

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Vyners School

Warren Road, Ickenham, Uxbridge UB10 8AB

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 January 2025

Outcome

Vyners School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Gary Mullings. This school is part of Vanguard Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Martina Lecky, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Davies.

What is it like to attend this school?

Vyners School is a positive and happy place to be. Staff create an ethos in which pupils are enabled to reach their academic and personal potential, regardless of their starting points. Pupils understand and demonstrate the school's values, which are 'community, aspiration, respect and endeavour.' The result is a vibrant and inclusive school, where academic rigour and personal development are equally important. Many pupils achieve exceptionally well across a wide range of subjects. They are very well prepared for their future pathways.

Staff have high expectations of how pupils should behave and what they can achieve. There is a highly purposeful atmosphere around the school. Pupils focus on their learning well, work hard and want to learn. Sixth-form students are excellent role models for younger pupils. Parents and carers appreciate the high expectations and standards that leaders have.

The school provides a broad range of enrichment opportunities that enhance the academic curriculum. These include photography, gospel choir, poet laureate society and inclusive cricket. These activities give pupils the chance to experience things that they otherwise might not. Sixth-form students are involved in running school events and leading clubs for the younger pupils. There is a student executive team in the sixth form that develops leadership skills.

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

The school has designed a highly ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and students in the sixth form. They are taught knowledge in a logical order, so that they build their understanding well. Teachers regularly revisit prior learning and check for gaps in pupils' understanding. Leaders use this information effectively to continually develop the curriculum and make sure that pupils achieve consistently high standards.

The key to the success of the curriculum is the consistent implementation by staff. Staff have very strong subject knowledge and benefit from high-quality professional development. Their explanations are clear and explicit. In lessons, pupils apply their knowledge to different problems and tasks. They confidently and articulately discuss topics. Teachers use assessment in lessons to check pupils' understanding skilfully. They provide pupils, and students in the sixth form, with thoughtful guidance on how to improve their work. Pupils respond readily to the feedback they receive. This enables pupils to gain the breadth and depth of knowledge that they need.

The school adopts an inclusive approach, whereby pupils with SEND access the curriculum alongside their peers. Staff use precise information effectively to consider where to adapt the learning for each pupil's individual needs. The specialist resource provision provides expert support for pupils with hearing impairments. The nurturing environment, alongside high aspirations, ensures that the pupils in the unit achieve very well.

Staff know precisely what support pupils need to be successful in their studies. This includes helping pupils at an early stage of learning to become confident and fluent readers. The school-wide reading strategy includes a reading canon for each year group, which ensures that pupils engage with a wide range of disciplinary literacy.

Pupils are respectful and polite. They value diverse beliefs in their community. Pupils benefit from excellent relationships with each other and with staff. They are cared for well and have adults they trust and who they can talk to if they have problems. Most pupils attend school regularly. The school works closely with parents and carers to address any concerns about pupils' absence from school.

Students in the sixth form are positive about their learning experiences and the wider opportunities the school provides. For example, they enjoy being reading mentors and taking part in university visits. Pupils appreciate the exceptional quality of careers advice and guidance that they receive, including taking part in work experience. The school has also built links with a range of employers to provide further opportunities for pupils to learn about different careers. The school deploys past alumni well in supporting pupils to think about their lives and careers beyond the school.

Through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) programme, form time and school assemblies, pupils are well prepared for life. The programme covers important topics such as the features of different relationships, which allows pupils to develop a detailed understanding of life in modern Britain. There is also a rolling schedule of clubs

and regular school visits. These allow pupils to discover and nurture their interests and talents.

Staff are rightly proud of their school. They feel very well supported with their workload and well-being. The school is not complacent. Leaders, backed by the trustees and CEO, are dedicated to their shared vision to improve every day. Staff across the school reflect on their practice constantly and seek to improve it further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour, or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness on 1 and 2 May 2019.

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	137635
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	10345932
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,516
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	301
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Davies
CEO of the trust	Martina Lecky
Headteacher	Gary Mullings
Website	www.vynersschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Vanguard Learning Trust.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND, which caters specifically for pupils with hearing impairments. There are currently 17 pupils educated in the unit.
- The school uses one registered and three unregistered alternative provisions.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and senior leaders and representatives from the trust, including the chair of the trust, other trustees, the CEO, and the school improvement lead. Inspectors also met with the acting chair of governors and other members of the governing body.
- To evaluate the quality of education, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils and teachers, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for careers education at the school.
- Inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils and also considered pupils' opinions expressed through the pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtime.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 examined the school's behaviour records, spoke to pupils who had been removed from lessons and spoke with providers of alternative education.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff, and also considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed through Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Sam Johnson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Eliot Wong	Ofsted Inspector
Luisa Bonelli	Ofsted Inspector

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