

Inspection of Sir Martin Frobisher Academy

Frobisher Drive, Jaywick, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 2QH

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Sir Martin Frobisher Academy. Pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe. They appreciate the changes that new leaders have brought about. For example, leaders act swiftly to stop poor behaviour.

Pupils know that staff care for them and want them to achieve well. Pupils appreciate the new curriculum they are being taught. They work hard to meet the high expectations teachers have of them. In reading and mathematics, pupils who need it are receiving additional support. This is helping pupils to successfully catch up so they can access the rest of the curriculum.

Behaviour in school is good. Pupils are polite and show respect to their peers and adults. Pupils understand what bullying is and report issues when they arise. When bullying happens, leaders do not tolerate it.

Pupils value the wider opportunities for development. They enjoy learning about other religions and cultures. Pupils are rightly proud of the respect they show others. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities for pupils to enjoy. This includes construction league, trips to the theatre and local competitions.

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

Over the last 18 months, improved strategic intervention from trust and school leaders has ensured increasingly stable staffing at all levels, including leadership.

Most of the curriculum has been reviewed and newly implemented to take into account what pupils know. This process is further ahead in its development in reading and mathematics. In these areas, leaders consider the starting points of pupils carefully, so they build knowledge and understanding step by step. Teachers receive effective training and support. As a result, teachers plan learning that helps pupils build on prior learning. This ensures that pupils deepen their learning and are consequently generally achieving well.

In other curriculum areas, pupils have more significant gaps in what they know and remember. This includes being able to remember and use subject-specific vocabulary. Leaders are still in the process of identifying what curriculum content pupils need to learn and what needs adapting further to help pupils achieve successfully. As a result, teaching does not always build on what pupils already know. Where this is the case, pupils find it difficult to know and remember more.

Leaders have made reading a priority. Teachers undertake regular training, so they teach the phonics programme consistently. Pupils who struggle to learn to read receive additional, targeted support. As a result, they are quickly gaining the knowledge they need to become fluent readers. Older pupils recognise that they can

read with more fluency. Pupils say reading is now their favourite part of the school day.

Leaders ensure that the majority of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support. Pupils with SEND are identified at an early stage. Detailed, precise plans are used by teachers to adapt learning. As such, pupils with SEND can access the curriculum well. As a result, pupils with SEND learn as well as their peers.

Children in early years get off to a good start. Curriculum plans are well thought out. They are planned to ensure that children's knowledge is consistently built upon what children have already learned. Children know how to care for themselves and develop positive relationships with each other. Staff know what children can do and give timely support to help them achieve well. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1.

Leaders are proud of how well pupils behave. Behaviour incidents are decreasing. Staff have high expectations and apply the behaviour policy consistently. Therefore, pupils understand what acceptable behaviour is. Adults act swiftly to tackle any low-level disruptions. Consequently, there is little interruption to pupils' learning.

Leaders carefully consider how pupils develop their individual character. Leaders widen and extend pupils' opportunities to celebrate differences and learn about other cultures. Pupils show respect and tolerance in their views on celebrating difference. There is high uptake of the school's broad extra-curricular offering. This range of experiences contributes effectively to pupils' personal development.

Leaders, including governors, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have held leaders to account for the quality of education. They make effective checks on leaders' work to improve the curriculum and its delivery, as well as making checks on behaviour and attendance.

Despite leaders' efforts, they know that there is work to be done to secure the trust and support of all parents. They are aware of the importance of this in making further improvements to the school experience for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders understand the local community well. They identify risks that pupils may encounter. Staff receive up-to-date training on government guidance to help them identify and report quickly any safeguarding concerns.

Leaders take prompt action, working with a range of agencies so that the most vulnerable pupils get the support they need. Leaders undertake the necessary safer recruitment checks before staff commence employment.

Pupils know that adults in school will help them if they have any worries. Pupils learn about how to stay safe when outside of school, including when online. For example, pupils learn the risks of social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Most of the curriculum has been reviewed and newly implemented. Aside from English and mathematics, leaders have identified gaps in pupils' learning and are further refining the curriculum to include what knowledge pupils need to learn to catch up. This includes pupils' knowledge of subject-specific vocabulary. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum they intend to offer is planned well, using the information they know about what pupils need to learn. Leaders should ensure that teachers are trained to implement the curriculum so that their delivery adheres to leaders' specification, ensuring that pupils catch up and are ready for the next stages of their education.
- Leaders know that many parents have a negative view of the school. This means that it is difficult for the school to engage with parents on important issues. Leaders should continue in their efforts to work with parents, ensuring they build further trust in leaders' actions so parents and school staff can unite in their ambition for all pupils to achieve their best.

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.

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	143121
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10268151
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	169
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gavin Robert
Executive headteacher	Simon Wood
Website	https://smfa.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 and 12 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher and members of the senior leadership team started in September 2022.
- Sir Martin Frobisher Academy is a sponsor-led academy within the REAch2 Academy Trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 executive headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. This includes the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.

- The lead inspector met with representatives of the trust and the intervention board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in other curriculum areas.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding policies, procedures and records, including the checks made on the suitability of staff and governors. They met with leaders, staff and pupils to further consider the effectiveness of safeguarding at the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school site. They also scrutinised behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors considered responses from staff to Ofsted's surveys. Inspectors also reviewed the responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Conor Heaven, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Liz Smith

His Majesty's Inspector

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