

# Inspection of Southway

South Leeds Hub, Middleton Road, Middleton, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS10 3JA

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Inspection dates:

5–7 November 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**No**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders aim to make sure that 'no pupil will be left behind'. This is because they know pupils have reached the end of the road at their mainstream schools. At Southway, every pupil gets another shot at their education. Pupils know that the staff believe in them. The pupils feel happy to be there, feel valued and feel safe.

All staff have high aspirations for the pupils. Leaders have made sure that pupils take subjects with worthwhile qualifications. This is so that they can either move back to their mainstream school, or go on to further education or training. Pupils know that there is a proper plan in place for them.

Bullying is not a problem at school. Staff have carefully built up trust with pupils. There is a calmness around school, even when pupils feel stressed and anxious. Even so, pupils swear too much at and around staff. Expectations are generally high. Sometimes, pupils' behaviour in class is disrespectful to others and to their teachers.

Leaders allow pupils to go off-site at social times under staff supervision. However, staff stand by and watch while pupils smoke. Staff also smoke when off-site, in the sight of pupils, which does not set a good example.

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

Leaders have put in place a curriculum which is well-suited to the needs of pupils. This is not an easy task. Pupils arrive at different times in the year from a large number of secondary schools. They arrive with different abilities and have studied different subjects, topics and qualifications. They stay for different lengths of time. It is very hard for staff to plan a curriculum in these circumstances. However, they have been successful in doing so. As a result, pupils do well in their examinations and next steps compared to pupils in similar schools elsewhere.

The pupils who attend the school all have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils who spoke to inspectors thought that teachers wanted them to do well. They thought that the subject 'schemes of work' pushed them to do well.

The curriculum is currently better planned in some subjects than others. It is getting there quickly. Subject plans are all based on the assumption that pupils will only be at the school for a short period of time. Leaders have got more thinking to do for pupils who stay at the school for long periods of time (such as over a year).

Pupils attend the school as the result of their challenging behaviour at their mainstream schools. Yet, the school is a calm environment. Staff are skilled at keeping pupils settled. Staff are respectful in their tones of voice towards pupils. This is even the case when pupils are swearing, which is commonplace. Staff are patient, even when pupils are being inattentive and distracting in lessons.

Leaders have an effective programme for helping pupils with their personal development. For example, they recently introduced religious education as a compulsory qualification. This is so that pupils learn more about the wider world. Pupils told inspectors about their experiences learning about other faiths and cultures. They described a tolerant and respectful school.

There is a lot to be credited in the school's leadership. The commitment to the pupils is very evident. This is something the pupils themselves recognised. As one of them said, 'This is a school where they will work with you. If you work with them, they will double it, triple it.'

The proprietor of the school is passionate about the deal pupils get. He has made sure that all staff share his commitment to the pupils' chances. He has given the head of school the resources she needs to get the job done. The trust's board of trustees and head of school support the proprietor in his aims.

The proprietor has made sure that the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Overall, safeguarding is effective. There are minor weaknesses which need immediate action to be put right. These relate to a few unmet independent school standards. Leaders allow pupils to smoke off-site at breaktime and lunchtime. They are supervised by staff at these times. This means that leaders are enabling and condoning smoking by pupils. Leaders have not given enough thought to the risks of pupils smoking and bringing smoking equipment onto the school site. They have not taken appropriate action to reduce these risks. There is no drawn-up or implemented risk assessment with regard to pupils' smoking.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders check on the suitability of staff to work at the school. These arrangements meet requirements. Staff training in safeguarding matters is up to date and appropriate. Leaders make sure links with other agencies to keep children safe are effective. Links include the local authority and the police.

However, there are minor weaknesses in safeguarding. These relate to the matters around pupils smoking, explained in the section above.

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

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken to plan next year's curriculum and train staff in how to deliver it that they

are in the process of bringing this about.

- A sizeable number of pupils stay at the school for over a year, particularly those who arrive during Year 10. Leaders should spend some time thinking through how to adapt their subject schemes of work, so that such pupils' cumulative knowledge can be built up and gaps addressed.
- Leaders should take immediate necessary action to put right the minor weaknesses in safeguarding. Specifically, they should draw up and implement a written risk assessment to address the matter of pupils smoking. This should include the steps leaders will take to mitigate the risks of pupils bringing flammable materials onto the school site. Action should be taken to introduce smoking cessation education into the school's personal development curriculum.
- Leaders should take action to further improve the behaviour of pupils. Staff tolerate a high level of swearing from pupils. The pupils agree that they swear a lot. Leaders should establish an expectation of language which is more respectful towards staff. Leaders should also apply their behaviour policy more rigorously, so that pupils' attitudes towards their learning are more consistently positive.

## How can I feed back my views?

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146633
<b>DfE registration number</b>	383/6009
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	10110730
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	90
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	5
<b>Proprietor</b>	Andrew Goulty
<b>Chair</b>	Janice Bennett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kelly Newby
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£22,675
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 3367772
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.southway.org.uk">www.southway.org.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@southway.org.uk">info@southway.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This is the first standard inspection of the school since it registered with the Department for Education on 20 March 2019.
- The school runs an off-site unit at The Featherstone Academy, called New Way. The address for this provision is The Featherstone Academy, Pontefract Road, Featherstone, Pontefract WF7 5AJ.
- Pupils attending Southway are dual registered with the school they originally attended and with Southway.
- The school is part of the Rodillian Multi-Academy Trust. The proprietor is also the executive headteacher of the school and the chief executive officer of the

Rodillian Multi-Academy Trust.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Further information about this part of the inspection is available in the annex of this report.
- Inspectors met with the head of school. We also met senior staff with responsibility for attendance, behaviour, personal development and pupils with SEND.
- An inspector talked with a trustee on the telephone and met with the proprietor. We met with other senior leaders of the Rodillian Multi-Academy Trust.
- An inspector met with the head of inclusion for Leeds local authority and with the police officer for Safer Schools.
- An inspector visited the school's second site, New Way, at The Featherstone Academy.
- We considered numerous subjects as part of this inspection, particularly English, mathematics, religious education and food studies. This was as part of deep dives. A deep dive consists of: a meeting with the subject leader to get an overview of the curriculum planning and how it works in practice; a visit to lessons in that subject in different year groups, accompanied by the leader; a meeting with some of the teachers whose lessons were visited; a discussion with some of the pupils who were in the lessons visited and a scrutiny of the workbooks of some of the pupils in the lessons visited.
- Inspectors reviewed the systems for checking the suitability of staff to work at the school. Other documentation relating to safeguarding was scrutinised, including a sample child protection case file and risk assessments.
- We spoke with pupils at different times, including social times and while in lessons. We observed arrangements for when pupils left the school site at breaktime and lunchtime. We spoke with staff, both individually and in groups.
- Ofsted's online surveys were considered: parents' free-text responses (three responses) and the staff survey (20 responses).

## Inspection team

Steve Shaw, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Michele Costello

Her Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school failed to meet the following independent school standards**

#### **Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
  - 9(a) a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, amongst other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour
  - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
  - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

#### **Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
  - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
  - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.



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