

Excellence in Pupil Development Award

Verification Report

School name:	Victory Park Academy
School address and postcode:	Wentworth Road, Southend-on-Sea Essex SS2 5LG
School telephone:	01702 347490
School website:	www.victorypark.org.uk
Head teacher:	Engaltin Muca
Head teacher's email:	emuca@plt.org.uk
EPDA coordinator:	Katie Blight
EPDA coordinator's email:	kblight@victorypark.org.uk
Award verifier:	Colin Noble
Award adviser (if applicable):	
Date of verification:	28 th February 2024

Commentary on the evidence provided:

The evidence consisted of a presentation given by the Head Teacher and the Award coordinator, a virtual tour of the School, discussions with separate groups of students, staff, parents and governors; and an examination of written evidence uploaded to AwardPlace. This was supplemented, after discussion, by more written evidence emailed to the verifier later in the day,

The evidence was very congruent inasmuch the presentation and written evidence were amply corroborated by the tour and discussions with groups of stakeholders - which in itself is a considerable achievement given that so many students in this PRU/Alternative Provision are at the School for short periods of time. For example, 47 students returned to mainstream schools last year and another 19 so far this year.

The students were particularly impressive: knowledgeable, articulate and confident, they were a living testament of what the School has achieved.

Strengths identified during verification:

There were many strengths. Most noticeable are the excellent attendance, together with the improvements in behaviour and learning. This says much about the students' experience of the School, where they feel safe and engaged by the curriculum. The School has a comprehensive and well planned PSHE curriculum and an exemplary model of tracing and integrating PSHE across academic subjects. This, allied to an engaging enrichment programme, means that students are personally developed very well, something they appreciate and value.

The School has invested heavily in an innovative curriculum, using White Rose Maths and, for those who need it, a secondary Phonics scheme called Fresh Start. This determination to tailor the curriculum to the needs and development of the students is, in itself, an example of how the School tackles the many barriers to learning by recognising the personal development needs of every student. The use of Zones of Regulation, particularly in the primary phases, has helped students self-regulate. The very clear behaviour policy, with its graphically explained consequences and rewards, is displayed throughout School and was referenced by students in discussing why behaviour is so good in school. This was further amplified by the Rewards Board during the virtual tour of the School. The tour also took in the Food Technology Room which is very popular with students, the Hair and Beauty Room and the Key Stages 3 & 4 common room, used at lunchtime and break, with its table tennis table, pool table and games and tv console. This first two reflect the School's investment in careers education. The School has a sensory room and commissions a speech and language therapist.

Students who have SEND (about 20%) are provided with an individual, customised provision map.

Learning about the environment in the curriculum is supported by the School's work on animal welfare (hosting several small animals), the opportunities to go horse-riding and the regular litter picks.

Students report that they are taught about how to get on with others and that bullying is very rare in School, and when it does occur it is dealt with effectively. The School uses a Restorative Justice system (deliberately not calling it a 'restorative approach'.)

Impact:

The work on pupil development has changed the school culture and impacted the outlook of parents and students. The latter now believe that they can learn, succeed and thrive. The Head Teacher feels that the Award has encouraged and helped guide the School to undertake a thorough self-analysis and consequently adjust its policies and practices.

Areas for development:

- 1 consolidate the work on numeracy
- 2 continue the work in the assessment of SEND students
- 3 consider the most effective and cost-efficient ways of spreading good practice within the Parallel Trust and across other areas of the country.

Verifier recommendation:

I recommend that Victory Park Academy be awarded the Excellence in Pupil Development Award for a period of three years.

Head teacher comments:

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