

# Inspection of a good school: Viewley Hill Academy

Andover Way, Hemlington, Middlesbrough TS8 9HL

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Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

## **Outcome**

Viewley Hill Academy continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Viewley Hill is a welcoming, warm and happy place to be. Pupils buzz with excitement while they learn. They behave very well in school and go out of their way to be friendly to others. Adults have high expectations. They teach pupils how to be polite and confident. This is a school where pupils ask each other about how they are feeling and greet each other warmly.

Adults keep pupils safe. Pupils know adults will listen to them and help to solve any problems. Pupils talk confidently about how to be safe outside school. They like the number of visitors who talk to them about their safety and well-being. Bullying is uncommon. Pupils know what to do if they see it or experience it, and staff deal with it effectively.

Leaders are passionate and determined that pupils do well and have memorable experiences at school. Pupils enjoy the exciting things they learn. Parents and carers appreciate the time staff take to talk about how well their child is doing. One parent, reflecting the views of many, said, 'We're always met with a smile, a listening ear and prompt feedback and guidance on the next steps'.

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

School leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum in most subjects. Pupils enjoy learning. Leaders have created clear plans so that teachers know what to teach and when. The development of some wider curriculum plans has been slowed by COVID-19. However, work to make necessary improvements is now well underway. Leaders regularly check how well the curriculum is taught, so that they can make further improvements if necessary. Governors are working closely with leaders to check the quality of education. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from the well-structured curriculum. Leaders provide excellent support to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders have the same high aspirations for all pupils.

Teachers look for any misconceptions that pupils might have and address these straight away. In most lessons, pupils revisit prior learning regularly through talk. This helps them to remember learning. This practice is stronger in some subjects than others. In some subjects, teachers do not always choose the right activities to check what pupils know and remember about learning. This means that teachers do not always plan subsequent learning which helps pupils deepen their understanding.

Children in Reception start learning phonics from their first days in school. Teachers ensure that the environment is rich with language and vocabulary. Experienced staff, in all year groups, help pupils to practise reading regularly. This helps pupils to become fluent. As pupils move up the school, they read their well-matched books with increasing independence. As soon as adults identify a gap in learning, they provide extra support to help pupils catch up. Staff work closely with parents, and some come into school to see how reading is taught, so they can help with reading at home. Older pupils talk confidently about the books they are reading.

Pupils across the school are fascinated by numbers. The curriculum is carefully sequenced so that pupils build up knowledge over time. Adults prepare well-resourced activities to help all children in the school understand how mathematics works. Teachers ensure that pupils develop their use and application of numbers with confidence. Pupils are excited to talk about times tables and how useful they are in solving problems. They relish the problem-solving and challenges they are given in mathematics.

Pupils' conduct and behaviour are a testament to the quality of the staff's work. These positive attitudes begin in the early years, where children learn the benefits of cooperating and sharing. Pupils become increasingly thoughtful. They learn about the importance and appreciation of difference, understanding why some people need more help than others. Teachers ensure that pupils learn about fairness and justice. There are a wide range of clubs and activities for pupils to join. For example, a group of Year 5 pupils talked keenly about the upcoming football tournament. They were proud to reach the final and be representing their school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Appropriate checks are carried out on all who work at the school. Regular training ensures that all staff have up-to-date knowledge. As a result, they are aware of the potential risks to pupils. Designated safeguarding leads make informed decisions about next steps for pupils who are at risk of harm. Leaders are rigorous in following up any concerns.

There are many opportunities for pupils to learn about keeping safe, both in school and in their community. The personal, social, health education teaches pupils about well-being, as well as how to be safe. Many pupils spoke about the good safety information they receive from the local police and fire service. They are confident about how to keep themselves safe online.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small minority of subjects, teachers do not plan lessons that enable pupils to use prior knowledge effectively to help them to learn more. As a result, pupils do not always remember what they have learned before, and do not always link ideas together. Subject leaders need to support teachers further to make sure they are confident to enact the curriculum as leaders intend.

## 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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school to be good in May 2011.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140505
<b>Local authority</b>	Middlesbrough
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211092
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	305
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kenneth Stone
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Barkley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.viewleyhillacademy.co.uk">www.viewleyhillacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 December 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The academy is currently using two alternative provisions.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, curriculum leaders and teaching and support staff.
- The inspector met with five governors, including the chair and vice chair. She talked to the school improvement partner.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, she met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. She also spoke to leaders in history, art and design technology, and physical education. The inspector listened to pupils reading

to a familiar adult, visited the early years and nursery provision and spoke to a number of parents and carers.

- The inspector examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation and school improvement plans.
- The inspector considered the 26 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. She took into consideration the confidential staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Jen Cave, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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