

# Focus 1st Academy

339 Bowes Road, New Southgate, London N11 1BA

**Inspection date**

25 January 2022

**Overall outcome**

**The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

*Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)*

- The school's safeguarding policy has been updated and reflects latest requirements. Leaders organise training and communicate regularly with staff to ensure that all are alert to any concerns about individual pupils. Leaders work closely with outside agencies to provide the support pupils need. The safeguarding policy is available on the school's website.
- Leaders are considerate of risks to pupils' safety and well-being. A well-established programme of personal, social and health education includes contributions from external speakers. This raises pupils' awareness of issues such as knife crime, radicalisation and gangs. Leaders have developed the curriculum to support pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe from harm and to support their mental health.
- Leaders have increased the number of leaders with responsibility for safeguarding since the previous inspection.

*Paragraphs 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- Leaders have extended the routine health and safety checks, including fire safety checks, to include the proposed additional premises. The school's health and safety and risk assessment policies include clear responsibilities for named individual members of staff to ensure the welfare and safety of pupils.
- Leaders have given careful thought to staffing arrangements to meet the needs of pupils the school proposes to admit should the proposed material change be approved. While the existing staffing levels are sufficient to provide for the class that would be based at the proposed additional premises, the headteacher plans to appoint an additional member of staff who would be based at the new site. This would increase the staff-to-pupil ratio and the level of supervision to meet the needs of pupils in the proposed new premises.

- The school is likely to continue to meet this part of the independent school standards if the material change is implemented.

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

##### *All paragraphs*

- Leaders understand the importance of completing the required employment checks for all staff. The headteacher makes sure that these are completed and recorded.
- The school does not routinely use supply staff but the headteacher is familiar with the requirements for the checking of agency staff if needed.
- During the inspection, the headteacher made improvements to the organisation of the single central record of employment checks so that individual checks are clearly distinguished.
- The school is likely to continue to meet this part of the independent school standards if the material change implementation is approved.

#### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

##### *All paragraphs*

- The proposed additional premises comprise a large central hall with a side room that serves currently as a meetings room. The meetings room and hall are suitable for use as classrooms for up to the proposed increased number of 24 pupils, with 12 pupils taught in each of these two areas. Appropriate fixtures and fittings are available, including tables and chairs that allow for flexible use. There is a whiteboard in the meetings room but currently no whiteboard in the main hall. The building is well-lit throughout with natural and artificial light.
- Separate toilets are available for male and female pupils, including a disabled access toilet. The toilets are clean and well maintained. Currently, only cold water is supplied to the handbasins. Arrangements have been made to fit individual thermostat heaters to provide warm water for washing hands.
- Leaders have made provision to create a suitable space for accommodation of short-term care of sick or injured pupils and if first aid is required.
- The hall provides a large space that will be available for pupils to exercise and play games. There is an outdoor grassed area leading from the hall which provides a pleasant space for pupils' recreation with supervision. The existing arrangements for physical education lessons at the local leisure centre, with access to showers, are intended to continue for the pupils based at the proposed additional site.
- There is a well-maintained proscenium stage area at one end of the hall. Leaders intend that this will provide an additional resource for pupils, for example for concerts and performances.
- The school is likely to continue to meet this part of the independent school standards if the material change implementation is approved.

#### Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

##### *Paragraph 34*

- The headteacher is fully aware of the requirements to meet the independent school standards. She has proposed appropriate adaptations to the school's policies and practice to ensure that the standards will continue to be met if the proposals to use additional premises and increase capacity are approved.
- The headteacher has considered carefully the suitability and potential of the proposed additional premises to accommodate the proposed increased number of pupils. Leaders prioritise providing a safe and suitable environment to support pupils' education and well-being and to meet the need for places across several local authorities.
- The school is likely to continue to meet this part of the independent school standards if the material change implementation is approved.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that are relevant to the material change.

## School details

Unique reference number	141247
DfE registration number	308/6003
Inspection number	10216602

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Marina Savva
Headteacher	Marina Savva
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,500
Telephone number	020 8361 5658
Website	<a href="http://www.focus1stacademy.org.uk">www.focus1stacademy.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:androulla@focustraining.org.uk">androulla@focustraining.org.uk</a>
Dates of previous standard inspection	12 to 14 March 2019

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	14 to 16	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	24	49	49

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	24	Not applicable

Number of part-time pupils	0	According to needs
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	5	According to needs
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	5	Dependent on the pupils placed in the school
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	5	Dependent on the pupils placed in the school

### Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	6
Number of part-time teaching staff	3	3
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	0

### Information about this school

- Focus 1<sup>st</sup> Academy caters for young people with a history of disrupted schooling. This includes those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Several north London local authorities refer pupils to the school. All pupils remain on roll at their secondary school.
- The headteacher is the sole proprietor of the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The previous inspection took place on 11 July 2019. It was an additional inspection to consider the school's material change application to extend the age range of pupils from 14 to 16 years to 5 to 16 years. The previous standard inspection took place on 12 to 14 March 2019 when the school was judged to be good.

## Information about this inspection

- The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a material change to its registration. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. The material change concerns the proposed use of a church hall including a committee room at St Paul's Church, High Road, New Southgate, London N11 1PL and associated increase in capacity from 25 to 49 pupils.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior staff. The inspector toured the existing school premises accompanied by the headteacher, and the proposed additional premises accompanied by school leaders and the landlord of the proposed additional premises.
- The inspector reviewed school documentation relevant to the independent school standards being considered. These included: the single central record of employment checks; the school's policies for health and safety, risk assessment and safeguarding; and documents and correspondence relating to fire safety checks.

## Inspection team

Amanda Carter-Fraser, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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