

Inspection of Da Vinci Academy

St Andrew's View, Breadsall, Derby, Derbyshire DE21 4ET

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 October 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders put pupils' interests at the heart of all that they do. Pupils are proud to come to Da Vinci. They know that their school is continually improving. Staff have high aspirations for all pupils' success. Leaders are determined that no child will be left behind. A typical comment from a pupil was that the headteacher 'won't let you give up'. Staff expect pupils to work hard and achieve well. Pupils are keen to meet these expectations. The curriculum enables pupils to achieve qualifications to take appropriate next steps.

The school is inclusive and welcoming to all. Pupils feel valued and cared for. They support each other. Relationships between pupils are good. They recognise and respect differences in other people. Pupils say that when bullying occasionally happens, staff are quick to deal with it. Pupils' concerns are taken seriously. They benefit from high-quality pastoral support. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well. Pupils who need help are supported to manage their own behaviour.

Pupils enjoy attending a range of lunchtime and after-school activities, such as sports, archery and gardening. They are encouraged to develop leadership skills, for example through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, which all pupils in Year 10 follow.

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

The curriculum reflects leaders' ambition for all pupils. It is based on the national curriculum and provides opportunities for pupils to follow appropriate programmes of study. At key stage 3, all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), follow the same curriculum. Older pupils select courses based on their interests and needs. For example, some pupils follow an entirely academic programme, while others incorporate some vocational subjects such as construction. Decisions about what qualifications pupils take are carefully made, in pupils' best interests.

Leaders in most subject areas have been appointed since the headteacher took up her post. They have done a lot of work to improve the quality of the curriculum in each subject area. Plans are well thought out and set out the important concepts and knowledge that pupils should know. Plans build on pupils' prior knowledge. Some curriculum leaders have begun to evaluate the impact of these new plans and have identified where gaps in pupils' knowledge need to be filled. They have amended plans accordingly. Not all curriculum leaders have done this yet.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They continually assess what pupils know, and most adapt their teaching to fill gaps in pupils' knowledge. The school's approach to providing feedback on pupils' work is consistent across different subjects. However, teachers do not always identify misconceptions. Leaders plan to review the school's approach to feedback to ensure that basic errors in pupils' work

are corrected. Pupils with SEND are well supported in lessons. Teachers adapt the curriculum to help these pupils study the same content as others.

Leaders promote a love of reading across the school. Staff and pupils are enthusiastic about the 'DVA reading' initiative, where tutors read aloud to pupils each morning. Texts are varied and challenging. They broaden pupils' experience of literature and complement the school's English curriculum. Pupils who need to catch up in reading receive additional support.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They understand the school's system for managing behaviour and say that it is effective. Low-level disruption is challenged effectively. Pupils are polite and courteous. Most pupils attend well. Staff work proactively with pupils who are persistently absent.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development in all aspects of the school's work. 'At my best' lessons and tutor sessions provide pupils with the knowledge they need to be successful in modern Britain. Pupils receive impartial careers advice and guidance. The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause.

Staff fully support leaders' vision for the school's continued improvement. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and promote staff's well-being. The school is well led and managed. Those responsible for governance know the school's strengths and priorities for further improvement. They hold leaders to account effectively. The trust has provided effective support to leadership at all levels.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A culture of vigilance, care and support permeates the school. The designated safeguarding leader is knowledgeable and ensures that all staff understand and fulfil their duties to safeguard pupils. Any safeguarding concerns are quickly followed up, involving external agencies when appropriate. Leaders monitor vulnerable pupils closely and ensure they get the help they need quickly.

Leaders are alert to safeguarding issues in the local area. Pupils learn about keeping safe. They know how to report concerns. They are confident in staff's ability and willingness to help when issues arise.

Measures to monitor staff's suitability to work with children are rigorous.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all curriculum leaders have evaluated the impact of the new curriculum plans. They do not all know whether curriculum plans have not been successfully implemented in their subjects. Curriculum leaders should continually review the

impact of their subject curriculum plans, including the approach to reading intervention, to ensure that gaps in knowledge are filled so that pupils have the building blocks they need to prepare them for the next steps in their learning.

- Not all staff identify and address misconceptions. This means that pupils sometimes misunderstand the learning and have gaps in their knowledge that are not addressed. Leaders should review their approach to feedback to ensure that errors and misconceptions are identified to help pupils know and remember more over time.
- Leaders should continue to develop strategies to support all pupils to attend regularly.

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

Unique reference number	144066
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10200431
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	668
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Buck
Headteacher	Katie Roberts
Website	www.davinciacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the LEAD Academy Trust in 2017. The headteacher took up her post in 2018.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative off-site provision at Derby Pride Academy and The Kingsmead School.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation.

- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide students in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders, groups of staff, governors and representatives of the LEAD Academy Trust. The lead inspector spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors met formally with groups of pupils and spoke with pupils in their lessons and around school. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime and around school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, history, mathematics and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors 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. The lead inspector reviewed the school's reading curriculum.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's safeguarding arrangements. They spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding. The lead inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding records and the school's single central register.
- Inspectors considered the 65 responses to Ofsted Parent View and the 33 free-text comments. They considered responses to the pupils' and staff's surveys.

Inspection team

Deborah Mosley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mark Mitchley	Ofsted Inspector
John Edwards	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Sheppard	Ofsted Inspector

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