

# Inspection of Southway Independent School

Middleton Road, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS10 3JA

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Inspection dates: 8 to 10 July 2025

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**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

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

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

Southway is a school that brings hope and confidence to its pupils, helping them become the best they can be. Staff work hard to build strong relationships with pupils. The school believes that caring for each other is very important. As a result, pupils trust their teachers. They feel at ease asking for help and guidance. This support helps pupils make choices that lead to their future dreams.

The school has high standards for academic success. It creates a space where every pupil is urged to do their best. When pupils enter as newcomers, the school checks their starting academic level. It provides personalised support that encourages pupils' growth. This tailored approach helps most pupils meet or even exceed their educational goals. Pupils benefit from a strong curriculum and teachers who demonstrate genuine care for their success.

Pupils receive personalised support to help them succeed in social situations. They also engage with the community. For example, pupils help to organise a Christmas lunch at the local church. Pupils behave well, which helps everyone focus on learning. Staff use various nurturing techniques to support pupils' readiness to learn, for example taking a 'walk and talk' break with their key worker.

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

The school has designed a curriculum that excites pupils about learning. It helps them reconnect with their studies. There is a combination of hands-on activities and more traditional lessons. This variety helps pupils remember essential information. For example, in science, pupils carry out a practical investigation into enzymes and chemical reactions. In English, a high-quality text inspires pupils to debate serious issues such as racial stereotypes with great maturity.

The school focuses on reading skills to ensure all pupils can access the full curriculum. It provides swift support for those pupils who struggle with reading. Skilled teachers know how to help pupils improve their reading. The materials staff select are engaging and help pupils start to discover an enthusiasm for reading. One previously reluctant reader said, 'It's ok to read.'

The school recognises the importance of checking pupils' understanding. In key stage 4, staff use their checks to address misconceptions and shape future learning activities. However, in key stage 3, this is less effective. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their learning and lose focus.

Pupils improve their behaviour and attendance over time. As they stay longer at the school, pupils become well-rounded learners. Staff manage behaviour with great skill. When issues arise, staff respond promptly and with consideration. They guide pupils to recognise their mistakes and take time to understand what led to the behaviour. This support boosts pupils' self-belief and self-worth.

The school is skilful at identifying pupils' needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive excellent support. Staff recognise pupils' needs and work hard to remove any additional obstacles to learning. As a result, pupils with SEND make great progress through the curriculum.

The school's personal development programme is impressive. When pupils join, they embark on a journey of self-improvement that benefits them in many ways. Key workers and other staff provide strong support, helping pupils learn important future skills. They teach pupils how to get along with others, stay safe in the community and learn from their own and others' mistakes. The school has strong partnerships with external professionals to support this work. For example, officers from the local police force visit the school often. They, and other guest speakers, help pupils better understand fundamental British values. Pupils learn how these values apply in daily life.

The extra-curricular activities are exciting and varied. Pupils visit local historical sites, learn skills such as construction and crocheting and work with community groups. The school motivates pupils to do their best. This can lead to job opportunities after work experience. The school's commitment to personal development prepares pupils well for their future.

Southway is a dynamic school. All stakeholders have a voice. Their views help to improve the school. When a pupil joins, staff collaborate with their parents and carers. The school supports the whole family to help the pupil succeed.

School leaders and staff have a profound commitment to their work. They are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil and family receives the help they need. At Southway, everyone approaches their responsibilities with seriousness. The school has created a positive learning environment where every decision is motivated by the desire to make a difference for pupils.

The proprietor has a firm understanding of the independent school standards and ensures these are consistently met. The school fulfils schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- Assessment of pupils' learning at key stage 3 is not as strong as it is for older pupils. This can lead to gaps in knowledge and misconceptions forming. The school should support staff to ensure they assess learning in a way that helps address these gaps and misconceptions to improve the overall assessment process at key stage 3.

## 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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146633
<b>DfE registration number</b>	383/6009
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	10374861
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent day 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>	57
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Resilience Multi Academy Trust
<b>Chair</b>	Janice Bennett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carl Miller
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£22,155 to £30,100
<b>Telephone number</b>	01134843030
<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>	22 to 24 March 2022

## Information about this school

- The school's address is Middleton Road, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS10 3JA.
- Southway is an independent special school registered to provide full-time education for up to 120 pupils. Currently, 57 pupils are on roll.
- Many pupils who attend this school have an education, health and care plan.
- The school uses four unregistered alternative provisions. When pupils attend these, they are always escorted by a Southway member of staff.

## 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.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the head of school, senior leaders and the proprietor.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, 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.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors toured the school site and scrutinised a wide range of documentary evidence to check on the statutory requirements of the independent school standards.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils and staff. They also considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents.

## **Inspection team**

Richard Jones, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Beaumont

His Majesty's Inspector

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