# Sandhill View Academy

**Address:** Grindon Lane, SR3 4EN

**Unique reference number (URN):** 141986

# Inspection report: 18 November 2025

| | |
|---|---|
| Exceptional | |
| Strong standard | 🟢 🟢 |
| Expected standard | 🟢 🟢 🟢 |
| Needs attention | 🟠 |
| Urgent improvement | |

## ✔ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

**How we evaluate safeguarding**

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

# Strong standard 🟢

## Inclusion                                                    **Strong standard** 🟢

Leaders' vision that inclusion is 'built in, not bolted on' to the school's work is fully realised. Leaders gain a thorough understanding of pupils' needs. Leaders make sure that staff's detailed knowledge of pupils' needs extends beyond those who are disadvantaged, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to social care.

Staff stick to the school's 'Everyone, everywhere, every time' system. This highly consistent approach reduces pupils' barriers to learning and wellbeing. Pupils know what is expected of them in lessons and of their behaviour. Pupils, including the most vulnerable, speak powerfully and with warmth about the positive impact of the school's work. They become more resilient, self-assured and less reliant on support to manage their emotions. Pupils gain confidence to attempt more challenging learning and to access the wide range of enrichment activities.

The needs of pupils joining the school constantly change. Leaders monitor carefully how well pupils, including those eligible for pupil premium funding, are supported. The changes leaders have made have led to marked improvements in pupils' academic achievement.

Staff develop highly effective partnerships with families, professionals and external agencies. Leaders make successful use of alternative provision in the best interest of pupils.

## Personal development and well-being                          **Strong standard** 🟢

Leaders have shaped an impressive personal development programme. This is delivered by knowledgeable staff and external experts. It meets pupils' needs, including the most vulnerable. The programme is rich with opportunities for pupils to broaden their horizons and try new things. Pupils reap considerable benefits from this programme. They are well placed to thrive, avoid risk and contribute positively to their community.

Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their beliefs and experiences, respect others' values and engage thoughtfully with ethical issues. They develop a mature understanding of fundamental British values, including diversity and respect. Their understanding is reinforced by planned opportunities to discuss democracy, equality and the rule of law. Pupils' increasingly reflective conduct reflects the impact of this learning.

The school provides very well for pupils' health and wellbeing. Leaders work closely with external agencies to promote pupils' healthy lifestyles. Pupils are taught, at an appropriate level, about the 'toxic trio' of drugs, alcohol, and domestic violence. They develop a detailed sense of what makes for a healthy relationship. They learn to recognise and respond to online and offline risks to their wellbeing.

Leaders have prioritised support for pupils' mental health. Pupils value and know how to access help and advice. Pupils explain that the assistance they have received has equipped them to better manage their mental health.

Staff have crafted the school's extensive enrichment opportunities to appeal to pupils' interests, and to develop their character, team work and oracy. Almost all pupils access one or more of these opportunities. The wide range of leadership roles, including school council, anti-bullying ambassadors and The Duke of Edinburgh's award, reinforces pupils' sense of responsibility and cooperation.

Pupils benefit from an impressive careers programme. This includes one-to-one guidance, careers fairs, work experience, and employer engagement. Increasing numbers of pupils remain in education, employment or training.

# Expected standard 🟢

## Achievement                                                      Expected standard 🟢

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, typically achieve well. This is reflected in their achievement in recent national assessments. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are increasingly well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils generally remember what they study across the curriculum and in each key stage. Pupils draw upon previous learning as they access more challenging work. For example, pupils in mathematics use their knowledge of factorising and expanding brackets to successfully solve algebraic problems.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, typically achieve well and gaps in their knowledge are closing. However, leaders recognise that this is not consistent across all subjects. In the few subjects where pupils' achievement has historically been lower, it is improving.

## Curriculum and teaching                                         Expected standard 🟢

Leaders successfully adapt the curriculum and how it is taught. Mindful of pupils' changing needs, leaders made appropriate alterations to the structure of the school day. Pupils now have more time in each lesson to consolidate their learning.

Pupils study a curriculum rooted in the knowledge they require to succeed in future learning. The curriculum is broadened and enriched with interesting opportunities, such as outdoor learning to aid pupils' wider personal development.

Leaders know that their pupils achieve best in familiar learning routines. Leaders ensure that teachers, including those new to the profession, have the knowledge to deliver the curriculum in line with the 'Culture at Sandhill View'. Most teachers routinely apply the school's 5Cs (connect, content, check point, concentrate, consolidate) approach. Teachers adapt their teaching and choose resources that generally ensure that pupils can access the curriculum equally. Pupils understand how to improve their work and recall their earlier studies with confidence.

Pupils who need additional help to become fluent, confident readers typically receive suitable support. Leaders have made changes so that pupils have more opportunities to develop their reading and speaking skills across the curriculum. However, the full impact of these changes is to be realised.

## Leadership and governance                                    **Expected standard** 🟢

Trust and school leaders act in pupils' best interests. Leaders are high profile around the school. They are welcoming to pupils and model the positive, consistent approach that they expect of staff. This has helped leaders to build a staff team that fully embraces the trust and school ethos that if 'you get it right for the most vulnerable you get it right for everyone'. Leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils. Where improvement is needed, leaders act decisively. They have successfully brought about improvements in pupils' behaviour, achievement and recently, to attendance.

The local governing body and trust governance board provide leaders with a well-balanced combination of challenge and support. Those responsible for governance play their full part in ensuring that decisions are in the best interests of pupils, particularly pupils who are most vulnerable.

Trust and school leaders provide staff with a comprehensive learning programme. Trust leaders draw upon expertise from within the school, across the trust and from other schools to deliver targeted and bespoke training. This equips staff with the knowledge they need to do their jobs to a high standard. Staff, including those new to the profession, appreciate this and leaders' consideration of their workload and wellbeing. Leaders actively seek staff views and act on feedback. Staff are proud to work at the Sandhill View Academy.

Leaders have established a wide range of avenues to engage and maintain positive relationships with families. This helps the school to provide pupils with the support that they need.

# Needs attention 🟠

## Attendance and behaviour                                    **Needs attention** 🟠

Pupils' attendance is below the national average and the trend of improvement is uneven. Leaders understand the underlying reasons for pupils' absence and work closely with families to increase attendance. With the support of the trust, leaders prioritise raising pupils' attendance. Leaders' work is bearing fruit. Innovative strategies, including 'Fantastic Friday' and 'Brilliant breakfasts', are making a difference. Attendance is beginning to improve after two years of decline. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have attended in line with their peers nationally over time. The number of pupils who miss significant amounts of school has fallen. The numbers of disadvantaged and pupils with SEND who miss school regularly is close to the national average.

The school typically is a calm, happy environment. Pupils feel safe and enjoy learning. Older pupils display increasing levels of maturity. Pupils' growing appreciation of the importance of learning is evident in their progressively more positive attitudes to their studies. Teachers apply the school's behaviour systems consistently and fairly. Bullying is not tolerated and is addressed promptly. A minority of pupils join the school needing support to manage their behaviour. They receive this from skilled staff, including those in the school's behaviour support team. These pupils learn to better manage their emotions.

# What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils appreciate the support and care that they receive. They grow to understand that staff want the best for them. Pupils feel safe. They turn to staff if they need a helping hand to resolve a problem or worry. As one pupil commented, 'No matter who you are, you get support at this school.'

Pupils who are disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities consistently benefit from high-quality support. For example, The Bridge, provides support to pupils who have missed large parts of the curriculum. They develop a powerful sense of belonging and progress socially and academically. One pupil's sentiment that, 'Everyone is equal in school. You can be yourself.' reflects the fact that equality is woven through school life.

As pupils develop an understanding of the school's values and leaders' expectations, their behaviour improves. They respond positively to adults' skilled support and consistent application of routines. The warm welcome from staff, family breakfast and tutor periods set the positive tone each day. Pupils usually are polite and attentive in lessons. They behave well at social times. There is little bullying. Staff use established systems to manage pupils' behaviour should the need arise.

Many pupils attend well. The lower attendance of some limits the extent to which they benefit from the care and opportunities that the school offers.

Pupils enjoy what they study and develop positive attitudes to learning. They typically achieve well. This is reflected in their work and in their achievement in national assessments in recent years. Pupils remember what they study because teachers teach the curriculum effectively.

Through the school's Aspire curriculum, pupils develop the confidence and resilience necessary to succeed in later life. They are keen to try their hand at one of the many clubs available to them. Drama is a particular favourite of many pupils.

# Next steps

• Leaders should continue to review and adapt their wide range of strategies to improve pupils' attendance.
• Leaders should ensure that the reading curriculum supports pupils to secure the knowledge they need to be confident readers and communicators.

# About this inspection

This school is part of Aspire North East Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Joanne Maw, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Dr John W Brown.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team during the inspection. Inspectors also met with teaching and support staff. The lead inspector held separate meetings with members of the trust board, members of the local governing body and with the chief executive officer.

Inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils as well as having discussions with pupils in lessons and at break and lunchtimes.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school provides for higher than average proportions of pupils that are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school makes use of four alternative provisions, including one that is unregistered.

Headteacher: Jill Dodd

**Lead inspector:**
John Lucas, His Majesty's Inspector

**Team inspectors:**

John Linkins, His Majesty's Inspector

Jessica McKay, His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Sergeant, His Majesty's Inspector

Tim Johnson, His Majesty's Inspector

# Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

⊘ This data is from 18 November 2025

## School and pupil context

**Total pupils**

# 760
Below average

**What does this mean?**

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

**School capacity**

# 750
Well below average

**What does this mean?**

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,152

**Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)**

# 51.05%
Well above average

**What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

**Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan**

## 2.76%
Close to average

**What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

**Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) support**

## 25.92%
Well above average

**What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

**Location deprivation**

# Well above average

**What does this mean?**

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

**Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)**

# No resourced provision

**What does this mean?**

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

## All pupils' performance

### English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2024/25** | 47.9% | 45.2% | Close to average |
| **2023/24** | 49.6% | 45.9% | Close to average |
| **2022/23** | 26.8% | 45.3% | Below |

### Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2024/25** | 38.5 | 45.9 | Below |
| **2023/24** | 40.6 | 45.9 | Below |
| **2022/23** | 38.5 | 46.3 | Below |

### Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2023/24** | -0.08 | -0.03 | Close to average |
| **2022/23** | -0.73 | -0.03 | Below |

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2021/22 | -0.48 | -0.03 | Below |

## Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

### Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2024/25 | 28.1% | 25.6% | Close to average |
| 2023/24 | 40.8% | 25.8% | Above |
| 2022/23 | 16.7% | 25.2% | Close to average |

### Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2024/25 | 30.7 | 34.9 | Close to average |
| 2023/24 | 35.6 | 34.6 | Close to average |
| 2022/23 | 32.1 | 35.0 | Close to average |

### Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2023/24** | -0.30 | -0.57 | Close to average |
| **2022/23** | -1.15 | -0.57 | Below |
| **2021/22** | -0.70 | -0.55 | Close to average |

## Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

### Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

| Year | This school | National non-disadvantaged score | School disadvantage gap |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2024/25** | 28.1% | 52.8% | -24.7 pp |
| **2023/24** | 40.8% | 53.1% | -12.3 pp |
| **2022/23** | 16.7% | 52.4% | -35.8 pp |

### Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

| Year | This school | National non-disadvantaged score | School disadvantage gap |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2024/25** | 30.7 | 50.3 | -19.6 |
| **2023/24** | 35.6 | 50.0 | -14.4 |
| **2022/23** | 32.1 | 50.3 | -18.2 |

**Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8**

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

| Year | This school | National non-disadvantaged score | School disadvantage gap |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2023/24** | -0.30 | 0.16 | -0.47 |
| **2022/23** | -1.15 | 0.17 | -1.31 |
| **2021/22** | -0.70 | 0.15 | -0.85 |

## Destinations after 16

**Destinations after 16**

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2022 leavers** | 86% | 93% | Below |
| **2021 leavers** | 83% | 94% | Below |
| **2020 leavers** | 91% | 94% | Average |

## Absence

**Overall absence**

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2024/25 (1 term)** | 9.9% | 7.7% | Above |
| **2023/24** | 11.7% | 8.9% | Above |
| **2022/23** | 10.7% | 9.0% | Above |

**Persistent absence**

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

| Year | This school | National average | Compared with national average |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2024/25 (1 term)** | 29.1% | 21.1% | Above |
| **2023/24** | 35.0% | 25.6% | Above |
| **2022/23** | 32.4% | 26.5% | Above |

# Our grades explained

**Exceptional** 🔵

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

**Strong standard** 🟢

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standards expected of them.

**Expected standard** 🟢

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standards set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

**Needs attention** 🟠

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

**Urgent improvement** 🔴

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.