

Southway

Middleton Road, Belle Isle, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS10 3JA

Inspection dates

3 February 2021

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- School leaders have implemented arrangements for safeguarding that are effective. The headteacher has ensured that information about safeguarding and pupils' welfare, such as the school's safeguarding policy, is available from the school's website and is compliant with current statutory guidance.
- The proprietor provides staff in the school with training in safeguarding and child protection. This ensures that all staff are up to date with their training and know how to help children keep safe.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and continues to be met.

Paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c)

- The previous inspection found that the proprietor had not ensured that a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, among other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils' misbehaviour, and that this policy is implemented effectively.
- The school's action plan details a full review of the current behaviour policy, with an emphasis on raising staff's expectation of pupils' behaviour, a clear sanction process and identified action routes to be taken by staff.
- The behaviour policy has been reviewed and re-launched. Leaders have simplified the approach to behaviour management and have increased the emphasis on rewards. There has been a significant training programme which has included de-escalation techniques and the use of physical restraint. Staff have become more confident to challenge unacceptable behaviour, including when pupils use bad language.
- Leaders have introduced 'culture walks'. They have heightened their presence around the school, provided additional support to their staff and reinforced expectations of good behaviour.
- As a result of these measures, there has been a significant improvement in pupils' behaviour. The school has a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Pupils and staff agree that

there is a more consistent approach to behaviour. A police officer, who is assigned to work at the school on a part-time basis, commented that attitudes and relationships have significantly changed for the better.

Paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- The previous inspection found that the proprietor had not ensured that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy. Also, appropriate action had not been taken to reduce risks that were identified.
- The school's action plan identifies that a review of risk assessment procedures will be completed with Leeds local authority advisers and any recommendations will be implemented. The plan also states that a policy entitled 'Welfare of Pupils' will be drafted and presented to the board of directors of Southway for approval and implementation.
- A significant issue at the time of the inspection in November 2019 was a high incidence of smoking by pupils and, consequently, concern about risks to health and also about pupils bringing flammable materials onto the school site.
- Decisive and highly effective action was taken by the new headteacher in November 2020. This included alterations to the school day, ensuring that pupils do not bring smoking materials onto the site and requiring staff to model expected behaviours.
- The written risk assessment policy is now fully implemented. Risk assessments covering premises, activities and individual pupils are in place. A specific risk assessment relating to smoking is in place and contains appropriate control measures.
- The 'Welfare of Pupils' policy is in place. It has a strong emphasis on preventing harm to pupils, for example through pastoral support, and protection of pupils, which includes thorough monitoring of vulnerable pupils. Leaders currently maintain highly detailed risk assessments for each pupil.
- The standards in this part are now met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraph 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(6)

- There is a single central register in place where all appropriate checks that have been carried out on adults are recorded.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and continues to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- The headteacher has ensured that there is a safeguarding policy that meets current government guidance and is published on the school's website.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and continues to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- The previous inspection found that the proprietor had not ensured that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and that they fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school standards are met consistently.
- The school's action plan identifies several actions to improve the quality of leadership and to strengthen lines of accountability. The plan identifies a number of actions to develop leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness.
- Leaders have ensured that all previously unmet standards are met. Leaders have developed and modified improvement plans, including the action plan sent to the Department for Education (DfE).
- A new headteacher was appointed in late October 2020. He has accelerated the pace of change and has taken a number of significant actions which have strengthened the leadership of the school, as well as addressing previously unmet standards, for example in relation to pupil behaviour.
- The headteacher has re-aligned roles and responsibilities. This has resulted in more efficient and effective leadership. It has also clearly identified accountability for the independent school standards. New systems are currently being introduced to improve self-evaluation.
- Staff have welcomed the new focus of leaders on consistency, clarity, professionalism, simplification of policy and raised expectations. Increased training and the fostering of a team spirit have improved relationships.
- The Rodillian Multi Academy Trust has appointed two directors to monitor the progress of the school. In addition, the school has enjoyed improved access to support, training and resources from other trust schools.
- Leaders have a strong focus on safeguarding. There are seven staff who are trained to designated safeguarding lead standard. They work closely with other professionals to check and support pupils' welfare.
- The school has taken exemplary action to ensure that pupils and staff are safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Government guidelines have been followed rigorously. Pupils and staff are regularly tested for the virus. Hand sanitiser and masks are provided and there is a regular cleaning regime. Where remote learning has been implemented, steps have been taken to ensure that staff and pupils adopt safe online practice.
- The standards in this part are now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
 - 9(a) a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, amongst other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

School details

Unique reference number	146633
DfE registration number	383/6009
Inspection number	10172707

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	Rodillian Multi Academy Trust
Chair	Janice Bennett
Headteacher	Andy Percival
Annual fees (day pupils)	£125 per day
Telephone number	01133367772
Website	www.southway.org.uk
Email address	info@southway.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	5–7 November 2019

Information about this school

- Southway is situated in The South Leeds Youth Hub which is located in the Belle Isle area of Leeds. The building is owned by Leeds local authority and is leased to the school. The building is used for other purposes. There is secure entry to the school.
- The school is part of the Rodillian Multi Academy Trust. The trust has appointed two directors for Southway who report to one of the trust's committees.
- The school admits pupils who are referred from local authorities or schools. Pupils attending Southway are dual registered with the school they originally attended and with Southway.

- The school runs an off-site unit at The Featherstone Academy, called New Way. The address for this provision is The Featherstone Academy, Pontefract Road, Featherstone, Pontefract WF7 5AJ. At the time of this inspection, the New Way unit was closed due to reduced numbers of pupils as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Pupils who were at this unit are now working at Southway.
- All of the pupils have special educational needs, including specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulty and autistic spectrum disorder. A small proportion of pupils have education, health and care plans.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the school's first progress monitoring inspection since the standard inspection in November 2019.
- Following the inspection in November 2019, the DfE directed the school to write an action plan by 24th February 2020. The purpose of this action plan was for leaders to show what steps they would take to meet the unmet independent school standards. The action plan was evaluated in March 2020 and judged to be acceptable. The DfE accepted the school's action plan in April 2020.
- This inspection was carried out with no notice. I made a phone call to the headteacher shortly before going onto the school's site to ensure compliance with the school's COVID-19 protocols.
- The inspection was carried out over one day by one inspector.
- I considered documentation relating to the safety and welfare of pupils, including recruitment checks and the recording of recruitment checks.
- I had a video meeting with one of the directors.
- I spoke to the headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding leader, and a deputy designated safeguarding leader. I also met with staff, pupils and a police officer who is assigned to this school.
- I toured the school's building and grounds. I reviewed the school's documents and policies relating to the previously unmet standards.
- I checked the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils.

Inspection team

Steve Rogers, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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