

Inspection of Sandhill View Academy

Grindon Lane, Thorney Close, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR3 4EN

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 September 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils appreciate the support and help that they get from their teachers at Sandhill View Academy. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Pupils feel safe and secure because the staff know them well. Behaviour is good and inspectors saw this during the inspection. The pupils spoken to during the inspection told us that any bullying is dealt with effectively.

Everyone in the school understands that the aim is to 'know more, do more and go further'. This motto is used to explain the importance of every lesson. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. The curriculum is challenging and there is effective support in place to help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils work hard in their lessons. Teachers take time to show pupils where a subject might lead them in the future.

School leaders understand the local community. They have made sure that the curriculum and the support that pupils receive fit the needs of the local area. There are lots of additional activities in school and many pupils take part in them. Alongside opportunities for drama and sport, pupils have been successful competing in the Lego league and participating in the 'girls into engineering' programme.

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

Leaders have put in a place an ambitious curriculum to challenge pupils and encourage them to aim high. All pupils have equal access to this curriculum. Curriculum leaders have organised the topics in each subject so that pupils can build on what they already know. Pupils learn effectively in lessons because they enjoy learning, and their behaviour is good. Some pupils need to improve their attendance so that they can benefit from the opportunities offered by the school.

Pupils in key stage 4 follow an academic curriculum, with some additional vocational subjects. All pupils are able to enter the English Baccalaureate group of subjects (science, history, geography and languages). The number of pupils taking these subjects is increasing. The school also delivers some subjects which link with the local economy, such as engineering. Pupils in key stage 4 said that they are able to choose the subjects that interest and motivate them.

Teachers have thought carefully about what pupils should study and why. In history, for example, pupils study protest movements from the middle ages to the present day. This helps pupils to understand important issues such as human rights and the development of democracy.

Learning is most effective where the teacher notices quickly if pupils do not understand or know something. This is not the case in all subjects. Most pupils are able to recall key facts and show that they are remembering more. Some pupils still need more support to help to remember information that they may have learned

some time ago. Leaders have good strategies in place to improve the way teachers spot gaps in learning and help pupils to recall key knowledge.

Weak reading skills prevent some pupils from being able to learn effectively. The school recognises this, and has programmes in place to support reading. This is helping pupils to read with greater fluency and understanding. Pupils say that the extra reading lessons are helping them in their other subjects.

Pupils with SEND achieve well because they get the right support. All teachers have information and training to adapt the curriculum to individual needs. There is a culture of high ambition for pupils with SEND. One parent of a pupil with SEND said, 'My child is understood, valued, supported and listened to.'

Pupils receive independent careers advice. There are many opportunities to learn about employment and further education. Career options and university choices are discussed weekly in tutor time, in all year groups. This means that the school meets the demands of the Baker Clause. The careers programme is effective because pupils explained how it gives them a sense of direction. Hardly any pupils leave school without a definite destination.

Leaders use the curriculum, assemblies and tutor time to develop pupils' values and cultural education. This work is having an impact, because pupils can speak confidently about tolerance, respect and moral issues. In art, and other subjects, pupils demonstrate their creativity and appreciation of culture.

Staff feel well supported at the school. They say that there is a shared sense of purpose. The majority of staff feel that workload is manageable. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained and that this training is focused on the things that make the most difference to pupils.

Governors and trust leaders have the skills and knowledge to challenge and support school leaders. They have focused on the right areas to help Sandhill View Academy become a good school. The trust board ensures that available resources have the most impact on pupils, including the spending of the pupil premium.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have strong systems in place to identify early any safeguarding concerns. Intervention and support for pupils who need it is swift. The school works effectively with other partner agencies that help to safeguard pupils. There is an effective culture of safeguarding in the school. This has been achieved through regular training to a high standard. Staff have a good understanding of the specific safeguarding issues which are most relevant to pupils at this school.

Pupils learn about the dangers they may face outside of school. Pupils speak confidently about a range of issues, including mental health awareness, sexual health and healthy diets.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' use of regular assessment strategies to pinpoint gaps in pupil knowledge is variable. For some pupils this hinders their learning. Leaders should ensure that all teachers are equipped to identify and address pupils' misconceptions effectively.
- Poor attendance is holding some pupils back. Pupils' absence from school means they have gaps in their knowledge. This makes it harder to learn new material and make progress. Leaders should continue to refine their attendance strategy and promote positive messages about the importance of attending school.

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	141986
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10200692
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	714
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Brown
Headteacher	Jill Dodd
Website	www.sandhillview.com
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the school was last inspected.
- The school places a small number of pupils in two alternative education providers. These are Beacon of Light School and The Link School.

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 the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with a range of staff, including the headteacher, subject leaders, teachers and support staff. Inspectors also met with a representative of the trust board and the chief executive.

- Inspectors carried out 'deep dives' in these subjects: English, science, history and art. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and visited lessons in some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with those responsible for safeguarding in school. We talked to pupils about how the school helps to keep them safe. They checked that staff are properly recruited and trained in safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited assemblies and tutor time and we considered the range of extra-curricular opportunities that are available for pupils. Inspectors held meetings to consider careers education, personal development and attendance. They also talked to pupils and staff in the behaviour support base in school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires. This included the staff survey (60 responses), Parent View (35 responses) and free-text responses to Parent View (5 responses).

Inspection team

Carl Sugden, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Moira Banks	Ofsted Inspector
Angela White	Ofsted Inspector
Katherine Spurr	Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021