

Inspection of Frome Vale Academy

Frenchay Road, Downend, Bristol BS16 2QS

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 January 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils excel at this highly ambitious and inclusive school. Staff strive relentlessly to find ways to improve pupils' lives, including through the delivery of the very carefully planned curriculum. Pupils know that staff care for and respect them. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn alongside, and in harmony with, their peers.

Pupils know that a lot is expected of them. Pupils thrive because of the wide range of extra-curricular experiences on offer. Staff promote equality of opportunity very well. Pupils of all abilities are included fully in school life. They take on various responsibilities. Pupils learn about cultures and beliefs from around the world in lessons and from each other. As a result, pupils understand, appreciate and respect difference.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Everyone has high expectations of behaviour. Staff promote positive relationships in all aspects of school life. Bullying is very rare, and is dealt with effectively if it happens. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary, especially as they get older. Pupils rightly said that they feel safe and are safe. They truly act as, and value being, Frome Vale Citizens.

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

Leaders' moral purpose underpins the success of this highly effective school. Leaders know their school and its community exceptionally well. They use this to improve the school systematically, and with high ambition. Leaders have secured the support and enthusiasm of all. Staff feel, and are, valued. Leaders develop staff to be highly effective, whatever their role. Consequently, the curriculum meets the pupils' needs with precision.

Leaders' rationale for curriculum design is underpinned by the shared value of preparing pupils as global citizens. They recognise the importance of broadening pupils' experiences to reduce barriers caused by disadvantage or individual need. To do this, they have planned an ambitious curriculum that goes beyond the expectation of the national curriculum. Curriculum leaders have in-depth knowledge of their subjects, and lead with clarity and gusto. They ensure that planning is logically sequenced and aspiring. This allows teachers to deliver series of lessons that secure rapid and deep learning for pupils, including those with SEND. The diversity of the curriculum engages pupils' enthusiasm. Pupils learn to be active citizens in their communities and beyond.

Children settle quickly into the highly effective early years provision. Early years leaders continuously look to improve further. They are ambitious for all, but particularly the most disadvantaged. Staff work to deliver the leaders' vision with enthusiasm. They are knowledgeable about the areas of learning they teach. Staff encourage children to make the most of every moment to learn. Positive

relationships underpin the high expectations staff have for children. Effective assessment and careful planning ensure that children's individual needs are met very well. Children love the chance to learn and explore through well-planned and well-presented learning environments.

The teaching of reading is very effective. Leaders have ensured that staff teach early reading consistently and effectively. Children learn sounds from the moment they enter Reception. Teachers deliver lessons that are well structured, interesting and exciting. Skilled support staff provide tailored extra sessions for those at risk of falling behind. Consequently, pupils learn their sounds quickly. They can blend sounds to read well. This is reflected in the high proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening checks. Staff work hard to engender a love of reading. Teachers act as storytellers and bring tales to life. Pupils said that teachers make reading fun. They talked about books they have learned to love, such as 'Esio Trot' and 'Skellig'.

Skilled staff deliver the intended curriculum very effectively. They have strong subject knowledge across all areas of the curriculum. Teachers plan learning with the school's strong ethos in mind. They use regular and ongoing assessment to successfully adapt the curriculum. Consequently, pupils make rapid gains, often from very low starting points. They remember the curriculum very well. They are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The members of the academy council, supported by the board of trustees, provide considered support and robust challenge. They have guided senior leaders to be even more effective. For example, curriculum leads benefit from access to national qualifications and trust networks. There are also opportunities to work with curriculum experts from secondary schools in the trust. Furthermore, similar initiatives enhance the leadership of SEND and the early years. Consequently, leadership at all levels is highly effective.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding leads are highly visible and known by staff, pupils and their families. Systems and processes are clear and established. Records are kept well. Leaders are tenacious in their interactions with other agencies.

Staff are aware of the contextual challenges of working in this vibrant community. They access appropriate training. Staff follow policy diligently. All work hard to support pupils and their families. Consequently, pupils are safe.

Safer recruitment processes are well established. Appropriate checks are made on the suitability of staff. Checks are recorded carefully on a single central record.

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	138791
Local authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	10211716
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Professor Paul Olomolaiye
Principal	Dr Janet Saunders
Website	fromevaleacademy.clf.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February and 5 March 2018

Information about this school

- Frome Vale Academy is smaller than the average primary school. There are currently seven classes.
- The academy has 175 pupils on roll.
- Since the last inspection, the 'Nest', which is part of an alternative provision on the same site, has stopped being part of the school, but remains within the trust.
- The academy is part of the Cabot Learning Federation Multi-Academy Trust. There are 19 other schools in the trust.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior and subject leaders, including the executive principal from the trust. Discussions took place with the chief executive officer of the trust,

the director of education, the special educational needs coordinator and the early years leader. Inspectors also met with the chair of the academy council and a trustee who chairs the scrutiny board that oversees the performance of this academy. Inspectors discussed leaders' evaluations, priorities for improvement, systems for monitoring and accountability, and the curriculum.

- Inspectors did deep dives into four subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and science. Inspectors met with senior and subject leaders, teachers and pupils. Inspectors also visited lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and talked to pupils. Inspectors reviewed some subject planning, and spoke to leaders about other subjects. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors analysed 50 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online parents' survey, and the free-text responses from those parents. Feedback from staff provided for leaders during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic was scrutinised.
- Inspectors analysed school documentation, including leaders' evaluations and plans for improvement, and paperwork relating to the work of the academy council. Inspectors scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to the curriculum.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by meeting with the designated and deputy designated safeguarding leads, reviewing safer recruitment processes and speaking to staff and pupils. School policies, governance arrangements, records of concerns and links to other agencies were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David New

Ofsted Inspector

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