

Inspection of Safe Start Education

1,2 and 4 Henry Square Chambers, Ashton Under Lyne, Tameside OL6 7ST

Inspection dates: 8 to 10 December 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this school. They work hard in lessons. Pupils achieve well and meet the high expectations that teachers have of them. Pupils study a wide range of subjects. They have opportunities to achieve accredited qualifications by the time they leave the school. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training.

Pupils enjoy participating in, and benefit from, a range of opportunities that develop their self-esteem and self-confidence. These include visits to museums which help to promote pupils' understanding of different cultures. Charitable work enhances pupils' understanding of fundamental British values.

Pupils appreciate the support that staff provide to help them to overcome their emotional and academic barriers to learning. Pupils know that staff care about them. This helps pupils to feel safe in school. Pupils are confident that staff will listen to them if they have any worries or concerns.

Pupils typically behave well in school. They show respect for each other and staff. Pupils are confident that staff will act to stop any bullying that might occur.

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

All pupils attending this school have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most pupils have an educational, health and care plan. Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those who attend the school part time. Carefully selected subjects meet the needs and interests of pupils.

Most teachers check that pupils understand what is being taught. Teachers use this information effectively to make appropriate amendments to their planning.

In nearly all subjects, curriculum plans build pupils' knowledge and understanding on what they already know and can do. However, a very small number of curriculum plans do not identify the key pieces of knowledge that pupils should know and the order in which it should be taught. This means that learning is not always planned in an orderly way. This hinders pupils' ability to use what they already know when learning something new.

Most teachers have the knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. However, leaders have not ensured that staff have access to training on up-to-date ways to deliver their subjects.

Leaders share information about pupils' SEND needs appropriately. Staff use this information to make suitable adjustments to their teaching. This enables pupils to learn alongside their classmates. Leaders have a suitable plan in place to promote equality of access to the school buildings and curriculum. This includes the provision

of access ramps and appropriate teaching resources. As a result, the school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Nearly all pupils are confident, fluent readers. Leaders have ensured that staff can teach phonics well. This means that staff know exactly what to do to help any pupil who finds reading difficult. Pupils benefit from access to a well-stocked library of books that appeal to teenagers. They speak confidently of their favourite authors and types of books. Some pupils are eager to begin the study of English literature.

Pupils receive impartial careers advice and study a comprehensive careers curriculum. This helps them to make informed choices about their next steps when leaving the school. Pupils are ambitious about their futures. For example, they want to gain the skills they need to run their own business or to attend college to study vocational courses.

Pupils' personal development is well promoted in school. Participation in adventurous activities such as overnight camps and mixed martial-arts training promotes healthy lifestyles. Pupils' work with a professional musician helps to develop their confidence when performing their own compositions. Pupils develop their understanding of responsibility through looking after the school's pet rats.

Pupils' positive attitudes to learning help them to concentrate well in lessons. Sometimes, pupils can struggle to manage their emotions. This can lead to inappropriate language being used and disruptions to learning. Skilled staff deal with these outbursts effectively and help pupils to swiftly re-engage in their learning.

Admission and attendance registers are well maintained and adhere to the most recent regulations. Leaders monitor pupils' attendance carefully to identify any emerging trends.

The proprietor body and leaders have a secure understanding of the independent school standards. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The proprietor body holds leaders closely to account for the impact of their actions. They have strengthened the governance of the school through the recent establishment of a new governing body. The proprietor body makes sure that the school buildings are maintained to a high standard and are safe to use. The proprietor body also ensures the school's website contains the school's safeguarding and relationship and sex education policies.

Staff feel well supported and proud to work in the school. Leaders consider staff workload carefully when implementing improvement actions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have secure knowledge of how to identify safeguarding concerns. Staff are vigilant and share any safeguarding concerns they have with leaders using

well-established procedures. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training to keep their knowledge of safeguarding up to date. Leaders know how to follow up any concerns that are raised with them. They share information appropriately with other agencies to ensure pupils get the support they need and are protected from harm.

The proprietor body ensures that the school's internet connection is appropriately filtered and monitored to help keep pupils safe from harm online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- A small number of curriculum plans do not carefully sequence the key pieces of knowledge that pupils must be taught. This means that pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that all curriculum plans clearly outline the key pieces of knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which they should be taught. This will help pupils to build their knowledge over time.
- Some staff have not had opportunities to attend training to enhance their knowledge of current educational research and pedagogy. As a result, they are unaware of the current ideas on how to teach their subjects most effectively. Leaders should ensure that all staff receive appropriate training to further enhance their pedagogical knowledge.

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 provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	147859
DfE registration number	357/6007
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10203852
Type of school	Independent school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	14 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	19
Number of part-time pupils	12
Proprietor	Safestart UK Ltd
Chair	Rachel Pilling
Headteacher	Carol Nolan
Annual fees (day pupils)	£32,000 to £48,000
Telephone number	0330 043 1546
Website	safestartschool.co.uk
Email address	head@safestartuk.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Safe Start Education is an independent school based in Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside and run by Safestart UK Ltd. The company has one director.
- The school caters for pupils aged 14 to 16 years who have been at risk of exclusion from mainstream schools. The school provides alternative provision for some pupils. All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Some pupils are looked after by the local authority.
- A new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- A governing body has been established since the pre-registration inspection of the school.
- The school does not use any alternative education providers.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors 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 meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first standard inspection of the school. Inspectors discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils about their work and school life. Inspectors spoke with the chair of the proprietor body, the headteacher and other senior staff. The lead inspector toured the school site to evaluate compliance with the independent school standards.
- The lead inspector held telephone conversations with representatives of some of the local authorities placing pupils at the school, and some parents or carers.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, music and digital skills education. For each deep dive, an inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and spoke with some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils reading. Inspectors also scrutinised curriculum plans from other subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation related to the work of the school and scrutinised documentation relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Parent View and the staff online questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil online questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Nixon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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