

Future Education

168b Motum Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR5 8EG

Inspection dates

6–8 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The proprietor, leaders and governors are not ensuring that the independent school standards are fully met.
- Changes of headteacher and staff restructuring have slowed improvements.
- Leaders have not secured consistently good teaching, learning, assessment and pupils' outcomes.
- Teachers' expectations for the learning of the most able pupils are not high enough. Information about pupils' prior learning is not used well enough to match learning tasks to the abilities of the most able pupils and pupils find the tasks too easy.
- Some pupils are not attending regularly enough, which limits their achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The majority of pupils, including those who are looked after, make good progress in improving their attendance and behaviour.
- Those pupils who attend regularly make generally good progress in their learning.
- Pupils benefit from good careers guidance and support. This enables them to transfer smoothly to college or work on leaving school.
- The headteacher has an accurate view of the school and is using this information effectively to improve the school. As a result, teaching, learning and pupils' outcomes are beginning to improve.
- The proprietor is supporting the work of the headteacher and governing body to ensure that the school improves.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by making sure that:
 - all of the independent school standards are well understood and consistently met
 - the curriculum is implemented effectively, by taking account of the needs of the most able pupils.
- Raise achievement of the most able pupils by ensuring that teachers:
 - have high expectations for their learning
 - use assessment effectively in their planning and teaching to deepen pupils' thinking.
- Improve the attendance of those pupils who are persistently absent so that pupils re-engage in learning and make good academic progress.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, is drawn up and implemented effectively, and
 - takes into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an education, health and care plan (paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school:
 - enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
 - shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons
 - demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(d), 3(g)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The proprietor has overseen significant changes in headteacher and staffing since the previous inspection, which have resulted in deterioration in the school's overall effectiveness. The proprietor is not ensuring that there is a sharp enough focus in developing the skills of the headteacher and new governing body in ensuring that the independent school standards are consistently met.
- Leaders are not rigorous enough in ensuring that the curriculum is implemented well. The curriculum is not sufficiently personalised to ensure that the most able are given the work needed to deepen their thinking so that they make the most of their potential.
- The curriculum includes a suitable range of academic and vocational courses to provide for pupils' different abilities. However, teachers are not extending the learning and deepening the thinking of the most able pupils when planning sequences of learning. Nevertheless, teachers are using the information from pupils' education, health and care plans appropriately to develop individual learning plans to enable them to improve their basic skills of communication, literacy and numeracy effectively.
- Despite previous shortcomings in leadership over time, the proprietor has appointed an experienced headteacher who has an accurate view of the school and a new governing body that is beginning to hold leaders to account for their work.
- Since his appointment, the headteacher has changed the ethos of the school positively to promote pupils' learning and well-being. He has carried out home visits to every pupil, instilling confidence in parents, and developed strong teamwork among staff, raising their morale. This is reflected in the overwhelmingly positive responses in the staff questionnaires.
- The headteacher has begun to strengthen the leadership team by developing their roles. As a result of their work in creating a more positive climate in the school, there has been a tenfold reduction in the rate of exclusions and improved rates of attendance. Attendance rates have improved significantly in the past year so that the majority of pupils achieve broadly average attendance.
- The headteacher's regular monitoring of teaching and support for staff has resulted in a steady improvement to teaching and pupils' learning since his appointment.
- Leaders are making good use of alternative providers to enhance the curriculum by offering a range of vocational courses to pupils, based on their interests and their chosen destinations when leaving school. These courses include mechanics, engineering and catering and are attended regularly by most pupils. Leaders regularly check and monitor pupils' attendance, behaviour and safety as well as their learning and progress when they attend these placements.
- Leaders are using every opportunity to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including fundamental British values. The opportunities include close work with external agencies such as the youth offending team to promote moral development, and leisure and community-based activities such as fishing to raise self-esteem. The positive ethos of the school ensures that each individual is valued and respected.

- Discussions within the programme of personal, social, health and economic education and citizenship, such as those about terrorism, successfully promote and increase pupils' awareness of the causes of conflict across the world.
- Leaders are developing new systems of assessment across the school to strengthen the tracking of pupils' progress across a wide range of subjects. However, they are not checking or making sure that teachers are using this assessment information to set high expectations for the learning of the most able pupils or planning tasks to deepen their thinking.
- The recent local authority review of the school's provision for children looked after and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has identified some shortcomings and acknowledged recent improvements to attendance, behaviour and the destinations pupils move to when they leave the school.
- In discussion and in their text responses to Parent View, parents stated that they are pleased with the work of the school in meeting the needs of their children. They would recommend the school to others. They believe staff are approachable and communication is good.
- Leaders are using pupil premium funding well to support the learning and improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, including those who are looked after.

Governance

- Governors are relatively new to their roles and it is too soon to judge the impact of their work. In the three meetings they have held they have already assigned the monitoring of specific aspects of the school's work to individual governors. They have carried out visits to familiarise themselves with the school and are producing a programme of focused visits to form their view of how well the school is doing.
- Governors' minutes show that they are holding the school to account for its pupil premium spending.
- Governors have a realistic view of teaching and its impact on learning. They are using the school's tracking information to hold the school to account for the achievement of different groups of pupils.
- Governors are ensuring that the school meets safeguarding requirements and that the safeguarding policy is available to parents on the website or as a paper copy in school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher and senior leaders are ensuring that appropriate checks are made on the suitability of staff to work with children, and for visitors. They ensure that all checks are recorded appropriately on a single central register and that all training in child protection is up to date. All staff have signed that they have received and read the latest guidance from the government on keeping children safe.
- Attendance and admissions registers are fully up to date to check that no children are missing from education.

- The school follows the procedures for protecting the well-being of its most vulnerable pupils consistently, in line with local authority guidance and with its own safeguarding policy.
- The health and safety policy and procedures for risk assessments are implemented effectively. Leaders regularly assess all potential risks for activities in school, when pupils attend alternative provision, and when they are out on educational visits and trips. Fire drills are regular and all electrical appliances are checked regularly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The headteacher's monitoring of teaching over time, the school's information about the progress pupils are making from their different starting points and work in pupils' books show that teaching and pupils' learning are still too variable across the school as not enough is of good quality.
- Teaching and assessment do not ensure that pupils are acquiring new knowledge, skills and understanding quickly enough to make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' books show too much variation in quality. Sometimes work is untidy, there are gaps in pupils' work and expectations are too low, especially for the most able.
- Teachers are not using the information about pupils' prior learning to plan activities to deepen their thinking well enough. Not enough teaching is adapted to the particular needs of the most able pupils so they do the same work and complete the same tasks as the least able.
- During visits to lessons, inspectors observed pupils losing interest in their learning. The most able pupils said that sometimes their work was too easy, which was also seen in their books.
- Teaching assistants provide appropriate support for pupils' learning by breaking tasks down into smaller steps and clarifying any misunderstandings. This enables those who find learning more difficult to catch up with their peers.
- All staff create a positive climate for learning, providing a balance of praise and encouragement. They manage behaviour well and maintain good relationship with pupils. As a result, most pupils focus on their learning and want to do well. Pupils said they liked their teachers, that teachers help them when they get stuck and they enjoyed learning more in this school than in their previous schools.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Most pupils successfully learn right from wrong through well-conceived topics on the dangers of smoking, drugs and alcohol abuse. They learn to respect the civil and criminal law through workshops by the youth offending team and visits to local courts. They develop an increasing awareness of diversity through music, art and topics on different

cultures and world religions.

- Pupils are developing the fundamental British values of respect for others, tolerance and democracy as seen in their mature responses and contributions to a discussion on radicalisation and how to recognise it.
- The school provides a secure environment where all pupils feel safe. Pupils said they feel safe in school and the majority adopt safe practices. They receive clear advice on the safe use of the internet and mobile phones and most adhere to this.
- Pupils say that bullying of any kind is rare and that if it occurred it would be dealt with quickly by staff. Parents also said that their children feel safe in school and there are no issues with bullying. They praised the quality of care provided to their children.
- Pupils benefit from good careers advice and guidance which enable them to make clear choices as to their future pathways when they leave the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Staff changes prior to the headteacher's appointment contributed to high levels of exclusions and recorded incidents of challenging behaviours. The school environment is much calmer now, exclusion rates have dramatically fallen and there are far fewer incidents of challenging behaviour.
- Some pupils do not take responsibility for their behaviour around the school; for example, a few break the rules on no smoking. Some pupils, through their actions, do not demonstrate an understanding of how good behaviour and regular attendance promote their learning and progress. As a result, they do not fully engage in learning.
- The majority of pupils are making rapid progress in improving their behaviour and attitudes to learning. This is reflected in the progress these pupils are making and the pride they are taking with their achievements.
- Attendance is below average, although it has risen significantly since the headteacher has been appointed. The majority of pupils are making rapid progress in attendance achieving broadly average attendance. The school's figures show that most of the pupils looked after are achieving broadly average and some above average attendance. These pupils are developing good attitudes to school, which has a good impact on their learning and progress.
- Staff work very closely with parents and the local authority to reduce persistent absence. In most cases, this is effective but there are a few pupils with very low levels of attendance and although their attendance has slightly improved, the school recognises the need to continue working closely with parents and the local authority to increase their children's attendance rates.
- Many pupils develop positive relationships with others and are courteous and polite to visitors. Some speak proudly of their achievements.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The school's tracking information about the progress pupils are making across the school

and pupils' books show inconsistencies in the progress different groups of pupils are making from their starting points. Leaders' visits to lessons over time also show that progress is too variable and that not enough is good.

- The small number of pupils who are persistently absent from school and remain disengaged with learning are not making enough progress. However, the majority of pupils who re-engage with learning and attend regularly generally are making good progress over time.
- The pupils in Year 9 who did not attend school before coming to Future Education and who joined the school in January 2017 are already re-engaging with learning and beginning to make progress in their communication, literacy and numeracy skills.
- The most able pupils across the school are not making the progress they should from their higher starting points, because they find the work they are given is too easy and does not deepen their thinking sufficiently.
- The majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 are making good progress towards a range of academic and vocational examination courses including GCSE and BTEC. There has been a significant increase in the proportion of pupils leaving with at least one qualification on leaving school. All pupils in Year 11 are on course to leave with a qualification and the majority are on course to achieve at least two GCSEs in English, mathematics or science.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the pupils looked after, are making the same progress as their classmates because effective support is provided to meet their needs.
- Pupils say they are making better progress at this school than in their previous schools. All said the school prepares them well for going to college or starting work when they leave.
- Nearly all pupils in Year 11 have been offered places at college or work of their choice. The school's close follow-up of pupils who have left in recent years shows that over time, the majority are sustaining their places in college successfully.

School details

Unique reference number	135859
DfE registration number	926/6160
Inspection number	10020821

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 Special School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	19
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Future Projects
Chair	Daniel Childerhouse (chief executive officer)
Headteacher	John Butcher
Annual fees (day pupils)	£28,700
Telephone number	01603 251310
Website	www.futureeducation.org.uk
Email address	office@futureeducation.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 November 2013

Information about this school

- Future Education is a day special school operated on a single spacious site, by the Future Projects charity in Norwich.
- At the time of the previous inspection, the school was registered for up to 28 pupils in the age range 14 to 16 years. Ofsted conducted a material change inspection in March 2015, following the school's request to the Department for Education (DfE) to increase the number of pupils from 28 to 44 and the lower age range to 13 years. The material change inspection found that the school failed to meet a number of independent school standards relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils and to the accommodation.

Consequently, the proprietor was asked to produce an action plan and submit this to the DfE for approval.

- The school's action plan was evaluated by Ofsted in October 2015 and found to be acceptable. On 6 November 2015, the DfE approved the school's material change request and the school is now registered for 44 pupils aged 13 to 16 years. There are currently four pupils in Years 9 and 10, who entered the school in January 2017. The majority of the 15 pupils in Year 11 on roll have attended the school since Year 10 and were sitting GCSE examinations during this standard inspection.
- All pupils are placed and funded by Norfolk County Council, with an education, health and care plan arising from social, emotional and mental health needs. Nearly all have histories of poor attendance, non-attendance, permanent exclusion from their previous schools or at risk of exclusion. Some have contact with the local youth offending team and agencies providing support for drug or alcohol abuse.
- The school receives pupil premium funding for just over half of pupils including enhanced pupil premium funding for the pupils who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school's philosophy is 'to offer pupils a holistic and supportive educational programme which incorporates both curriculum and non-curriculum subjects and which in turn will help to improve both the educational achievements and the life chances of students'.
- The school currently uses two alternative providers to enable a few pupils at any one time to follow a range of vocational training programmes.
 - A few pupils attend Nova Training in Norwich for one day per week to follow Entry Level 3 course in mechanics and construction.
 - A few pupils attend Ace Community Enterprises in Norwich for one day per week to participate in BTEC courses in mechanics and catering.
- The school makes use of the facilities of the on-site 'Future Radio' project and offsite local amenities for physical education, outdoor activities, fishing and sport.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been two changes of headteacher with a new headteacher in post since March 2016. There has also been a significant turnover of staff. The proprietor has appointed a governing body, which took up post in February 2017.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector carried out a number of joint visits to lessons with the headteacher and looked at samples of pupils' work over time.
- The inspector examined the school's information about the progress pupils are making.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, four members of the governing body, the proprietor and representatives of the local authority.
- The inspector held informal discussions with different pupils to seek their views.
- The inspector took account of the four text responses from parents out of the five responses to Parent View. He also telephoned some parents to seek their views and considered the responses in the 10 questionnaires returned from staff.
- The inspector viewed the school premises and accommodation.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, which included: the curriculum policy and schemes of work; the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils; the central record of checks made on the suitability of staff and visitors to work with pupils; records of behaviour; attendance and exclusion figures; the information the school makes available to parents; the complaints procedure; minutes of governing body and leadership meetings and the recent local authority review of the school's work.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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