

Inspection of DSLV E-ACT Academy

Hawke Road, Southbrook, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 4LJ

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 April 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this all-through school. Pupils build strong relationships with staff. Most pupils said that they feel safe and happy.

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and become. There is a clear focus on raising aspirations and fulfilling each pupil's full potential. Many pupils demonstrate the school's key message: 'be proud, be confident and be successful'.

Teachers look after and care for children in early years. Children in early years get off to a good start. Students in the sixth form are well prepared for their next steps in education or employment.

Most pupils agree that behaviour around the school is good. Pupils understand what bullying is. They said that it only happens occasionally. They are confident that teachers take bullying seriously and do not tolerate it.

Many parents and carers would recommend the school. As one parent told us: 'All the staff in this school work really hard to try and make sure students receive any help that they may need.'

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

Leaders have instilled increased expectations and improved further the quality of education. Older pupils told us that behaviour is even better than it used to be, and that they are learning more than they used to. As a result, more parents now want their children to attend this school.

The curriculum is broad. Leaders are keen to increase the number of pupils studying a modern foreign language to GCSE level. They have given languages extra time in the curriculum in key stage 3, so that pupils start to develop a love for language and choose to study it further.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum builds from early years onwards in most subjects. Leaders have identified the most important knowledge that they want pupils to know. They have made sure that pupils learn new knowledge in the right order, so that they can build on what they already know.

Teachers know how to present information clearly. They use assessment well to check what pupils have remembered. Effective use of recall activities has a positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement. Teachers support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Pupils with SEND study the full curriculum and achieve well. Some teachers in the primary phase do not have enough subject knowledge in a few of the foundation subjects. In these subjects, some pupils do not develop the rich, detailed knowledge that is set out in the curriculum in the primary phase.

Children start to learn the sounds that letters represent as soon as they start in Reception Year. Most teachers in the primary phase are early reading experts. Teachers use assessment well. When they identify that pupils that are behind, they make sure that they receive extra help to catch up quickly. Teachers match books closely to the sounds that pupils know. Pupils read to teachers regularly. Many pupils become confident readers. In key stage 2, pupils enjoy reading books such as 'Letters from the lighthouse', which help them develop their understanding of the Second World War. There are also 100 minutes a week dedicated to reading in key stage 3. Pupils continue to develop a love for reading as they progress through the school.

Staff in early years interact and play with children to help them learn. Staff encourage children to become independent. Staff carefully plan activities so that children have the opportunity to learn and develop across several areas. For example, children paint blossom pictures using fine paint brushes and discuss the seasons with an adult. This allows children to develop physically, and to develop their language and learn about the world.

Leaders in the sixth form promote different future pathways. For example, there are visits that expose students to both apprenticeships and universities. Students feel well prepared to make well-informed decisions about their future. They achieve well on courses such as those for engineering that they study on this site.

The curriculum goes beyond the academic. Many pupils value and benefit from extra-curricular activities such as the dance club. The dance club culminates with pupils performing at the Silverstone racetrack. Pupils develop a good understanding of age-appropriate relationships education. The careers education that pupils receive prepares them well for their next steps. There are some elements of personal development that are not as strong as others, for example spiritual development.

Exclusions have reduced significantly at this school, and attendance has improved. There is effective support for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Leaders have created dedicated areas of the school such as 'the base' and 'the retreat'. These areas help pupils who struggle to concentrate in lessons to continue to learn in a different environment in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong safeguarding culture. Leaders from the trust check safeguarding procedures to make sure that these remain effective.

Regular planned safeguarding training ensures that staff remain vigilant and are knowledgeable about safeguarding. Staff understand the procedures for recording and reporting concerns about pupils. Leaders take swift action to help pupils in need.

Leaders work in partnership with external agencies. This ensures that the most vulnerable pupils receive the support they need.

Pupils all know that there is someone to talk to if they have a concern. They know that a trusted adult will take them seriously and help them with their problems.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not have all the subject knowledge they need to teach some of the foundation subjects in the primary phase effectively. Some pupils do not develop a detailed understanding of concepts that are set out in curriculum plans. Leaders must ensure that teachers have the necessary knowledge to deliver the curriculum in all subjects and phases effectively.
- Leaders ensure that there is dedicated curriculum time to promote pupils' broader development, including high-quality relationships education and careers education. However, opportunities for pupils' spiritual development are not of the same high quality as other aspects of the provision for personal development. Some pupils have limited opportunity to be reflective about their own beliefs. Some pupils do not gain sufficient knowledge of different people's faiths, feelings and values. Leaders must ensure that all opportunities for personal development are of equally high quality.

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	138073
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10227230
Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	916
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	28
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lord Jim Knight
Headteacher	Simon Cox
Website	www.dslv.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 and 2 December 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the E-ACT Multi-Academy Trust.
- Since the previous section 5 inspection in February 2017, there have been considerable changes in the senior leadership team. This includes the appointment of a new executive headteacher, a new primary phase headteacher and a new secondary phase headteacher.
- The school's sixth-form curriculum is delivered as part of a partnership arrangement with one other local school, The Parker E-ACT Academy. This partnership is known as the Daventry Sixth Form.
- The school uses one registered and two unregistered alternative education providers for a small number of pupils on a part-time basis.

- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 had 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, geography, design and technology, and science. 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 that pupils had produced.
- Inspectors met with subject leaders from the primary phase.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for: behaviour; personal development; children looked after; early years provision; the sixth form; pupil premium; and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stages 1 to 4, as well as students in the sixth form.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and child protection officer 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 all teachers and a group of support staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees and representatives of the trust, including the interim chief executive officer of the trust.
- The lead inspector contacted the alternative provisions that are attended by a small number of pupils at this school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and also considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

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