

# Violet Way Academy

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	136762
<b>Local authority</b>	Not applicable
<b>Inspection number</b>	384807
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Steve Nelson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Academy
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	277
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Arthur Goldstraw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dianne Marshall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Violet Way Burton-on-Trent DE15 9ES
<b>Telephone number</b>	01283 239778
<b>Fax number</b>	01283 239779
<b>Email address</b>	principal@violetway.staffs.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Steve Nelson	Additional Inspector
Janet Bird	Additional Inspector
Heather Phillips	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 24 lessons taught by 11 teachers. They also listened to pupils read and observed assemblies. In addition, meetings were held with the Principal, the senior leadership team, the Chair of the Governing Body, and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and looked at its self-evaluation documents and development plans. They also scrutinised the school's data on pupils' achievement, the Principal's records of the monitoring of teachers' performance, samples of pupils' work, safeguarding information, behaviour records, and the minutes for the governing body meetings. Inspectors analysed 102 questionnaires from parents and carers.

## Information about the school

The school became an academy on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2011. Violet Way Academy is an above average-sized infant school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are a few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. The school has achieved a number of awards, including the BECTA award for ICT, Healthy Schools, full Dyslexia Friendly, Artsmark Gold, and permanent Eco-School status.

There is a privately run nursery and out-of-school club on site. That provision is subject to a separate Ofsted inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. The outstanding leadership of the Principal ensures that expectations and the quality of teaching are consistently high. As a result, pupils learn very effectively and achieve exceptionally well.
- Pupils make excellent progress and achievement is outstanding. Children make rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The excellent start is built on effectively as they move through the school, resulting in pupils' attainment being significantly above average by the end of Year 2. Highly effective provision for those pupils who have barriers to learning ensures that there are no differences of achievement between any groups of pupils.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers use their excellent skills and expertise to plan lessons that successfully enthuse, motivate, and meet the interests and learning needs of all pupils extremely well. Teachers and teaching assistants are highly effective in ensuring that pupils know exactly what they need to do and how to do it.
- Behaviour is excellent in and out of lessons. Pupils enjoy school immensely. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning are seen in the way they work together cooperatively and collaboratively. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in various situations, including water, fire, and road safety. Attendance is above average.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. Termly pupil progress meetings held with all teachers and senior leaders ensure that teachers are accountable for the progress of every pupil. The curriculum is vibrant and reflects the interests of the pupils, helping them to become effective learners. A particular strength is the excellent use of information communication technology (ICT) to promote learning. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is outstanding. However, while very good attention is given to ensuring pupils use and develop their basic skills, opportunities are sometimes

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missed to apply their numeracy skills in different subjects.

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

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills throughout the curriculum, particularly in the Forest School activities.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Children make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from generally expected starting points. By the end of Reception Year, children enter Year 1 having reached above age-related expected skills levels, particularly in communication, language and literacy, problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, and in their personal development. As one parent, representing the view of many, said, 'My child has made excellent progress and is challenged with lots of fun and exciting activities.' The outstanding progress continues throughout the main school. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is consistently significantly above average for pupils of a similar age in reading, writing, and mathematics. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels is significantly greater than the average.

Pupils' high level of interest and genuine enjoyment of learning have a major impact on their excellent progress. That is particularly the case in the many lessons when they are actively engaged in challenging activities and are discovering things for themselves. For example, in a Year 1 writing lesson, pupils showed high levels of interest and engagement and made rapid progress in writing sentences to describe toys and how objects move, before having to present their findings to the class. Examples of pupils' writing observed in lessons and during work scrutiny showed pupils of all abilities making good or better progress against their targets.

Pupils' reading abilities are significantly above average and they talk about how they learn to read and their favourite books with considerable enthusiasm. That is because the school, very effectively, uses a systematic programme for the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) and because pupils are encouraged to read regularly at home. That gives pupils a good start to their reading and they are confident readers by the end of Year 2. The best readers could, confidently, discuss favourite genres and authors.

All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make the same outstanding progress as all others. That is a result of exceptionally well-targeted provision, including highly effective teaching by teachers and teaching assistants throughout the school. All parents and carers believe their children are making good progress and the findings of the inspection corroborate their views.

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## Quality of teaching

Teaching is outstanding. There is a high level of consistency in the approaches used by all teachers, in their high expectations, and in the positive attitudes to learning that they develop in the pupils. Teachers plan very well for the learning needs of all pupils. The marking of pupils' work and oral feedback are developed well in most classes and help pupils effectively to improve their work, as they follow up on their teachers' comments for improvement or tackle additional challenging tasks.

In Reception Year, children, eagerly, participate in the wide range of stimulating activities available for them. Children show immense enjoyment when working under the direction of adults and when playing independently. For example, at the start of the day, they looked at photographs of their woodland experiences with much excitement, talking animatedly about their experiences of making tents, constructing imaginary furniture and using tools to make campsite badges.

Teaching of early reading skills is systematic and thorough. There is highly skilful teaching of the links between sounds and letters and reading throughout the school. As a result, children make outstanding progress in reading and writing. In a Year 1 lesson, the interactive whiteboard was used expertly to enhance pupils' ability to read and write words with a known spelling pattern. It was delivered at pace, with children sorting real or pseudo words into the 'bin' or 'treasure trove'.

Teachers and teaching assistants in all classes, regularly, check pupils' understanding through effective use of questioning. For example, pupils in a Year 2 mathematics lesson were asked challenging questions that required detailed answers about partitioning numbers into hundreds, tens and units. That developed pupils' higher-level analytical skills effectively. Planned cross-curricular work is highly effective in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural awareness. Pupils are enthralled by the current theme of outer space. Inspectors saw pupils using materials to create imaginary worlds, with illustrations of space ships, flying saucers, and aliens. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were set the challenging task of designing an interactive 'Planets' game for Year 1 pupils to play.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported very well and highly effective work is planned carefully to allow them to succeed. The vast majority of parents and carers think that their children are well taught. One parent commented, 'My child loves the hands-on learning. He enjoys doing the Woodlands and Forest School activities.' The inspection evidence supports those views.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to assess risks and keep themselves safe in different situations, including when using the internet. They feel very safe at school and know to whom to turn if they have any concerns. Parents and carers who replied to the inspection questionnaire confirm this view. The older pupils are very aware of the different forms that bullying can take, such as verbal and physical, but

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such occurrences are extremely rare and dealt with effectively by the school. Attendance is above average and pupils are punctual.

An analysis of the comprehensive records kept by the school, a scrutiny of risk assessment, and observations during the inspection all confirmed that the behaviour and safety of pupils are strengths of the school and this conclusion was reflected in pupils' highly positive attitudes observed in all activities.

Pupils know the high standards of behaviour expected of them. The school is a very calm, orderly community. In lessons, pupils listen attentively, contribute to discussions confidently and work very hard. Relationships are excellent. Around the school, pupils play well together and are very kind to one another. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire agreed, or strongly agreed, that there was a good standard of behaviour in the school and that lessons were not disrupted. Inspectors judged behaviour to be outstanding.

### **Leadership and management**

The Principal is the driving force behind the school's success, providing outstanding leadership and a vision for the school, to which all staff are committed. Staff morale is high and all are proud to be members of this school community.

The leadership and management of teaching are outstanding. Staff comment favourably about how they have benefitted from professional development opportunities to enhance their skills. In particular, thorough monitoring of the quality of teaching, coaching and training are focused sharply on helping teachers to improve their practice. The Principal and senior leaders check the progress of each pupil frequently to identify individuals or small groups who are not doing as well as expected. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved to outstanding.

The excellent curriculum is broad and balanced, with a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. Extremely well-planned enrichment activities, such as the residential school trip to the Kingswood Activity centre, visits to museums and theatres, and visitors to the school, ensure the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is outstanding. The curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils to use their reading, writing and ICT skills. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to practise their good numeracy skills in the Forest School and in other subjects.

The school is exceptionally successful in developing an inclusive ethos and has very effective systems for eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunities for all pupils to be successful. The school has a very strong capacity to maintain and build on the improvements made. That is because it has an accurate view of its provision and highly enthusiastic staff who are skilful at leading development. Recommendations from the previous inspection have all been implemented. The governing body monitors the work of the school closely and provides strong support and challenge in helping drive improvement. Leaders ensure

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that arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and meet statutory requirements.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



15 June 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Violet Way Academy, Burton upon Trent, DE15 9ES**

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We were glad to be able to talk with you and see you at work and play. We enjoyed particularly discussing with you about what it is like to be a pupil in your school, hearing you read and coming to your lessons. Your parents and carers are very pleased with the school. This letter is to tell you that we found that Violet Way Academy is an outstanding school. Some of the things that make it outstanding are that:

- you behave extremely well and you are very helpful, thoughtful and polite
- you work hard and you make outstanding progress all the way through school and reach high standards
- you enjoy your lessons and your curriculum topics are interesting and exciting
- you have excellent school leaders, managers and teachers who make sure you are safe.

To help your school to be even better, we have asked your Principal and senior leaders to make sure you are given opportunities throughout the curriculum to use your good numeracy skills, when, for example, you are doing work in the Forest School. You can help by continuing your very good work and enjoying everything you do at school.

We send you our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Steve Nelson  
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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