

Values Academy

Grove Road, Stockingford, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV10 8JX

Inspection dates

6 October 2020

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)

- In January 2020, the standard relating to safeguarding was not met as the culture of safeguarding in the school was poor. Some staff had not completed their induction training and were unsure about the school's procedures to secure pupils' well-being and safety. Records of safeguarding training were incomplete. Inconsistencies in implementing safeguarding procedures meant that pupils were not always prevented from smoking. Levels of supervision while pupils were in a public park near the school were not adequate.
- Since that time, leaders have taken swift and effective action to address the failings identified and instil a strong safeguarding culture. Staff are vigilant and quick to act. Pupils say they feel safe in school and trust adults to support them.
- The school principal and school leaders provide all staff with the necessary training to enable them to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. Training records document clearly the wide range of training undertaken. For example, all staff have completed new safeguarding training and modules on domestic violence, self-harm and substance misuse. All staff have completed training in the 'Prevent' duty and are alert to signs of radicalisation and extremism.
- A comprehensive induction programme has been put in place. This ensures that all new staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Leaders discuss safeguarding regularly in staff meetings so that it remains central to the school's work. They check what staff members know and understand by using regular safeguarding 'quizzes'.
- The safeguarding policy, which is available on the school's website, is informed by the most recent guidance from the Secretary of State. A range of other policies have been developed and revised to support the safeguarding culture in the school. These include a whistleblowing policy, an allegations of abuse statement and a clear set of guidelines for dealing with grievances.

- School records are appropriately maintained. They show that staff know what information they need to record on referral forms and the action leaders have taken. The school maintains strong links with external agencies so that pupils and families get extra help when they need it.
- Leaders use a rota to ensure that staff are deployed effectively during break times. The introduction of hand-held radio 'walkie-talkies' enables staff to communicate quickly when around the school site and in the local park. Staff have set clear boundaries that make it clear where pupils are allowed to go. Pupils understand the school's rules and know why they have been put in place. They know that an adult must accompany them when they are in the park. Pupils say that staff take action quickly if rules are ignored.
- Leaders have tackled pupils' smoking head on. A detailed anti-smoking action plan is in place. Leaders make sure that pupils and parents know that the school is a no smoking site. Any attempt by pupils to smoke is now robustly challenged. Agencies such as the NHS stop smoking service support pupils with their addictions. The dangers of smoking are discussed in lessons using resources such as a 'tar jar' and a set of lungs. Pupils told the inspector that smoking is not allowed at school anymore.
- It is clear from talking to staff that they see safeguarding as everyone's responsibility.
- The standard is now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c) and 34(2)

- The standards relating to leadership and management of the school were not met at the time of the January 2020 emergency inspection. This was because leaders had not ensured that all the requirements of the independent school standards were met consistently. Leaders did not ensure that school policies for safeguarding pupils and promoting their well-being were fully implemented.
- Leadership has been strengthened and staffing at the school is now more stable. Roles and responsibilities are clear. Leaders have high expectations of themselves and the whole staff team. They are determined to ensure that the school's values of respect, courage, honesty, compassion and integrity are central to their work. Staff morale has risen and staff value the clear direction now provided by senior leaders.
- Leaders make good use of action plans to drive improvement. They evaluate the impact of the actions they have taken. Leaders check more regularly that school policies and procedures are followed consistently by all staff. Practice observed during this inspection reflected that described in school policies.
- Senior leaders and the academy's trustees demonstrate a strong commitment to the school. They want each pupil to gain the skills necessary for lifelong success. The school principal has raised expectations, including those around educational outcomes.
- As a result, the standards checked are now met.

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 that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.
- 34(2) For the purposes of paragraph 1(c) 'well-being' means well-being within the meaning of section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004.

School details

Unique reference number	137597
DfE registration number	937/6000
Inspection number	10161625

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 status	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	21
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	2
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Values Academy
Chair	Emma Browning (Interim Chair)
Headteacher	Fiona Hims
Annual fees (day pupils)	£25,860
Telephone number	02476 326 383
Website	www.valuesacademy.org.uk
Email address	info@valuesacademy.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	10–12 July 2018

Information about this school

- Values Academy is an independent secondary special day school located in a residential area of Nuneaton, Warwickshire. It is owned by Values Academy, which is a privately owned non-profit-making company and registered charity.
- The school provides education for pupils aged 11 to 18 years old who have experienced social, emotional and mental health difficulties. There are currently 21 pupils on roll.

- The school caters for pupils with education, health and care plans (EHC plans) and pupils who are cared for by local authorities. At the time of the inspection, all of the pupils had EHC plans. Several pupils have an autism spectrum disorder. Many pupils have been permanently excluded or withdrawn from their previous education settings.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club for pupils. Outdoor physical education and recreation are undertaken in an adjacent public playing field.
- The school principal was appointed in December 2019. She also has responsibility for the charity's partner school and divides her time between the two schools. Another senior leader is responsible for the school when the principal is not on site. Since the January 2020 inspection, a new school business manager has been appointed.
- Two trustees of Values Academy have recently resigned from their posts; one due to work commitments and the other after serving for seven years as a trustee. An interim chair has been appointed by the board of trustees. A recruitment and selection process for new trustees is partly completed.
- An unannounced emergency inspection commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) was carried out in January 2020. The last independent school standard inspection of Values Academy took place in July 2018 when its overall effectiveness was judged to be good.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection. This was the first progress monitoring inspection.
- The DfE required the school to prepare an action plan following the emergency inspection in January 2020. Ofsted evaluated the plan on 18 May 2020. The plan was judged to be acceptable.
- This inspection was carried out with no notice and lasted for one day.
- This inspection focused on safeguarding and leadership and management.
- The inspector met with the principal and a senior leader who is also the designated safeguarding lead. A meeting was held with the chief executive officer of Values Academies. The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the trustees. She met with three members of staff and talked to pupils.
- The inspector toured the school premises and observed pupils arriving at school and during the lunchbreak. She looked at school policies, records and reports from the principal. She scrutinised the safeguarding policy and the single central record of employment checks on staff.
- Before the inspection, the inspector checked the school's website and looked at information about the school available on the internet.

Inspection team

Nicola Harwood, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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