

Inspection of a good school: The Vaynor First School

Tennyson Road, Headless Cross, Redditch, Worcestershire B97 5BL

Inspection dates: 22–23 January 2020

Outcome

The Vaynor First School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this happy school. They say that learning is fun. They enjoy learning about new things. Pupils say that their teachers are kind and friendly and they make learning interesting. I agree. Year 4 had a lovely time making their version of the intestines! They have lots of friends and care about each other.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of everyone in school. The school motto, 'Inspired to be the best that I can be', is central to everything. The school is fully inclusive. Pupils relish the opportunities to learn about their community. They enjoy visiting the local old people's home to share conversations, do art work with the residents or sing to them.

There is a child-friendly anti-bullying policy. This helps pupils understand bullying. Pupils say, quite rightly, that bullying happens very rarely, if at all. They know that if bullying happens, they should tell the bully to stop. They help their friends and then tell an adult, who deals with it.

Pupils say that they feel safe and happy in school. Behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils have a thirst for learning. Pupils enjoy breaktimes. At the end of breaktimes pupils respond impeccably to routines and instructions.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders reviewed the curriculum to ensure that it was vibrant and met the needs of their pupils. They have a clear understanding of the strengths of the curriculum and subjects that can be further enhanced. Developing pupils' higher-level writing skills is a key focus for the school. Improvements in pupils' writing, especially by the end of Year 4, can be seen in books. However, leaders know that developments have not happened as swiftly as they want.

Children in Reception classes get off to a good start in learning. They enjoy a vibrant and stimulating indoor and outdoor environment. Staff know their children well and plan learning that meets their interests. Children quickly learn the routines and high expectations. They share well and happily play together.

Leaders have a strong understanding of early reading. Secure plans are in place to teach phonics in a systematic way. Children start to learn early reading skills as soon as they come to school. Children read books matched to the sounds they know. Children who find reading more difficult are quickly given the support they need to succeed. Older pupils enjoy reading. They like to read 'chapter books' and series of books written by the same author. Pupils sit engrossed, listening to their teachers make books come alive in story times.

Leaders have created a history curriculum that encourages pupils to become historical detectives. Pupils learn key vocabulary, knowledge and enquiry skills that build over time. Pupils love to explore historical resources. Opportunities for writing in history lessons are developing well. Teachers focus precisely on the key vocabulary, language style and high standards they expect. This is improving the quality of writing.

The development of mathematics is very strong. Leaders have structured a curriculum which helps pupils achieve highly. Well-established plans develop pupils' understanding, fluency and problem solving. Pupils enjoy mathematics and work hard on open-ended challenges. Tasks at the start of a unit identify each child's starting point, and learning starts there. Pupils regularly explain or prove their answers. However, pupils do not use enough explicit mathematical vocabulary and reasoning in written explanations.

Pupils have many opportunities to learn about life in modern Britain. They go on visits to the local council to meet the mayor, to the local post office and sites such as Warwick Castle. Year 4 go on a residential visit that supports their personal development. A highlight for Year 4 pupils is learning about the Second World War. They make clay poppies and join the remembrance service at the local cenotaph. They learn about the experiences of family members, or famous people, in the war. Pupils told me that this helped them reflect and understand the effects of war. Pupils take on roles and responsibilities in school. Each pupil has a school passport describing the exciting experiences promised for them in the school year.

The school is well led. Members of the local governing body are passionate about their role in supporting the school. They want to help the school continue to go from strength to strength. Staff I spoke with said they feel well supported and happy working in school. However, some who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire said that their workload was not always considered by leaders. Leaders are reviewing how they monitor this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take safeguarding seriously. They ensure that staff receive regular training and safeguarding updates. Staff know their children and families well. They are alert to the

signs that might cause concern and know to whom they should report any worries. Governors take their safeguarding duties seriously. They ensure that all pre-employment checks take place before staff start at the school.

Pupils learn how to stay safe. They learn about road safety, fire safety and how they have a right to say 'no' if something worries them. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and protect themselves from any cyber bullying.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have reviewed the curriculum to ensure that pupils are inspired and find learning interesting. This means that nearly all pupils reach the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1 and are ready for middle school by the end of Year 4. It is broad and balanced and makes learning fun for pupils. However, leaders recognise that pupils' higher-level writing skills are not strong enough. Leaders should focus on providing further writing opportunities in all subjects, including written explanations in mathematics, ensuring that expectations of pupils' vocabulary use, reasoning and language development are of the highest quality.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, The Vaynor First School, to be good on 9–10 December 2010.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	137960
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10122564
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	443
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Tom Slater
Headteacher	Sallyanne Dunstan
Website	www.thevaynor.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 April 2016

Information about this school

- The school is part of Endeavour Schools Trust

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders within the school and members of staff. I met with the chief executive officer of the trust, the chair of the local governing body and three other governors.
- I met with key staff responsible for safeguarding. I checked the single central record and procedures for the recruitment of staff. I discussed procedures and policies relating to safeguarding and the welfare of pupils.
- In order to judge the quality of education I focused on reading, mathematics and history. I spoke to subject leaders, visited lessons with senior leaders, looked at pupils' work and met with pupils and staff from these lessons. I visited phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1 and heard pupils read from Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.
- I watched pupils' behaviour in class and at other times during the day and spoke to parents, staff and pupils about behaviour. I also met with the school council to listen to their views of the school.

- I spoke to parents at the end of the school day. I considered the 81 responses to Parent View and the 84 free-text responses from parents. I reviewed the 101 responses to the pupil questionnaire and the 27 responses to staff online questionnaire.
- I studied the school's website and other published information about the school.

Inspection team

Tina Willmott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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