

# Education and residential inspection summary for Vale of Evesham School

Four Pools Lane, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 1BN

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Inspection dates: 26 to 28 September 2023

## **Outcome**

The education overall effectiveness judgement is: good

The judgement for the experiences and progress of children in the residential provision is: good

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

- Every moment counts when it comes to 'learning for life' at Vale of Evesham school. The school has the highest expectations for all pupils.
- Pupils arrive with various learning barriers, such as autistic spectrum conditions and speech, language, and communication needs. Because of caring staff and determined leaders, these barriers are overcome, and expectations are fulfilled. Pupils leave as confident young adults eager to be part of the world around them.
- A strong focus on positive relationships is at the heart of this special community. Staff act quickly when a pupil needs help or finds things difficult.
- This is a positive, calm environment where pupils are cared for and valued.
- Pupils have varying understanding about bullying, but they agree that staff will be there for them if they need help. Pupils are happy and safe because the staff care.
- Forest schools, horticulture or pop-up cafes enrich pupils' time at school. Trips to places such as castles, the railway, rugby stadiums or local museums inspire an awareness of the community around them.

The inspectors made **three** recommendations to help the school improve, covering the quality of education and the sixth form.

## What is it like to stay at this school?

- Children make good progress while in residence. There are clear targets in place to enable staff to support children and to monitor progress. Leaders work hard to make continuous improvements to make this more effective. This demonstrates that leaders and staff are focused on developing new systems to support children to make ongoing progress.
- Children have built strong relationships with the adults who care for them. Relationships between the staff and children are warm, affectionate and loving.
- Staff are child-centred and supportive of children's individual needs. They respond to children sensitively and with compassion, as well as providing consistent, individualised support. This helps children to build trust and feel safe and relaxed in their surroundings.
- Children move between residence and school seamlessly. Staff work well with education staff to ensure that children have good transitions. Staff from both sides of the school communicate well with each other and handovers are clear and detailed.
- Staff regularly seek children's views so they can act on their wishes. For example, children meet regularly and talk about menu choices. Staff pass these to the kitchen staff, who arrange menus so children can eat the foods that they enjoy. The kitchen staff involve themselves in children's care. They spend time with children setting up breakfast. The new catering manager also held a pizza-making activity with children to get to know them better. She considered all dietary requirements, so that everyone could take part. This contributes to the overall care children receive from all staff.
- Staff work hard to support children to develop their individual independence skills. For some children, this may mean learning how to make their choice of snacks, for others, this involves them doing chores, such as laundry. Staff have high aspirations for children and want to help children to achieve.
- The residential environment is homely and warm. Children's belongings fill the space, and children's artwork and certificates are on display. Books and games are easily accessible and soft furnishings help to maintain a nurturing feel. Children personalise their bedrooms in ways that meet their needs and staff help them keep them tidy. However, plans to upgrade areas of the home, including children's bedroom doors, have not yet come to fruition. This means that children who are ready to have more control of their privacy and the security of their room are not yet able to develop this.

- Staff understand children's individual communication needs. Staff spend time getting to know children and to understand their views. Staff listen to the children's views and act on the choices they make. Staff are creative and use a range of resources to find out children's wishes and feelings. For example, choice boards are used to encourage children to communicate.
- Children are actively encouraged to develop all their interests. Staff identify and nurture these well. Staff carefully consider how activities can help children's development, as well as having an emphasis on children enjoying themselves. For example, children regularly attend forest school where they learn outdoor skills.

The school **does not meet the national minimum standards for residential special schools** relating to Standard 1 - Statement of principles and practice, Standard 2 - Leadership and management and Standard 9 - Residential accommodation.

The inspectors made **one recommendation** to help the school improve, covering the inclusion of the residential element of the school and National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools in policies.

- View the full inspection report for the education provision:  
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/25/148347>
- View the full inspection report for the residential provision:  
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/10/SC043049>



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