

# Inspection of Sirius Academy West

296 Anlaby Park Road South, Hull HU4 7JB

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Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Sixth-form provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

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

Leaders are ambitious and want the best for pupils at Sirius Academy West. Leaders are keen to prepare pupils for life beyond school, regardless of their starting points from primary school.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. Since the last inspection, leaders have raised their expectations for pupils' achievement by introducing a much more appropriate and challenging curriculum.

The relationships between pupils and staff are positive. Leaders have ensured a strong culture of safeguarding and pupils feel safe. The pupils spoken to by inspectors said that bullying sometimes happens but is not tolerated. Inspectors agree that this is the case. Pupils are confident that if bullying happens, staff would do their best to sort it out.

Pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular activities, ranging from sport, to robotics, to the combined cadet force. Leaders are keen to ensure that as many pupils as possible participate in these activities to help strengthen pupils' well-being following the disruption caused by the pandemic.

Leaders have high expectations of pupil behaviour in the school. The behaviour at the school is improving. There are, however, too many pupils who do not always match the behaviour expectations set by leaders.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have prioritised the development of the curriculum. Ambitious teaching plans identify the knowledge that it is important for pupils to learn. Leaders have also thought about the order in which staff teach the curriculum. Leaders have ensured that any gaps in pupil knowledge caused by the pandemic have been reduced.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and clearly explain key terms and ideas to pupils. In lessons, teachers check for pupils' understanding through effective use of assessment. In the strongest subjects, such as geography, leaders have set up effective assessment systems. Teaching routines, such as the 'connect' activity, allow teachers to quickly address misconceptions. There are small inconsistencies in other areas of the curriculum. In English and mathematics, for example, some delivery and assessment is more varied.

Leaders encourage pupils to study a broad curriculum. This includes subjects that count towards the English Baccalaureate qualification. However, the take-up of modern foreign languages at GCSE level is not as high as leaders would like. Leaders have identified barriers to the take up of languages and are taking effective action to further stimulate pupils' interest.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Teachers use individual 'pupil pen portraits' to ensure that the needs of these pupils are met. A small number of parents of children with SEND feel that the school could provide further support in this area.

Leaders have recognised the need to do more work with the weakest readers. Strategies are in place to support the pupils who find it tough. Leaders know that work in this area is still relatively new and is not embedded.

The personal development of pupils is carefully considered. Leaders have taken steps to ensure that pupils have a range of opportunities beyond their academic subjects. These range from sporting activities to clubs in drama, as well as science, and the combined cadet force. Leaders have done much to strengthen the personal development curriculum. Most pupils gain the knowledge of the wider world. Leaders are aware that there is still more work to do and are taking appropriate steps to enhance the curriculum so that all pupils gain such knowledge.

Leaders ensure that pupils receive careers education in line with the Baker clause.

Leaders in the sixth form are ambitious for their students. Students enjoy their time in the sixth form and adopt a very positive attitude. Students are guided well through university and employment applications. They value the support they receive. Leaders proactively support specialist sixth form teachers with their professional development. Some teachers benefit from a local network of sixth form providers where they gain support from their peers.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and most pupils are polite and show positive attitudes. Inspectors saw very little low level disruption during lessons. The behaviour system is clear and consistently applied across the school. The behaviour of some pupils has been challenging since returning from the pandemic. There are some pupils that do not yet meet the standards of behaviour expected. The numbers of pupils removed from lessons and who are suspended are too high. Some pupils, including some who attend alternative provision, do not attend school as often as they did before the pandemic. However, leaders have acted with urgency to improve the behaviour and attendance of this group of pupils and are taking the right steps in securing sustainable improvements.

Governance is effective. The 'secondary school improvement board' knows the school well and holds leaders to account. Those responsible for governance fulfil their statutory duties. Teachers told inspectors that leaders support their well-being and workload. Staff are very positive about the professional development and training they receive. Leaders are aware that there is the need to further capture the views of a wider group of stakeholders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant and there is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. It is high profile. Leaders have detailed knowledge of the local context and safeguarding issues. Pupils told inspectors that they felt safe in the school and are taught how to stay safe.

School staff work very closely with partners and external agencies. The safeguarding team is tenacious in ensuring the follow up of cases for the most at-risk pupils. Staff receive regular and appropriate training. Staff are clear on how to identify those pupils at risk of neglect and exploitation.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The behaviour of some pupils does not match or align with the high expectations that leaders have. There are too many pupils that are internally excluded or receiving suspensions. As a result of this, they are missing out on their learning and are falling behind. Leaders should ensure that they continue to work on improving the expected standards of behaviour across the school, and the attitudes and expectations of a substantial number of pupils. Leaders should continue to take appropriate steps to reduce the number of suspensions and internal exclusions in the school.
- The programme to support the weakest readers in the school is in its infancy. Leaders have reviewed provision and now detailed plans are in place. However, leaders should accelerate the implementation of these plans so that weaker readers catch up quickly. Leaders should continue to make sure that reading permeates all aspects of school life and that pupils develop a love of reading. Leaders should ensure that the new plans ensure those staff delivering early reading support are well trained so that weakest readers fully access the curriculum.
- Some pupils in the school do not benefit from spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning as much as they should. Some pupils have not retained the knowledge and respect for different people's feelings, faiths and values. Leaders should ensure that this area of personal development is strengthened, so that pupils are able to make appropriate choices as they encounter more complex and changing circumstances in modern society.
- Leaders should further develop their work in capturing the views of stakeholders, through taking effective steps to ensure a more extensive and consistent approach to engagement with the wider community. This includes building positive relationships with parents who are not happy with the 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>                    | 135945   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                            | Kingston Upon Hull City Council  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                          | 10227443   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                             | Secondary Comprehensive  |
| <b>School category</b>                            | Academy converter  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                        | 11 to 18   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                           | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>        | 1538   |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b> | 152  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                      | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                             | Neil Porteus   |
| <b>Principal</b>                                  | Gemma Ransom   |
| <b>Website</b>                                    | <a href="http://www.sirius-academy.org.uk">www.sirius-academy.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                | 21 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005               |

## Information about this school

- The school is one of ten schools as part of The Constellation Trust.
- The school has links with one alternative education provider, the Rise Academy, which is part of The Constellation Trust.

## 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the chief executive officer of The Constellation Trust, the principal and other members of the senior leadership team, curriculum directors, and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo). Inspectors also held

meetings with leaders responsible for attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, the sixth form, personal development and careers.

- Meetings were held with the chair of the board of trustees and members of the secondary school improvement board. Inspectors also reviewed a sample of minutes from secondary school improvement board meetings.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, geography and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum directors, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. The single central record was also scrutinised. Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding records.
- A range of documentation provided by the school was reviewed. This included the school improvement plan, school self-evaluation, curriculum documentation and school policies.
- Inspectors considered the views given in Ofsted's online survey for staff, with 99 responses. The 49 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey were also considered.

## Inspection team

|                                  |                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Julian Appleyard, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector        |
| James Duncan                     | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Rebekah Taylor                   | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Manina Tyler-Mort                | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Richard Jones                    | Her Majesty's Inspector |

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