the expected level. Given the number of pupils who speak English as an additional when they join the school in the early years, and children's overall abilities, this is an outstanding performance.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 in reading writing and mathematics currently in the school are average. This is an improvement on the standards in 2014 when reading was below average. Those reading results reflect the fact that, in that year group, a proportion of pupils joined the school after the early years and spoke English as an additional language. Despite their rapid progress they were not in school long enough to attain the national levels but have caught up in Year 3. Significant proportions of pupils in the current Year 2 are working at the higher Level 3, having made better than expected progress.
- Standards at Key Stage 2 have been consistently average over time but showed an upward turn in 2014 with a particularly good performance in writing. The positive trend has been continued with improvement in all subjects, especially in the numbers who are currently working at Level 5 or beyond.
- Pupils achieve very well in reading. Year 2 pupils are confident readers. They use their knowledge of phonics, when needed, to break down unfamiliar words and understand what they read; they know the differences between fiction and non-fiction. They read regularly at home as well as in school.
- Year 6 readers also make excellent progress. They read fluently and use punctuation well to demonstrate their very clear understanding. They choose suitably challenging books for themselves and have very good attitudes to reading.
- The progress of different groups and individual pupils who join the school at different times, is excellent. Every corner of the school is a learning zone where pupils work with adults to boost their knowledge and skills and close any gaps. Overall, students' progress in Year 6 is exceeding expectations as a result of the progress they have made throughout the school. School assessments show that some pupils who recently joined Year 6 have made the equivalent of two years progress in less than a year because of the school's provision for them.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are exceptionally well provided for. In 2014, pupils did considerably better than similar groups nationally. Pupils' needs are identified very early and nothing is left to chance in the teaching they receive, resources provided and the emotional support given. These allow pupils to make rapid gains from their starting points.
- The most able pupils benefit from additional teaching by specialist teachers in English and mathematics. Pupils also attend extra sessions outside lesson time. A system of class action planning identifies the most able pupils and ensures that their progress is closely checked and reviewed regularly. Expectations have

risen, and an increased number of pupils are working at the highest possible level 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Disadvantaged pupils, who are supported through pupil premium funding, attained as well as other pupils nationally in writing in 2014. Disadvantaged students' attainment in reading was broadly the same as others but it was lower in mathematics. Data suggest that disadvantaged pupils were two terms behind in mathematics. When compared with other pupils in the school, the group's attainment was equal to others in reading but lower in writing and mathematics. Again, data suggest that disadvantaged students' writing and mathematics were about two terms behind that of others.
- The school's assessments for the current Year 6 indicate that virtually all disadvantaged pupils have made expected progress so far and more than half have done better than that. Gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school are closing quickly.

### The early years provision

### is outstanding

- When children enter nursery a very high proportion have abilities that are below typical expectations in reading, writing and number work, and in social and emotional development. By the end of nursery, that proportion has changed significantly and a large majority are at a typical stage of development for their age. Children continue to make rapid progress in the Reception class. The proportion who reach a good level of development was similar to the national average in 2014. In the current Reception class, a higher proportion has reached that level. This means that children are very well prepared in all the skills they need for their transfer into Year 1.
- The progress of children supported by the pupil premium is rapid in almost all areas because the specific focused teaching they receive meets their needs exceptionally well.
- The significant proportion of children who speak English as an additional language receive highly effective bi-lingual support that quickly enables them to acquire the language they need to learn as well as others
- Leadership of the early years is outstanding. The leader has a very strong vision for her team who fully share her commitment to the highest standards.
- Teaching is precisely matched to every child's needs. Relationships are extremely supportive and the busy hum of the classrooms does not affect the focus and high quality of teaching groups. The curriculum is broad and exciting and very well resourced. It provides ample opportunities for children to learn both indoors and through active, physical exploration and problem solving outdoors. Children learn from activities which they choose themselves.
- The safety and the well-being of children is given paramount importance. Children's behaviour is excellent and they develop very high levels of confidence and self-esteem as results of excellent nurturing and support they receive from all of the adults who teach them. Parents are welcomed in the early years and are included in their children's learning.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105459
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	461581

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	405
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr P Stone
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr B Madden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 November 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 234 1616
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<b>Email address</b>	head@varna.manchester.sch.uk

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