

Inspection of William Alvey School

Eastgate, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 7EA

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 March 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected William Alvey School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are punctual and eager to arrive at this school every morning. They say that they look forward to learning new things every day. The 'living museum' in the on-site air raid shelter, for example, brings the curriculum to life.

The relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Teachers know the pupils in their classes well. Pupils in Year 5 act as 'buddies' for younger children in the early years through to Year 1. This helps younger children settle quickly into this large school. Pupils say they feel safe and happy.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils are polite and demonstrate good manners. They greet visitors with 'good morning' and 'good afternoon'. During lesson changeover times, pupils known as 'corridor captains' are on hand to open doors and keep the corridors tidy. This helps maintain the calm learning environment around the school.

Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is. They say it rarely occurs. They are very confident that teachers will not tolerate any form of bullying.

Many parents and carers agree that this school is a place where pupils thrive and flourish.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious for all pupils. Subject coordinators make sure that learning builds appropriately on what pupils already know. They ensure that pupils revisit the most important concepts. Subject plans also identify the key vocabulary that pupils need to know and remember. Many pupils acquire this specialist vocabulary and use it accurately. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are extremely well supported and achieve as well as their peers.

Leaders are yet to ensure that the curriculum is securely and consistently embedded in all subjects. Some foundation subject plans are very new. Teachers have only recently started to use these plans to teach pupils.

Teachers have good subject knowledge in many of the subjects they teach. In subjects such as mathematics and history, teachers use their subject knowledge expertly to help pupils remember the most important knowledge. Some teachers, however, still need further training to enhance their own subject knowledge.

Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. Many pupils describe school as a place where they can learn. Occasionally, pupils can engage in off-task behaviour. Teachers deal with this type of behaviour swiftly.

Children rapidly learn to read. They start to learn the sounds that letters make as soon as they start the Reception year. Teachers are ambitious and teach children four sounds a week. They match the books that children read precisely to the sounds that they know. Teachers assess children's knowledge of sounds every day. If a child falls behind, a highly trained adult supports them to catch up quickly.

Every pupil reads every day. Older pupils explore extracts from books such as 'The Wolves of Willoughby Chase'. This introduces pupils to different genres. Pupils are encouraged to pick books to read for pleasure. On their birthday, some pupils donate a book that they enjoy reading to the school library. This helps pupils share their love for reading with others.

Children in the early years get off to a good start. Adults carefully plan learning activities for children in the outdoor learning areas. They match activities closely to children's identified next steps. Teachers teach more formal elements of the curriculum with clarity. Children respond well. They quickly learn to count. They use mathematical language such as 'altogether' and 'subitize' with confidence.

The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to understand how to stay healthy and how to stay safe online. There is a range of sports clubs from which pupils benefit. Pupils say that they learn how to use self-control to help them deal with feelings of anger. Pupils also benefit from age-appropriate relationships education.

Trustees and governors are effective at holding leaders to account. Staff are very proud to work at William Alvey School.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding training. This helps staff keep abreast of emerging local and national safeguarding issues. All adults in the school understand how to record and report a concern about a pupil. Teachers are vigilant. They report anything they believe may indicate that a pupil may need help.

Leaders take effective and swift action to safeguard children. They work with external agencies to support pupils and families that are most vulnerable. At times, however, some of the safeguarding documentation is not as well organised as is needed.

Pupils know they can share a worry with any of the adults in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum planning sets out the sequence of pupils' learning in all subjects. They have identified the important knowledge that

they want pupils to learn. Some of this planning is relatively new in some foundation subjects. The teaching in these subjects is still not consistently well embedded. As a result, pupils are unable to gain a depth of knowledge across the full curriculum. Leaders should ensure that teaching in all subjects is consistently well embedded in order to help pupils successfully build their knowledge and understanding over time.

- Some teachers do not have the necessary subject knowledge to teach some parts of the curriculum effectively. These teachers do not use the resources provided well enough, to impart the most important knowledge so that pupils remember it. Leaders must ensure that all teachers have the appropriate subject knowledge and training to deliver subjects they teach well.

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	137565
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10199326
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	650
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Leah Kirkman
Headteacher	Stephen Tapley
Website	www.williamalvey.net

Information about this school

- William Alvey School converted to an academy in October 2011 and became a part of The William Alvey School Trust. This is a single academy trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider. This is Springwell Alternative Academy Grantham.

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 and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in design and technology, history, reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in other subjects. For these subjects, they checked the work pupils had produced, spoke to subject leaders, looked at subject plans, and spoke to teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for: behaviour; personal development; looked after children; early years provision; pupil premium; and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader and pastoral manager to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. He reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- An inspector met with a group of support staff.
- The lead inspector met with governors and trustees, including the chair of the trust board.
- An inspector spoke to a representative at the alternative provision the school is using.

Inspection team

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