

Sirius Academy North

540 Hall Road, Kingston Upon Hull HU6 9BP

Inspection dates 9–10 December 2015

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive headteacher and headteacher have extremely high expectations of the staff and pupils. Staff and pupils have risen to these expectations and as a result the proportion of pupils achieving five A* to C GCSE grades, including mathematics and English, rose significantly in 2015.
- The progress made by pupils in all subjects, but especially in English and mathematics, has risen significantly. The progress of all groups of pupils in the academy is good.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is tracked very carefully. Their progress is good as a result of effective strategies to support their learning.
- Teaching has improved considerably as a result of effective and highly focused training. In the majority of lessons pupils make good progress.
- The newly appointed governing body shares the high expectations of senior leaders. The governing body monitors the academy's plans for improvement and asks challenging questions about the impact of the plans.
- Pupils want to come to the academy and their attendance is above average. Pupils' behaviour around the academy is good. They respect each other, members of staff and the environment.
- Pupils feel safe. They are safe as a result of the effective implementation of the academy's safeguarding policies and procedures.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a small number of lessons pupils' behaviour falls short of that seen in other lessons and around the academy.
- On occasion, pupils, and in particular the more-able pupils, are not challenged to reach the levels of which they are capable.
- Although narrowing, there are still some gaps in the achievement of different groups of pupils.
- Not all marking adheres to the academy's policy which reducing its effectiveness.
- The academy's work to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of the pupils across the curriculum is not fully effective in all subjects.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that in all lessons pupils adhere to the high expectations of behaviour seen around the academy.
- Improve even further the achievement of all pupils by:
 - embedding a coherent and comprehensive approach to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects
 - challenging all pupils, but particularly the more able, to achieve the highest possible levels
 - improving the consistency of marking and feedback so they conform to the high standard expected by the academy
 - improving the quality of teaching to increase the proportion of pupils which make more than expected progress and reduce further the gaps between different groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The executive headteacher and headteacher are relentless in their pursuit of excellence. In four terms they have ensured that pupils' behaviour has improved significantly. It is now good, and it was inadequate. Teaching is much improved and teachers focus on planning lessons which ensure that, over time, the progress of all pupils, regardless of their starting points, is good. As one middle leader said, 'things get done with the minimum amount of fuss and the maximum amount of haste'.
- Sirius Academy North became part of the Sirius Academy Multi Academy Trust from the 1 September 2015. From September 2014 Sirius Academy West was supporting the academy. The actions of the staff from Sirius, and in particular the executive headteacher and headteacher, have been fundamental in ensuring that Sirius Academy North now provides a good standard of education.
- The focus of all staff and governors is entirely on improving the education provided for the pupils in their care, increasing their life chances and allowing them to follow their dreams.
- The executive headteacher and headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, have challenged middle leaders to become a highly effective and efficient team, through regular and supportive line management. Middle leaders are now fully involved in quality assuring the work of their departments. Middle leaders conduct lesson observations, work scrutiny and learning walks. They have become astute judges of the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and how to develop the teaching of staff. Knowing this, they are then able to provide support for staff to develop their teaching skills.
- Lead teachers, a new addition to the academy, have quickly established themselves. They lead on some of the training for staff and also on the development of the pupils' progress at Key Stage 3. This means that pupils are tracked rigorously throughout the whole academy and as soon as a group, or individual pupil, is identified as not making the progress expected, effective intervention strategies are put in place.
- Effective performance management ensures that increases in teachers' pay are linked to outcomes for pupils. Training is bespoke and highly welcomed by staff. Voluntary training sessions are attended well. Whole-academy training is focused on the needs of the staff and how to improve teaching to enable the pupils to make better progress.
- The assembly and tutor programme allow pupils to consider the role they will play in modern Britain. Pupils are actively involved in the democratic process by appointing form representatives and house captains. When asked, pupils said there was nothing they wanted to change about the academy because they had put forward what needed to be changed through the academy council and action had been taken. Pupils are respectful of each other, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or faith. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education is developed very effectively.
- The pupil premium money is used extremely well to enhance the education of those pupils it is intended to support. The money is used improve the attendance of the pupils, and to give them opportunities which they would otherwise not be able to have. For example, a significant number of pupils, including some supported by the pupil premium, visited Cambridge University to consider whether they would like to apply. The spending of the money is planned, and then tracked rigorously. As a result gaps are closing rapidly. These pupils, like their peers, are making good progress.
- The curriculum was changed completely in September 2014 to focus on allowing pupils to have better life chances. As a result, pupils are now making good progress and are being given the chance to continue their education or take up employment or training opportunities. In 2015 only a very small proportion of pupils, at the end of Year 11, were not in employment, education or training, proving the effectiveness of the academy's work.
- At Key Stage 3, there is a greater focus, in all subjects, on developing the literacy and numeracy skills of the pupils. However, the work to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is not embedded throughout the academy. Sometimes in lessons the opportunity to develop these skills is not taken.
- There is a significant range of extra-curricular activities, including academic, sporting, musical and drama. These allow pupils, whatever their interests, to participate. Pupils appreciate these opportunities and large numbers of pupils are involved in extra-curricular activities.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body came into being on 1 September 2015. The governing body is streamlined, with far fewer committees, which means fewer meetings and better communication. There is a new governor representing parents, who was elected earlier this term, allowing parents to have a direct contact to the governing body.

- The governing body is fully aware of the need to challenge and support the senior leadership team. However, the governing body knows how effective the executive headteacher and headteacher are and allows them to do their job, raising the aspirations of pupils and providing a better education. The governors are also determined to ensure that the pupils of the academy are given the best life chances possible.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All policies and procedures are in place. Referrals to the local authority are made in a timely manner, and followed through. Pupils who are risk of not attending are monitored and supported to improve their attendance. Pupils report that they feel safe in the academy and there are now no areas of the academy which are 'no go areas'.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Lessons are planned effectively, ensuring that the needs of pupils, in the majority of lessons, are well met. This enables the pupils to make, overall, good progress.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is comprehensive. They are aware of the demands of the examinations pupils will do and work is often tailored to those demands. Many teachers are skilful in the use of questioning to make sure pupils do not continue to believe misconceptions.
- Since the last inspection much work has been done on improving the climate for learning in classrooms. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils and this is enabling pupils to learn more. Pupils, especially in Year 11, appreciate these relationships, and consider that the staff are, as one pupils said, 'on our side', working with pupils to enable them to do their best.
- Progress support assistants are used effectively in lessons to ensure that the pupils they support are able to access the curriculum and make good progress.
- There is a clear policy for marking and feedback to pupils. The impact on learning of marking which adheres to this policy is very positive. However, not all marking conforms to the academy's policy, which reduces its effectiveness and the positive impact on learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The academy's 'expert learner' programme has been highly effective in ensuring that the majority of pupils are self-sufficient and successful learners. The linking of the development of pupils' skills to tangible and converted rewards, such as leaving the academy from the front door and breakfast, means pupils have bought into the programme. The pupils who are 'expert learners' wear their badges with pride and are keen to explain what the programme is about.
- Pupils are encouraged to improve their physical well-being through structured physical education (PE) lessons and the wide range of extra-curricular activities. There is a programme for pupils to participate in the leadership challenge in PE and organise inter-house activities.
- Pupils understand the need to keep themselves healthy. Information is provided to ensure that pupils know about mental well-being. Year 11 pupils have a mentor and pupils see this person as someone they can trust to discuss issues, such as stress, which might be challenging them.
- Pupils are kept safe in the academy. Pupils are aware of the dangers of the inappropriate use of technology. They are also informed of how to keep themselves safe in the real world as well as the virtual world. Pupils were very clear that bullying, of any form, is not an issue. However, they are also aware of what to do if it occurs and confident that it will be dealt with if it happens. The academy has put in place a range of strategies to discourage bullying and the effectiveness of these is tracked by leaders and governors.
- 'Positive steps' is a structured programme for pupils who need more support to improve their behaviour. Pupils are out of lessons for a short period of time to work on their coping skills. The impact is monitored, and pupils are reintegrated quickly back into lessons.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct around the academy is much improved and is good. Pupils are sensible on the narrow

staircase, wait in turn when waiting to talk to members of staff during social times, and speak politely to each other and visitors.

- In most lessons pupils are well behaved and ensure that learning takes place in a safe and supportive environment. For example, in most lessons pupils were prepared to 'have a go' and answer questions, even if they were not quite sure of their answer, because they were treated with respect by their peers, even if they got it wrong.
- The proportion of lessons disrupted by poor behaviour is now very small. However, there are still a few lessons in which pupils do not rise to the high standards expected of them in terms of their behaviour. This does disrupt learning. Often this behaviour occurs because lessons are not challenging.
- Over the past four terms the proportion of pupils attending on a day-to-day basis has increased significantly and is now above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has decreased significantly. This is because of concerted effort to work with parents and pupils to discover, and eliminate, the issues around poor attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Since the last section 5 inspection, the proportion of pupils achieving five A* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics has risen significantly. The proportion of pupils making the expected progress in mathematics in 2015 doubled compared to 2014. In English the proportion of pupils making expected progress was in line with the national average. Although the published information shows some pupils making less than good progress between Year 7 and Year 11, the progress the pupils have made since the academy went into special measures is good. The progress of current pupils is good.
- The very accurate and robust data the academy has on its pupils shows that the progress of current pupils is even better than it was in 2015. Across the academy, because of better teaching, improved behaviour and bespoke support, all groups of pupils are making good progress across a range of subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in Year 10 were not making as much progress as their peers at the beginning of the academy year. The academy spotted this through the data tracking system, swiftly intervened and provided a supportive package for these pupils based on their individual needs. As a result, these pupils are now making the same good progress as their peers.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are integrated well. They are making good progress and their progress is tracked with the same rigour as for other pupils in the academy.
- The most-able pupils have been offered a range of activities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. These include Mensa days, trips to universities and being challenged to complete A* and A grade work in lessons. However, in some lessons these pupils are not challenged effectively and sometimes they do not achieve the higher levels of which they are capable.
- The gaps between the achievement of pupils supported by the pupil premium and those who are not, reduced in most subjects in 2015. Current data shows that these gaps are continuing to close across the academy.

School details

Unique reference number	138246
Local authority	Kingston upon Hull
Inspection number	10005212

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	764
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Porteus
Executive headteacher	Dr Cathy Taylor
Headteacher	Ian Ravenscroft
Telephone number	01482 349600
Website	http://www.siriusacademynorth.org.uk/
Email address	admin@siriusacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 June 2014

Information about this school

- Sirius Academy North became part of the Sirius Academy Multi Academy Trust on 1 September 2015. Prior to this date Sirius Academy North was known as Thomas Ferens Academy (TFA) and was judged to be requiring special measures. Staff from Sirius Academy West supported TFA from 1 September 2014.
- The academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There is an increasing proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the premium funding is considerably above the national average. This is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above that found nationally.
- The academy meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The academy does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in a range of lessons, year groups and subjects. Inspectors also looked at the work pupils had completed over time. A number of these activities were carried out with members of the senior leadership team and middle leaders.
- Meetings were held with members of the senior leadership team, the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, middle leaders, teachers and progress support assistants. Three groups of pupils were met with and pupils were spoken to at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors looked at documentation concerning safeguarding, pupils' achievement, the curriculum, improvement planning, pupils' behaviour and attendance and the academy's monitoring of its work.
- Inspectors observed an assembly, visited tutor groups and monitored the pupils' behaviour at break, lunchtimes and between lessons.
- There were not enough responses on Parent View to allow the inspectors to consider these. Inspectors did take into account parental views collected by the academy.

Inspection team

Tanya Stuart, lead inspector
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Her Majesty's Inspector
Ofsted Inspector

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