

Vyners School

Warren Road, Ickenham, Uxbridge UB10 8AB

Inspection dates

1–2 May 2019

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
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders have built on the school's previous strengths. Pupils, therefore, now benefit from an outstanding education.
- Leaders, trustees and local governors strive for excellence. They have strong systems in place for checking the school's work and planning for continual improvement.
- Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subjects. They benefit from a comprehensive programme of training. They use assessment information effectively to plan activities that support all groups of pupils to make substantial gains across subjects.
- Pupils make outstanding progress across key stages 3 and 4 to attain standards that are consistently above national averages.
- Pupils thrive on a broad curriculum and plentiful enrichment activities. The curriculum makes a particularly positive impact on pupils' academic success, and their personal development and welfare. It prepares them extremely well for their future lives.
- Pupils in the specialist hearing impairment resource base (HIRB), and others with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), thrive. This is because leaders make sure that the curriculum, teaching, support and therapies are sharply tailored to meet their needs.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes towards learning. They work diligently, and are keen to succeed. Pupils welcome diversity, and are respectful towards all people, whatever their culture, faiths, lifestyles or abilities.
- New leaders have secured notable improvements this year in the sixth form. They have successfully addressed the previous decline. Teaching and students' attendance rates have markedly improved. As a result, current students make good progress across subjects. The provision prepares them well for their future careers.
- Pupils across key stages 3 and 4 benefit from a comprehensive programme of impartial careers advice and guidance. Work experience in the sixth form, however, is less effective. For some students, the placements have no useful bearing on their career aspirations.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the work to improve the sixth form so that it is outstanding by ensuring that:
 - teaching and students' outcomes continue to improve
 - all Year 12 students gain quality work experience that is relevant to their career aspirations.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The new headteacher, other leaders, trustees and governors are highly ambitious. They share and communicate a common vision to support pupils and staff to meet their potential. Leaders place a strong emphasis on academic success and on building pupils' character and their sense of responsibility. As a result, teaching, pastoral care and the range of enrichment opportunities helps pupils to secure outstanding academic achievement, and personal development and welfare.
- Leaders are highly committed to staff training and development. Teachers and leaders agree a personalised career plan. Staff attend training, and benefit from coaching support in the school. Furthermore, the school works closely with the trust's partner schools and various national educational organisations. Staff attend courses and share best practice. School leaders and staff contribute more widely to education by delivering training to other organisations. As a result, staff develop excellent professional skills, and their morale is high. Teaching is outstanding, and leaders at all levels secure school improvement.
- Leadership of inclusion is very effective. Leaders have high aspirations for pupils with SEND, including those who are supported in the HIRB. Well-trained teachers of the deaf, and support staff, have an in-depth knowledge of pupils' needs. They plan a personalised curriculum, accordingly. There is strong liaison with parents, and therapists support pupils with individualised programmes. They train staff and pupils on how to support and include pupils with hearing and visual impairment, for example. Furthermore, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) trains staff on how to meet the needs of pupils with SEND in their lessons. As a result, pupils with SEND make substantial gains in their learning and social development. The school prepares them extremely well for the next stage of their education.
- The curriculum offers pupils a range of subjects. These are mainly academic courses, but there are some vocational options. Leaders are responsive to pupils' needs and interests. Pupils with home languages other than English are supported to take GCSE qualifications in their home language as an additional qualification. The proportion of pupils who study the subjects required to qualify for the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) accreditation is above that found nationally. It is below the government's aspirations for 75% of pupils entering for the EBacc by 2022.
- The EBacc subject with the least amount of entries is modern foreign languages. Until last year, pupils could study French and/or German GCSE. Pupils told leaders that they would like to learn Spanish. As a result, leaders introduced Spanish into the curriculum this year, and a small number of Year 11 students are taking the GCSE Spanish examination. With this change, leaders aspire for more pupils to gain the EBacc accreditation.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. For example, the formal curriculum provides lessons on ethics and different faiths and workshops on combating stereotyping. Additionally, there is an extensive range of enrichment activities. These include multiple choirs, bands and ensembles, national debating competitions and international sporting events.

- The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to Ofsted’s online questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school’s work.

Governance of the school

- Trustees have overall responsibility for governance. They delegate day-to-day monitoring functions, mainly around standards, teaching and pupils’ behaviour and attendance, to the local governing body (LGB).
- Governors check on the quality of teaching, and analyse pupils’ progress information. They invite middle leaders to report at committee meetings, in addition to the headteacher and senior leaders who regularly report on their work.
- Twice a year, members of the LGB and some trustees spend a day in the school. They attend lessons, speak with leaders, other staff and pupils. In addition, some visit the school regularly to check on different aspects of the school’s work. As a result, they know the school well and hold leaders to account.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Three leaders have completed the designated safeguarding leader training. They organise regular training and updates for all members of staff. There is a strong culture of vigilance. Governors and staff are aware that there are changes happening in the local area. They are alert to these and report any signs that may indicate a pupil is at risk.
- Members of staff, especially the year leaders, know pupils well. In order to protect pupils, they carry out extensive preventative work to identify potential risks.
- Leaders work closely with parents and external agencies to support pupils at risk. Meticulous records show that leaders are tenacious in following up concerns.
- The curriculum helps pupils understand how to stay safe in different situations. For example, police officers run workshops on staying safe. These include the dangers of knife crime, gangs and use of social media.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers and other members of staff researched effective teaching practice, and what works best for pupils in the school. Based on their findings, leaders devised the school’s agreed principles for effective teaching. These principles underpin the school’s induction programme for new teachers, and for ongoing training. Furthermore, leaders encourage teachers to implement and test out new approaches. As a result, teaching has improved, and is routinely outstanding. This enables pupils to make substantial progress in their learning.
- Typically, teachers and support staff have very high expectations of pupils’ behaviour and attitudes to work. They establish clear routines and plan activities that engage pupils. As a result, pupils work diligently, using their time in lessons efficiently.
- Teachers plan activities that systematically build on pupils’ prior learning. They challenge pupils to apply their learning in new contexts, and to solve increasingly

challenging problems. In addition, they frequently give pupils exercises to help them recall their previous learning and embed it into their long-term memory.

- Teachers regularly assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. In line with the school's policy, they give pupils feedback on how well they are progressing towards their targets, and how to improve their work. Teachers use assessment information to identify misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge. They address these in lessons or through additional support sessions.
- Teachers work effectively to extend pupils' vocabulary. Across subjects, there is a strong focus on developing pupils' ability to articulate their ideas and thoughts. Teachers question pupils effectively, probing their responses to deepen their thinking. They make good use of quality resources to support learning. In the upper years, teachers make sure that pupils are well versed in the academic rigour required for success in examinations.
- Teaching and support for pupils with SEND are routinely well planned to meet pupils' needs. As a result, these pupils make outstanding progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have opportunities to participate and work collaboratively in many enrichment activities, and to take on leadership roles. These include pupils from all year groups putting on theatrical productions and music concerts and arranging charity fundraising events. Over time, the school's swing band has raised over half a million pounds for charity. Pupils take on roles as year or school councillors, prefects or sports captains, and arrange sporting events in local primary schools, for example. These and many other opportunities help pupils to gain self-confidence and develop a sense of responsibility for the community.
- Leaders promote pupils' mental health, emotional well-being and safety, extremely well. Pupils learn about mental health, and staff attended training on how to identify possible mental health issues, and how to support pupils. The school employs a part-time counsellor. Staff, parents and pupils can make referrals, should they need this support. If pupils have any concerns, they know that they can report this online and seek help from a member of staff.
- Pupils have many opportunities to learn how to keep themselves healthy. They learn about healthy eating and the dangers of substance abuse, for instance. In addition to physical education lessons, pupils have access to a range of other sporting opportunities, such as mountain bike cycling and zumba dancing. Leaders encourage pupils to take part in competitive sports, and some school teams participate in overseas sporting fixtures, such as the rugby team tournament in Canada.
- Pupils, from Year 7 onwards, benefit from a comprehensive careers guidance programme. This includes annual career fairs, which include alumni speakers. Every subject appoints a careers champion, so that pupils can discuss future career options in specific subject areas. Year 11 pupils have one-to-one discussions with an impartial

careers guidance advisor. These opportunities enable pupils to make well-informed choices in terms of their GCSE and post-16 options.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are unfailingly courteous and welcoming to visitors. They are fully signed up to the school's inclusive ethos, and show respect for all.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times is excellent. They conduct themselves sensibly and maturely. They take pride in the school and care about the environment. Their extremely positive attitudes to learning make a very strong contribution to their progress.
- Rates of exclusion have reduced over the past few years and are below average.
- Pupils attend school regularly. Leaders work effectively with pupils and their parents to address any poor attendance. As a result, no group of pupils is adversely affected by low attendance. Persistent absence is routinely below national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Over time, as they move up the school, pupils make substantial and sustained progress across the range of subjects. As a result, they leave Year 11 with standards, including in English and mathematics, which are consistently above national average. Disadvantaged pupils make stronger progress than other pupils, nationally.
- Inspection evidence confirms that pupils in key stages 3 and 4 make significantly above average progress across the curriculum. This is because teaching and support is routinely outstanding.
- Pupils in the specially resourced provision, as well as others with SEND, make outstanding progress. This is because leaders have high ambitions for their success. Staff design a bespoke curriculum to meet pupils' needs and aspirations. They make sure that pupils with SEND access high-quality teaching, support and therapies suited to their needs.
- The school prepares pupils exceptionally well for the next stages of their lives. Pupils complete Year 11 with high academic standards, strong personal development and excellent attitudes to learning.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leadership of the sixth form is good. Following a decline in outcomes in 2018, when progress was well below average, leaders took decisive action to reverse the trend. They have achieved a great deal this academic year, securing marked improvements in many aspects of the provision.
- Leaders prioritised improving teaching in the sixth form this year. Inspection evidence shows that, across subjects, teachers routinely plan good lessons that meet students' needs. Leaders put in place robust systems for checking students' progress. Leaders

use this information to hold teachers to account. Teachers use the information well to identify students who need extra help. As a result, students make strong progress in their different subjects.

- Leaders took determined action to make sure that students attend school regularly. Since the start of the academic year, Year 13 attendance has increased by 17 percentage points, compared to the same period last year. Students have strong attitudes to learning, and they are keen to succeed. They work conscientiously in lessons. Furthermore, throughout the day, students use the study room and/or other quiet spaces to work independently.
- Students have a strong understanding of risk and how to keep themselves safe. Sixth-form students, in collaboration with students in three other local schools, delivered a workshop in the borough about the 'Prevent' duty. The project was set up to create teaching materials for use in local schools, and was supported by Brunel University and the local authority 'Prevent' team.
- In line with students' and parents' aspirations, the curriculum is largely academic, although there are some vocational options. The few students who have not attained a good GCSE pass in English or mathematics can study to resit the GCSE examination in those subjects. These students routinely attain a GCSE pass during Year 12.
- Students benefit from many enrichment opportunities that support their learning and personal development. English literature students, for example, listen to podcast critiques of texts and attend workshops run by the critics. Students can participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, mentor younger pupils and run sporting activities in local primary schools. House captains write and produce drama and musical productions for pupils of all ages, in their house groups.
- The school supports students well to make decisions about the next stage of their education or training, and in pursuing their aspirations for the future. This is because the school has a comprehensive and impartial careers advice and guidance programme. Activities include workshops on writing a curriculum vitae and one-to-one interview practice.
- Although leaders encourage Year 12 students to undertake work experience, almost one in four students, last year, did not find a placement. Among those that did, some placements were not related to their career goals. Leaders have, this year, been trying to secure an improved uptake. However, some Year 12 pupils do not have a placement that will be helpful for their future careers.
- The school prepares students well for the next stages of their lives. This is because they make good progress, experience a range of enrichment activities, and contribute to the community. Over time, most go on to study at university, with others proceeding to apprenticeships or employment.

School details

Unique reference number	137635
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	10058852

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,174
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	263
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Peter Davies
Headteacher	Gary Mullings
Telephone number	01895 234 342
Website	www.vynersschool.org.uk
Email address	office@vynersschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 March 2018

Information about this school

- The school became an academy on 1 November 2011. It is part of the Vanguard Learning Trust.
- Academy trustees have overall responsibility for governance. They delegate some functions, mainly around standards, teaching and pupils' behaviour and attendance, to the LGB.
- There is specialist resource provision for up to 16 deaf pupils. There are currently 16 pupils in the provision.
- The sixth form is part of the 4H Consortium, which is a partnership with three other

secondary schools. The consortium is at the early stages of development. A few students attend courses at the partner schools.

- No pupils attend part-time alternative provision.
- There have been several changes to senior leadership this year. The headteacher took up his substantive post from September 2018, as did the one of deputy headteachers; the other in January 2018. Trustees appointed a chief executive officer (CEO), who is the substantive headteacher of another school in the trust. The new leader of the sixth form and the SENCo were appointed from September 2018.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in a range of classes. Senior leaders joined inspectors during most of these visits.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils' work to inform judgements about pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Inspectors met with four groups of pupils and spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during social times. Inspectors met with school leaders and other members of staff.
- Meetings were held with the vice-chair of trustees, the chair of the local governing body and four other trustees and governors.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation relating to pupils' attainment and progress. They also looked at records and documentation about pupils' behaviour, attendance and exclusions, and the ways that staff help to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors considered the 217 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, which included some free-text responses. The lead inspector spoke to two parents on the telephone. Inspectors took account of the views of 76 members of staff and 318 pupils who responded to the inspection surveys.

Inspection team

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