

# Modus Academy

<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 June 2013	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Good	2
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

## Summary of key findings

### This school is good because

- Students are motivated and engaged by high quality teaching. All staff have high expectations of students. This is helping students to catch up on significant gaps in their education so that they make good progress.
- Leaders are exacting in evaluating the work of the school. They have put in place effective systems to maximise the progress students make in developing their academic and personal skills.
- The school provides a safe place for students in which they feel valued and make significant progress in overcoming their emotional social and behavioural difficulties.
- The school provides a cohesive learning community with a strong partnership between the care, residential and therapeutic teams.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- The development of students' mathematics skills is not as rapid as their gains in reading, writing and speaking
- Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to accelerate the progress of more-able students.
- The effective and thoughtful evaluation of the school's work is not pulled together in a clear improvement plan for the school's future.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Information about this inspection

- The school was inspected following one day's notice.
- Three lessons were observed taught by two teachers and supported by a number of additional staff. Discussions were held with the headteacher, teaching and other members of staff and with students.
- A range of documents was evaluated, including the school's policies, individual students' learning plans and progress records. The inspector also looked at samples of students' work.
- Additional information was considered from the three questionnaires returned by staff. There were no results displayed for responses to the Ofsted Parent View website.

## Inspection team

Joan Hewitt, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Modus Academy opened in July 2012 and it is part of a small therapeutic community that specialises in working with students who have severe social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school does not provide or make use of any alternative provision for students.
- The school is owned by The Compass Community Ltd, a private company providing childcare, fostering and related training services. It is registered to take boys between the ages of 11 to 16 years. The school has temporary permission to extend the age range to 18 years.
- It is a small school and students are aged between 12 and 17. All students are resident at the aligned children's home.
- One pupil has a statement of special educational needs related to his behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and learning needs. One pupil is currently being assessed for a statement of special educational needs.
- Students are taught in two classes, one for Key Stage 3 and one for Key Stages 4 and 5.
- This is the school's first full inspection since its registration.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop strategies to promote students' enjoyment and application of mathematics across the curriculum.
- Ensure that teachers consistently plan tasks to stretch the most-able students.
- Use the effective evaluation of the school's work to develop a school improvement plan.

## Inspection judgements

### Pupils' achievement

**Good**

Students, including those with a statement of special educational needs, make good progress in their learning over the time they have been attending the school. Attainment is often below the levels found nationally because of significant gaps in students' previous education. Students make good progress because teaching is tailored to their individual needs. Their progress is also supported by a curriculum which is broad and prepares them well for the next steps in their education. The school's records show that students are making good progress in improving their reading, writing and speaking skills. Students' progress in mathematics is also strong but students do not make as much progress as they do in English. This is because they do not get enough practice in using their mathematics skills to work out real-life problems and applying their skills in other subjects. Students make good progress in a range of other subjects, such as geography and history. Students in Key Stage 4 and 5 are on track to achieve appropriate qualifications in English, mathematics and science. This is a very important step in securing exactly the right pathway as they prepare for the world of work. Students' personal qualities of perseverance, concentration and cooperation are developing well.

### Pupils' behaviour and personal development

**Good**

Students' behaviour is generally good. Students respond well to teachers' high expectations of them. Students have positive attitudes to learning and this is a significant factor in their good progress. In lessons, behaviour is calm and any disruption is dealt with firmly, logged carefully and discussed fully with students. Teachers and other staff provide clear boundaries and rewards which support students in adjusting their behaviour and developing independence. The high level of staff supervision means that bullying is rare. On the very few occasions when it does occur, it is in the form of name-calling and it is dealt with swiftly and fairly. Students say they feel very safe and their attendance and punctuality are excellent. Students are supported by a strong team approach which provides consistent interventions by the school, residential and therapeutic teams. As a result of this detailed work, students are making good and sometimes outstanding progress in overcoming their difficulties. The handover arrangements between home and school are strong and provide a secure context so that behaviour is managed consistently. The atmosphere is calm and friendly. Students develop warm relationships with adults and with each other. Students also demonstrate respect for each other and for adults. Staff are upbeat and positive in helping students to improve their self-confidence and self-esteem. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school provide good opportunities for students to learn about other beliefs and cultures nationally and internationally. Students benefit from a range of visits. For example, students learned about the lives of slaves and developed skills of empathy as a result of a visit to the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool. The broad curriculum ensures that students have a good understanding of British society, public services and institutions. The proprietor has taken steps to ensure that no partisan political views will be promoted and that there will be balanced views presented during any political discussion with students.

### Quality of teaching

**Good**

Teaching is good. Teachers and other staff make it clear that they expect students to work hard. Consequently, students are industrious and keen to do well. The teaching of reading, writing and speaking skills is especially strong and pervades all subjects. Students' progress in improving these skills is supported by effective work outside the classroom and in the home. Students are developing a love of reading and their writing skills are improving rapidly, especially for students with very low starting points. The promotion of mathematical and numeracy skills is not as strongly supported in other subjects or outside the classrooms. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to increase the level of challenge for more-able students to help them to make rapid and sustained

progress. Teachers plan the questions they ask carefully and tailor them to suit the ability of each pupil. Teachers mark students' work regularly and make helpful comments. These comments detail exactly what each pupil has done well and give precise guidance on what they should do to make their work even better. Students are skilled at assessing how hard they have worked and the quality of their work. Lessons are lively and stimulating. Teachers and other staff use a combination of good humour, creative ideas and constant encouragement to secure students' engagement and motivation. The classrooms are bright and cheerful. Wall displays celebrate students' work and enhance their learning. There are helpful tips on what students should check to improve their work. Students' progress is charted through individual 'learning journeys'. Teachers use these well to make sure that work meets each student's needs. Staff are skilled in managing behaviour largely by ensuring tasks are stimulating. For example, students of very different abilities made good progress in extending their use of adjectives. This was because they were motivated by an engaging task in which they used a blindfold to explore words to describe the senses of touch, smell, hearing and taste.

### **Quality of curriculum**

**Good**

The quality of the curriculum is good. Students study a broad range of subjects and this is successful in preparing them for their next steps in education, employment or training. The school is particularly effective in making sure that students develop strong literacy skills. This is helping students express their ideas and feelings which is a key feature in helping them to overcome their difficulties. There is a strong emphasis on teamwork and resilience which develops students' independence and ability to cooperate and socialise appropriately. Teachers' planning is of good quality, and careful consideration is given to students' different learning styles and needs. Teachers make sure that students' individual interests and aptitudes are used to maintain their engagement and motivation. Older students have regular interviews to explore the whole range of different pathways open to them when they leave the school. Schemes of work show how students' skills and knowledge are built up progressively from their different starting points. After-school activities add a rich dimension to students' experiences. For example, students can attend drama classes, learn to play a musical instrument, or learn how to sew. These activities give students new skills and also support their social development.

### **Pupils' welfare, health and safety**

**Good**

The arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students are good and all the independent school standards are met. High quality, cohesive care supports students' good progress in understanding how to change harmful behaviour. The management of students' behaviour and around the site is very effective and makes a strong contribution to students' well-being. Risk assessments are thorough and realistic. This allows students to benefit from trips and other external activities. All staff are alert to any concerning behaviour and they are swift to respond. The school's procedures for dealing with and eliminating bullying are effective.

Arrangements for checking the suitability of all staff who work with the students are comprehensive and recorded in a single central register. Staff are trained to the required levels in child protection, first aid and fire safety. There are good routines to monitor all aspects of fire safety. The working relationships between the home and the school are very strong. The handover arrangements are seamless and this helps students in being consistently ready to make the most of their lessons. Relationships with external agencies, including placing authorities, are strong because they are supported by effective communication.

**Leadership and management****Good**

The quality of leadership and management of the school is good. Staff work together as an effective team and morale is high. There are effective systems to monitor and improve staff performance which are linked clearly to the progress students make. Teachers are supported through regular meetings with the headteacher. He makes regular checks on the quality of lessons and on students' work. Teachers and students are provided with detailed and helpful feedback about the quality of their work. Staff are clear about the purpose of the school and have a consistent approach in implementing policies. The unified integration of routines between the home and school provide a solid foundation for students, and keeps all staff focused on improving the learning and progress of students. Leaders have made sure that the premises and accommodation are of a high standard. Information for parents, carers and placing authorities is appropriate. There have been no complaints raised since the school opened but there are effective systems in place to manage any concerns if they arise. Good leadership has ensured that all the independent school standards are met. The good quality of the teaching, curriculum and students' achievement is the result of good teamwork and attention to detail. Leaders have a secure vision for the school's future, but this is not yet set out in a comprehensive plan with clear indications of how success will be measured.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138441
<b>Inspection number</b>	420279
<b>DfE registration number</b>	381/6004

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

<b>Type of school</b>	Day school for boys with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
<b>School status</b>	Independent School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	4
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Compass Community Ltd
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jason Manley



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