



The Valley School

SEF Summary

Sept 2026

Evaluation Area	Key Strengths	Evidence Sources
Safeguarding (Met)	Highly effective and embedded culture; vigilant staff; strong strategic oversight; timely multi-agency working; online safety integrated.	Training records & CPD logs; Prevent certificates; weekly DSL minutes; governor monitoring; case conference records; Early Help referrals; LA feedback; Online safety curriculum maps; parent workshop logs; Risk assessments; Site security checks. - Student questionnaire states that they feel safe, supported and are rewarded for good work. They know who they can turn to if they need help. (Oct 2025) - Parent questionnaire states that their child feels safe, supported and are rewarded for good work. They know who they can turn to if they need help. (Dec 2025) - Intimidation will be dealt with effectively. (Staff feedback questionnaire Oct 2025) - Governors' minutes show very low levels of bullying that are effectively addressed. HFL Education Improvement Partner Visit (Declan McCarthy), joint learning walks and verbal feedback, 2 March 2026 – validated SEF judgements across safeguarding, inclusion, behaviour, assessment and personal development; identified refinements in curriculum and teaching (learning intentions clarity, vocabulary instruction, stretch for cognitively more able learners); actions

		agreed and in place ahead of May 2026 KIT visit.
Inclusion (Exceptional)	Barriers reduced exceptionally well through 4 pathways and bespoke support; strengthened Y6-7 transition; strong parental engagement; diverse but inclusive community.	Transition plans; student profiles; Intervention impact reports; RRSA Silver evidence; Equalities monitoring; Student voice surveys. - The students really love attending The Valley. They said that 'teachers are so nice', the school 'brings out (their) confidence', they feel 'listened to', they are 'not judged' and they fit in well with their peers. (HCC PP Commissioned School Visit Report 2024-25) HFL Education Improvement Partner Visit (Declan McCarthy), joint learning walks and verbal feedback, 2 March 2026 – validated SEF judgements across safeguarding, inclusion, behaviour, assessment and personal development; identified refinements in curriculum and teaching (learning intentions clarity, vocabulary instruction, stretch for cognitively more able learners); actions agreed and in place ahead of May 2026 KIT visit.
Curriculum & Teaching (Strong)	Broad, ambitious, well-sequenced pathways; consistently good teaching; reading prioritised; enhanced numeracy; GCSE science pathway and increased GCSE maths entries.	Baseline data reports; Progress tracking dashboards; Learning walks & observations; Internal/external moderation; Exam entry records & analysis; Curriculum maps; Assessment policy. - The school offers a broad and ambitious curriculum for its pupils. It allows

		pupils to develop their interests and talents, as well as study a range of subjects from the national curriculum. (Ofsted Nov 2024) - The school has addressed the key points outlined in the last inspection and has implemented an approved phonics scheme for those at the early stages of reading. (Ofsted Nov 2024) HFL Education Improvement Partner Visit (Declan McCarthy), joint learning walks and verbal feedback, 2 March 2026 – validated SEF judgements across safeguarding, inclusion, behaviour, assessment and personal development; identified refinements in curriculum and teaching (learning intentions clarity, vocabulary instruction, stretch for cognitively more able learners); actions agreed and in place ahead of May 2026 KIT visit.
Achievement (Strong)	Accelerated gains from low starting points; qualifications up to GCSE; strong post-16 preparation with zero NEETs for 4 years.	Assessment data; Progress reports; Exam outcomes; Destination data; Post-16 transition plans; Work experience logs; Employer feedback. - <i>Careers delivery and preparing for life after The Valley scored 100% in all areas through Gatsby Benchmarking.</i>
Attendance & Behaviour (Exceptional)	Attendance above national and improving (91.9% all; PA reducing); exemplary conduct; minimal suspensions; zero	Whole-school attendance data; DfE benchmarking; Persistent absence reports; Behaviour tracking; Lesson observation records; Sports/performing arts

	exclusions; calm purposeful climate.	logs; Assemblies/newsletters. - Pupils at this school are happy and positive. They are kept safe. (Ofsted Nov 2024) - No poor behaviour was seen on the day of the visit. Students see great behaviour role modelled by the critical mass of their peers. They get attention for 'getting it right'. (HCC PP Commissioned School Visit Report 2024-25) - PPE learners were settled, safe, engaged in learning, confident, articulate and comfortable to talk with me. In all classes, strong relationships between adults and learners were in evidence. The status and self-efficacy of learners was being built up in all classrooms. PPE learners were well motivated and keen to demonstrate what they can do and know. (HCC PP Commissioned School Visit Report 2024-25) HFL Education Improvement Partner Visit (Declan McCarthy), joint learning walks and verbal feedback, 2 March 2026 – validated SEF judgements across safeguarding, inclusion, behaviour, assessment and personal development; identified refinements in curriculum and teaching (learning intentions clarity, vocabulary instruction, stretch for cognitively more able learners); actions agreed and in place ahead of May 2026 KIT visit.
--	---	---

Personal Development & Well-being (Exceptional)	Coherent, ambitious programme; strong SMSC/PSCHE; enrichment builds awe & wonder; careers meets Gatsby; four colleges; half-day weekly college; zero NEETs.	PSCHE/SMSC maps; RRSA documentation; Enrichment logs; Event programmes; Photographic evidence; Careers evaluation; Destination data; Partnership agreements. - The pupils involved in the school play are demonstrably flourishing they demonstrated teamwork, hard work, concentration, discipline, confidence and joy! (HCC PP Commissioned School Visit Report 2024-25) HFL Education Improvement Partner Visit (Declan McCarthy), joint learning walks and verbal feedback, 2 March 2026 – validated SEF judgements across safeguarding, inclusion, behaviour, assessment and personal development; identified refinements in curriculum and teaching (learning intentions clarity, vocabulary instruction, stretch for cognitively more able learners); actions agreed and in place ahead of May 2026 KIT visit.
Leadership & Governance (Strong)	Accurate SEF; effective improvement planning; robust governor challenge; high-quality CPD; staff progression; oversubscribed & outward-facing leadership.	SEF & SDP; Governor visit logs & minutes; CPD records; Staff development reviews; HR retention data; Admissions & oversubscription figures; Parent/student surveys. - Responses from Governors' questionnaire to staff (Oct 2025): Staff work well as a team; Communication is good at all levels; Staff feel valued

		and respected; The curriculum matches students' needs; Staff have good training opportunities; Any intimidation of staff or students will be dealt with effectively; There is a high priority given to staff and student wellbeing; Staff have enough capacity to meet their workload; The school continues to improve; The school is a rewarding place to work. HFL Education Improvement Partner Visit (Declan McCarthy), joint learning walks and verbal feedback, 2 March 2026 – validated SEF judgements across safeguarding, inclusion, behaviour, assessment and personal development; identified refinements in curriculum and teaching (learning intentions clarity, vocabulary instruction, stretch for cognitively more able learners); actions agreed and in place ahead of May 2026 KIT visit.
--	--	---

Safeguarding (Met)

Safeguarding remains highly effective and deeply embedded. Staff adopt a vigilant mindset ("it could happen here") supported by regular, comprehensive training. Strategic oversight is robust through weekly DSL meetings, governor scrutiny and systematic audits. Multi-agency working is timely and effective, with Early Help referrals and positive LA feedback. Online safety is fully integrated via PSCHE, assemblies and parent workshops. Risk assessments and site security checks strengthen practice; the school continues to comply with KCSIE 2025. Last external review: Ofsted, Dec 2024; next review due May 2026.

Key evidence:

- Training records & CPD logs; Prevent duty certificates
- Weekly DSL meeting minutes; governor monitoring reports; audit documentation
- Case conference records; Early Help referrals; LA feedback
- Online safety curriculum plans; parent workshop attendance
- Risk assessment logs; premises/site security checks
- Safeguarding policy; Single Central Record; safer recruitment files

Next steps:

- Maintain termly monitoring of CPOMS/safeguarding data and training cycle for all staff
- Engage pupil and parent voice on safety each term; review online safety content
- Regularly review safer recruitment and record-keeping procedures
- Benchmark evaluative commentary against Ofsted Inspection Toolkit (expected/strong) when updating SEF

Inclusion (Exceptional)

Inclusion is exemplary and sustained. The four pathways (formal, semi-formal, informal, nurture) and bespoke timetables reduce barriers exceptionally well. Transition into Year 7 is strengthened through thorough plans and pupil profiles. A diverse but inclusive community is evidenced by RRSA Silver and active work towards Gold. Parental engagement and student voice inform ongoing refinements.

Key evidence:

- Transition plans; Pupil profiles; Year 6–7 documentation
- Intervention impact reports; Reading age data; Numeracy programme records
- RRSA Silver evidence; Equalities monitoring reports
- Student voice and wellbeing surveys

Next steps:

- Compile case studies demonstrating inclusive impact for different groups over time
- Continue work towards RRSA Gold with mapped milestones
- Refine sequencing in subjects identified for development to strengthen access for all learners

Curriculum & Teaching (Strong)

Curriculum breadth and ambition are matched by consistently good teaching across pathways. Reading is prioritised with targeted phonics; a new Numeracy programme supports non-specialists. Science now offers GCSE pathways with students sitting all six papers; GCSE Maths entries have more than doubled, reflecting raised expectations. Assessment is accurate and reliable, informing teaching and embedding knowledge.

Key evidence:

- Curriculum maps & schemes of learning; Assessment policy
- Baseline data reports; Progress tracking dashboards
- Learning walks (half-termly) and "Poppins" drop-ins; observation and evaluation records
- Internal/external moderation reports
- Exam entry records and outcomes analysis (Science & Maths)

Next steps:

- Sustain 90%+ lessons good or better; monitor CPD impact on teaching quality
- Embed vertical reading groups; ensure phonics is structured, accumulative and sequential
- Embed Numeracy programme consistently; support non-specialists
- Develop consistency in AfL, long- and medium-term planning across the school
- Benchmark SEF commentary against Ofsted expected/strong criteria

Achievement (Strong)

Students, including CLA, PP and LA, make accelerated gains from low starting points. Qualifications up to GCSE/BTEC are achieved where appropriate, alongside transformational personal development. Preparation for adulthood is strong: tailored work experience, travel training and financial literacy contribute to zero NEETs for four consecutive years and broadened post-16 destinations (now four colleges).

Key evidence:

- Assessment data and progress reports for all groups
- Exam outcomes analysis; Qualification records
- Work experience logs; Employer feedback
- Destination data; Post-16 transition plans; College partnership agreements

Next steps:

- Produce case studies evidencing achievement trajectories for different groups
- Continue to raise expectations for formal qualifications where appropriate
- Track scaffold removal to support independence towards post-16 readiness

Attendance & Behaviour (Exceptional)

Attendance and behaviour remain exemplary. Attendance has improved to 91.9% (all students) with persistent absence reducing (20.1% overall). PP attendance is 90.5%; part-time timetables reduced to 8. Behaviour is exceptionally positive: to date, 3 suspensions with 0 repeats; 0 permanent exclusions; 0 RPI instances. Calm, purposeful classrooms enable stretch and challenge; celebrations and enrichment reinforce pride and belonging.

Key evidence:

- Whole-school attendance data and trend analysis; DfE benchmarking
- Persistent absence reports; Weekly summary reports to tutors/HOY
- Behaviour tracking data; Lesson observation records; Learning walk feedback
- Sports competition records; Performing arts event programmes; Newsletter/assembly logs

Next steps:

- Target cohort at 85–95% to reach 95%+; maintain weekly attendance summaries to tutors/HOY
- Continue form tutor mentoring and parental engagement; plans in place for all PA students
- Review rewards system for perceived value; maintain therapeutic behaviour training
- Compile case studies evidencing sustained behaviour improvements across groups

Personal Development & Well-being (Exceptional)

Personal development is outstanding and continues to strengthen. A coherent programme builds confidence, resilience and reflection. SMSC is exceptionally strong; RRSA Silver achieved with work towards Gold. Awe and wonder are realised through enrichment (Royal Albert Hall, The Lion King MD, international rugby player, whole-school shows). Careers education meets Gatsby benchmarks; Year 11 spend half a day per week in college; destinations broadened with zero NEETs for four years.

Key evidence:

- PSICHE/SMSC curriculum maps; Assemblies programme
- RRSA documentation (Silver) and action plan towards Gold
- Enrichment logs; Event programmes; Photographic evidence
- Careers reports and Gatsby benchmark evaluation; Work experience logs
- Destination data; College timetables; Partnership agreements

Next steps:

- Audit SEF Personal Development commentary against statutory and non-statutory guidance
- Maintain breadth and quality of enrichment linked to curriculum intent
- Track and evaluate student leadership, character and cultural capital indicators

Leadership & Governance (Strong)

Leadership provides clear vision, accurate self-evaluation and effective improvement planning. Governors offer robust challenge and know the school well through visits and committees. Workforce development is a key strength: high-quality CPD, strong retention and progression (TA/UQT to teacher; promotions to senior leadership). The school is oversubscribed, recognised locally, and outward-facing in sharing best practice.

Key evidence:

- SEF and School Development Plan; Impact reports; Termly progress monitoring
- Governor visit logs; Committee minutes; Monitoring records
- CPD records; Training logs; Staff development reviews
- HR retention data; Admissions and oversubscription figures
- Parent and student voice surveys; LA feedback

Next steps:

- Update SEF using Ofsted evaluative criteria (Inspection Toolkit) to benchmark judgements
- Provide training for middle leaders to lead whole-school priorities
- Prioritise staff workload and wellbeing; maintain accurate improvement planning
- Support the new Chair of Governors via induction, mentoring and regular strategy meetings

HFL SEA Visit (11 May 2026) confirmed strong teaching, accurate leadership evaluation, and consistent curriculum delivery across lessons, with minor refinements identified in LSA deployment and lesson planning progression.