

Inspection of The Violet Way Academy

Violet Way, Stapenhill, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE15 9ES

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Michelle Kee. This school is part of Fiertè Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Maria Hamblin, and is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Zoe Insley.

What is it like to attend this school?

At Violet Way, pupils are encouraged to 'reach for the stars' and achieve their full potential. Staff know the pupils very well and show great care for them. This helps them to feel safe and happy when they are in school.

A warm, nurturing environment helps children in Reception to settle quickly. They develop independence and resilience as they explore a range of inviting learning opportunities. Pupils build on this good start as they move through the school. Pupils learn to read well and develop a good understanding of mathematics.

The school has high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils behave well in most lessons and show respect to staff and each other. When pupils find this more challenging, they are well supported to regulate their emotions. At social times, pupils enjoy playing together and being active. Pupils are friendly and welcoming to visitors.

The school places a high priority on developing pupils personally. Pupils enjoy a range of different sports clubs including, dance and gymnastics. They show an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe online. The 'well-being Wednesdays' support pupils to have a healthy body and a happy mind.

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

The school wants all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to have the best possible start to their educational journey. To make this happen, they work in close partnership with families and other agencies to accurately identify needs. The school has ensured that staff are well trained to meet the varied needs of the pupils. By adapting their teaching methods and providing additional support, staff enable most pupils with SEND to access the same curriculum and make good progress. For a small number of pupils with SEND the school provides a bespoke curriculum to meet their specific needs.

The school has identified the knowledge pupils will learn in each subject, including the areas of learning in early years. In many subjects, the order in which pupils should learn this knowledge is carefully sequenced. This means that pupils build on their prior knowledge as they move through the school. In mathematics, for example, children in Reception learn how to make numbers to 10 in different ways. Pupils in Year 1 then learn how two-digit numbers are made from tens and ones.

In some subjects however, pupils do not always learn key information in a logical order. On occasion, pupils do work without having the prior knowledge they need to complete the work successfully. This results in pupils not understanding some important parts of the curriculum.

Reading is a high priority across the school. Books are central to the curriculum. This focus on language and communication starts in the early years. Staff read to children regularly and explore a range of vocabulary. Staff deliver daily phonics sessions well. This supports most children to start reading fluently and with confidence. Furthermore, staff use assessment to identify where there are gaps in knowledge. Children and pupils who need extra support to keep up have extra sessions. These sessions are working well in helping these pupils to read with increased confidence and fluency.

In English lessons, pupils learn to write using a range of vocabulary and punctuation. However, they are not provided with enough opportunities to practise writing at length. Consequently, when writing at length in English, pupils sometimes forget some of the basic writing skills they have learned previously. This includes correct letter sizing and using full stops accurately at the end of sentences.

The school provides a calm and purposeful learning environment. In most lessons pupils can learn without interruption. Staff expect pupils to work hard, and they do.

Pupils' personal development is an important part of the wider curriculum. The school has a deliberately planned calendar of events that enhance the curriculum. Pupils recalled with enthusiasm their visit to a local castle and what they learned from it. Pupils also learn about fundamental British values through voting for roles such as school councillors. These experiences prepare them well for life in modern Britain.

Leaders engage well with staff. They are mindful of workload. Staff feel valued and are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all areas of the curriculum are as carefully planned and sequenced as others. This means that in some subjects, pupils do not always build their knowledge step by step or have a deep understanding of important concepts. Leaders should continue to review the curriculum to ensure pupils' knowledge builds in a coherent sequence.
- Pupils do not get enough opportunities to practise writing. As a result, pupils sometimes forget the basic skills of writing when writing at length. Leaders should ensure that enough opportunities are provided to write at length so that pupils become fluent in basic writing skills.

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.

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	136762
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10294573
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	266
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Zoe Insley
CEO of the trust	Maria Hamblin
Headteacher	Michelle Kee
Website	www.violetwayacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 June 2012

Information about this school

- There have been changes to the leadership at this school since the last inspection.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders.

- The lead inspector met with the chair of the local governing body, other members of the governing body and the vice chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art and design and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also sampled pupils work in a range of other subjects, including science, English, geography, and design technology. An inspector visited a sample of music and personal, social and health and economic (PSHE) education lessons and spoke to pupils about what they know in these subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent view, including free-text responses. The inspector also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Helen Forrest, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jane Edgerton	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Gilbert	Ofsted Inspector

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