

Values Academy

Grove Road, Stockingford, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV10 8JX

Inspection dates

10–12 July 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Sixth form provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have systematically addressed every point for improvement identified by the previous inspection. They have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Leaders have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have strengthened teaching. As a result, outcomes for pupils are improving but still have further to go to be good.
- The school's broad, varied and interesting curriculum has a strong focus on pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development. Ample experiences in art and music enhance pupils' enjoyment of learning.
- Adults work hard to support pupils to settle well into school and to begin to enjoy learning.
- Safeguarding practice is strong. Pupils feel safe at all times. This feeling of security contributes to the growing confidence that pupils show in their relationships and in their learning.
- The current quality of teaching in the vast majority of subjects is good, including in the sixth form.
- New mathematics and science teachers have inspired pupils to work hard during the past six months. Pupils' knowledge and skills in mathematics and science are improving quickly because of these recent and significant improvements to teaching.
- Teachers have been successful in motivating pupils to read. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to improve their writing skills and develop a wider vocabulary. As a result, their progress in writing is not strong.
- Leaders have introduced a framework for assessment of pupils' work in different subjects. However, they do not check pupils' progress in reading, writing and speaking separately. Consequently, the results of assessments do not pinpoint areas for improvement sharply enough, particularly in writing.
- Leaders are able to ensure that some pupils gain from therapeutic opportunities. However, these opportunities are not available often enough. As a result, expertise in mental health does not support the pupils well enough.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes for pupils and further improve teaching by:
 - finding motivating ways to encourage pupils to improve their writing skills and develop a wider vocabulary for use in range of subjects
 - ensuring that the assessment of pupils' work in English provides robust information about pupils' skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing so that areas where pupils need to improve can be more precisely identified
 - further strengthening the therapeutic curriculum so that the school does more to address pupils' mental health issues.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have ensured that the school meets all of the independent school standards.
- Leaders are determined to ensure that their values of 'respect, courage, honesty, compassion and integrity' are seen in everything that they do. They have a good awareness of the school's effectiveness. They have successfully addressed a clear set of priorities that have had a positive impact on both the emotional and academic progress of the pupils.
- The chief executive officer, the new principal and the school leaders are well equipped with experience of education and care and provide good support to the teaching staff.
- The new headteacher strongly supports the school leader, who knows all the pupils extremely well. There is a cohesive team of teachers, team leaders and mentors, whose work has a significant impact on improving pupils' emotional well-being.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and includes many opportunities for vocational experiences, as well as making provision for a wide number of academic subjects, including mathematics, English, science and information technology (IT). Creative subjects like art, media studies and cooking also have a high priority.
- All pupils follow Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network courses, from which they receive personal development accreditations. These modules help pupils to prepare for working life, to solve problems and to understand the local community and learn about the wider world. Consequently, they develop new knowledge and skills.
- Educational visits widen pupils' horizons and extend their knowledge of history, geography and science. They have visited, for example, Bosworth battlefield, a transport museum, a science museum and Warwick Castle. Pupils learn about the way institutions work in this country by visiting the army careers service, health clinics, local libraries and the local refuse centre. Other visits are arranged as rewards, for example to restaurants, go-karting and theme parks. As a result, pupils are motivated to work hard.
- The school keeps good records of all pupils' progress and their individual needs. Records of each individual pupil's behaviour and starting points are thorough and provide a reliable basis for discussing their academic and social progress. Good tracking and monitoring of behaviour patterns enables leaders to take action when needed and to support pupils effectively.
- Before pupils join the school, leaders work closely with parents, carers and other stakeholders to gather information, which assists with the smooth transition into school.
- Staff benefit from a strong programme of performance management. In addition, professional development supports all staff to continue to develop their practice. As a result, staff feel well supported in their roles.
- Staff morale is high. All staff who completed the staff questionnaire indicated that they enjoy working at the school. They say that leaders and managers support them well in their roles at the school and in their personal well-being. A typical comment was 'I believe our principal, our school leader and team leaders do a wonderful job of managing our school.'

- Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school. They very much appreciate the support their children are given. They talk about their children 'thriving from being at this school'.

Governance

- The trustees are a highly experienced and work hard to support the vulnerable pupils who attend Values Academy.
- They are experienced in finance as well as school leadership and have significant knowledge of educating pupils who have special educational needs (SEN).
- Strong support and challenge to leaders is provided through monthly meetings of the board of trustees. The trustees are also a welcome presence within the school, providing well-informed support for teachers.

Safeguarding

- Leaders ensure that safeguarding is effective. Every member of the school team is well trained to regularly detail concerns. As a result, pupils are safe and well supported.
- The schools safeguarding policy is available on the website. It meets current government requirements. Practice in school matches the requirements of the policy.
- Staff use the school's safeguarding recording system well. This system records all the details of safeguarding concerns and actions. Safeguarding training includes the recognition of signs of extremism and radicalisation. As a result, staff all know how to safeguard the pupils.
- A staff debriefing at the end of each school day ensures that all concerns are made clear to leaders. Consequently, leaders are able to act quickly on arising issues.
- The building is clean and well maintained. Appropriate fire-safety measures ensure that pupils can leave the building quickly in case of fire. A health and safety officer checks the building regularly for safety hazards.
- One pupil is a representative on the school health and safety committee. This ensures that pupils themselves know about safety concerns related to buildings and prepares them for their adult lives.
- Leaders make sure that they assess all risks associated with the building, with school visits and with the pupils themselves, if necessary. This includes making sure that all the off-site facilities that the pupils use are safe. Consequently, leaders can be sure that they adopt robust measures to safeguard pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Recent improvements to quality of teaching mean that current pupils are now making much better progress than they used to.
- The school is a calm and supportive place where pupils are able to apply themselves to learning. Teachers care deeply about pupils' personal well-being and educational progress. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. This positive environment supports pupils to concentrate on their work.

- Regular diagnostic assessment identifies gaps in knowledge and understanding that have developed because of disruption to their previous schooling. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this and the knowledge from their assessments to plan appropriate activities for the pupils. These activities help to ensure that gaps in knowledge are filled.
- Teaching staff make good use of high-quality resources that have been recently provided by the school. Pupils are taught either individually or in very small groups. This creates a supportive atmosphere where their individual needs are met. Supportive displays encourage pupils to learn from mistakes or to be persistent in their learning. Consequently, pupils are often reminded of positive qualities that support learning.
- Teachers, team leaders and mentors are skilled at managing pupils who have challenging behaviour. They manage behaviour well because they have been well trained and are well aware of the personal needs of each pupil. They ensure that learning proceeds at a pace that suits each pupil.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and encourage pupils to develop their thinking skills. They ask demanding questions that require considered responses. Mentors are also skilled in questioning so that pupils develop their answers well. Teachers also make good links to the work taking place in other subjects of the curriculum. In art, for example, pupils were creating illuminated letters. The work was purposeful and included the teaching of literacy, mathematics and design technology skills.
- Good use is made of pupils' own interests. During this inspection, for example, teachers capitalised on pupils' interest in a famous rapper who had recently died. They studied text relating to him in English and, in art, pupils were encouraged to include the rapper's words as an inspirational statement. Pupils were well motivated because teaching inspired them.
- Recently pupils have been working particularly hard in mathematics and science. The work in their books shows that they are highly motivated to complete their work to a good standard. Pupils said that they thought they were good at mathematics and that science is interesting and fun.
- Teachers have successfully encouraged pupils to enjoy reading different materials. Pupils have developed the confidence to read aloud and take part in discussions about the texts they read and the video material that they watch. However, teachers do not put as much focus on motivating pupils to work on their writing skills. As a result, their progress in writing is limited and they do not consolidate the new vocabulary that they learn in all lessons across the curriculum.

Teachers usually use the school's assessment framework well to ensure that they identify pupils who are falling behind and then help them to catch up. They are able to plan new learning for pupils in subjects such as mathematics on the basis of these assessments. However, teachers do not assess the skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing separately. As a result, the information obtained from assessment is not detailed enough to pinpoint areas where pupils need to improve their skills in English. This has not restricted pupils' progress in reading but has limited their progress in writing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural teaching supports pupils to develop a good understanding of equalities. Pupils say, 'In this country men and women and different races get equal rights, which is good. People should not be put down for what they are. Other people should be treated exactly the same as you would want to be treated.'
- A variety of visits and school celebrations extend pupils' knowledge of other religions. For example, pupils have visited a mosque and a local church, as well as Coombe Abbey. They have celebrated Diwali, Eid, the Chinese New Year and Christmas in school. As a result, they are able to make comparisons between religions and discuss similarities.
- Pupils have excellent relationships with their mentors. Mentors ensure that lessons about personal development take place in a relaxed situation where pupils feel confident to talk about issues that strongly affect their own lives. Consequently, pupils feel secure enough to take part in informal discussions, including listening to the views of others. They all say that they feel safe in school and they know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are fully aware of how to remain safe online.
- Pupils have good opportunities in alternative provision to develop vocational learning. They learn, for example, car maintenance, construction, digital media studies or gardening. They have opportunities to obtain certificates and awards in these subjects. As a result, they become more prepared for the world of work and develop knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils learn about democracy and learn to take responsibility through their involvement in the fairness committee, the disciplinary committee, the fundraising committee and the health and safety committee. Meetings discuss positives and negatives and participants come to decisions, for example about who to raise funds for and whether or not action was fair. Decisions are made through voting. This ensures that they understand how democracy works.
- High-quality careers advice and work experience are offered to all pupils. The school leader is experienced in supporting pupils with career choices. Pupils also have visits from specialist careers advisers, who offer independent advice, and meet representatives from a national apprentice scheme. All pupils spoken to by the inspector had clear ideas about their preferences and future careers. They spoke about continuing into further education or becoming, for example, a chef, a politician or a bricklayer.
- Pupils have had experience of working, for example, in a car sales and valeting company, a garage where they learned mechanics, a retail shop and a recycling company. Consequently, pupils gain an insight into the world of work.
- Teachers ensure that pupils have opportunities to raise money for charities. For example, pupils raised funds for Comic Relief, Sport Relief and Children in Need. They entertained old people from the local community to tea and coffee as well as growing their own produce to sell to local residents. As a result of this work, they have developed an awareness of the needs of others.
- Pupils enjoy the therapeutic experience of writing raps about their personal experiences

and setting these to rhythm. They also have some opportunities for therapeutic support from child and adolescent mental health services, but these opportunities do not happen often. As a result, their mental health needs are not fully met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and respectful to staff and visitors.
- The vast majority of pupils attend well. The school works hard to improve the attendance of those who do not attend regularly enough, with some of these pupils making great improvements to their previous attendance.
- As pupils settle into school their behaviour improves and, as a result, they achieve their personal behaviour targets. Records show that pupils have achieved more personal targets each term, with the summer term showing the best results.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- While good leadership and significant improvements to the quality of teaching have boosted progress, pupils still have some ground to make up, particularly in their writing.
- The school has helped pupils to overcome their previous difficulties with learning. Parents say that their children have gained confidence since starting at this school and pupils agree with this. The school has entered pupils for many more examinations this year compared with previous years.
- The vast majority of pupils in key stage 3 have made good progress in reading from their starting points, with less progress evident in writing. This is because there has been more emphasis placed on the teaching of reading, particularly on developing reading comprehension skills. Pupils of all abilities have made good progress in mathematics and science over the last six months because teaching has improved.
- The vast majority of pupils in key stage 4, including the most able, have made good progress in mathematics and science over the last six months. They have made insufficient progress from their starting points over time in writing. They have, however, become more enthusiastic about reading books and articles from the internet, which has made a positive impact on their recent progress in reading.
- All pupils in the school have had good opportunities to be involved in vocational studies and the vast majority have gained certificates and awards from external providers in these subjects. For example, pupils have gained certificates in construction, vehicle maintenance and media studies. They spend either one or two days per week with providers of alternative provision.
- Pupils have good opportunities to read. The school has bought a wide variety of materials for the teaching of reading. Teachers find interesting articles for them to read from the internet.
- All pupils in Year 11 are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and have attained relevant qualifications. Some will move on to post-16 destinations in further education. Some are staying at Values Academy for a further year.

Sixth form provision

Good

- In line with the rest of the school, leadership of the sixth form is good. This is reflected in good-quality teaching in the vast majority of subjects, as well as the good support for students' personal development, behaviour and welfare. The few students in the sixth form are taught in mixed-age groups, along with the rest of the school. Safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- Leaders ensure that students in the sixth form have good support for transition to further education and provide excellent support for students' personal needs and issues. As a result, students feel well supported and know that leaders want the best for them.
- Sixth-form students have good opportunities to take on responsibilities, to engage in problem-solving activities and team leadership training. For example, they have the opportunity to chair meetings with members of staff and to attend National Citizenship Scheme residential courses.
- Sixth-form students follow a similar curriculum to pupils in the rest of the school, with programmes focusing on essential skills in English, mathematics and IT. Some of them have taken GCSEs in English, mathematics and art as well as, for example, functional skills at entry levels, level one and level two. They also follow courses in, for example, history, personal, social, health and economic education, cooking and physical education (PE) which are not accredited.
- All students in the sixth form have made good progress in reading from their starting points because there has been a strong emphasis on this. They have made less progress in writing. In mathematics, the vast majority of pupils have made strong progress over the last six months because teaching in this subject has improved significantly.
- Students are given good careers advice and guidance and opportunities for work experience. The vast majority of pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and have attained relevant qualifications that support their progress to further education.

School details

Unique reference number	137597
DfE registration number	937/6000
Inspection number	10038846

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	23
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	6
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	Values Academy
Chair	Simon Livings
Headteacher	Caroline Swift
Annual fees (day pupils)	£25,605
Telephone number	02476 326383
Website	www.valuesacademy.org.uk
Email address	caroline.swift@valuesacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–20 November 2015

Information about this school

- Values Academy was last inspected in November 2015.
- Values Academy is an independent secondary special day school located in a residential area of Nuneaton, Warwickshire. It is owned by Values Academy, a privately owned non-profit-making limited company, which is also a registered charity.

- The mission of the school is to improve quality of life for young people through values-based education. The school aims to develop pupils' character by teaching them about important life values. It provides regular opportunities for pupils to practise applying these values in weekly community group meetings and pupil-led committees for fairness, discipline and equal opportunities. The school's key values are respect, courage, honesty, compassion and integrity.
- The school provides education for male and female pupils aged 11 to 18 years old who have experienced social, emotional and mental health difficulties. There are currently 23 pupils on roll. At the time of the inspection all pupils were boys.
- The school caters for pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans and pupils who are cared for by local authorities. At the time of the inspection all pupils had EHC plans. Several pupils have autism spectrum disorder. Many pupils have been permanently excluded or withdrawn from their previous education.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club for pupils.
- The school principal took up her role in October 2017. Pupils at the school have PE lessons at Vale View Community Centre, Stockingford, Nuneaton.
- The school uses alternative providers to offer vocational opportunities and work experience for young people. These alternative providers are: Positive Youth Foundation, Coventry; Coventry Building Workshop; CWT Work Related Learning; U-neek, Hinkley; Positive Impact, Nuneaton; Greenacres, Northamptonshire; Moor Farm, Corley and Creative Optimistic Visions, Coventry.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in a sample of lessons and scrutinised a variety of pupils' books. The inspector made observations of pupils at break and as they moved about the school and interacted with members of staff.
- The inspector held meetings with the chief executive officer of Values Academy, the headteacher, the school business manager, the school leader who leads on safeguarding, SEN and pastoral care, two team leaders and the English teacher. She also held a meeting with the chair of the trustees and two other trustees.
- The inspector scrutinised schemes of work and lesson plans as well as a variety of documents about pupils' needs and progress as well as safeguarding. She scrutinised risk assessments for the school building and the leisure centre where pupils have PE, and for individual pupils and external visits.
- The inspector toured the school premises, including the recreation ground where pupils play games.
- The inspector spoke to several parents on the telephone and several of the pupils. There were no responses to the Ofsted parent questionnaire, Parent View. The inspector took account of 19 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- The inspector spoke on the telephone to a member of a local authority that places pupils in the school.

Inspection team

Mary Maybank, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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