

Future Education

168b Motum Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR5 8EG

Inspection date

12 October 2021

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g)

- At the full inspection in March 2019, inspectors found standards to be un-met. They found that expectations were too low, and the quality of teaching was too variable. Inspectors also found that insufficient time was allocated to teaching English and mathematics each week. Assessment was underdeveloped and there was no scheme of work for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.
- In their action plan, leaders undertook to carry out a range of actions. For example, they planned to retrain teaching and support staff on the standards and expectations of the school and review and adjust the school timetable to maximise learning time, particularly for English and mathematics. Leaders planned to develop a new curriculum policy, ensuring that detailed schemes of work were in place for all subjects.
- At the next monitoring inspection in October 2019, inspectors found that some progress had been made. For example, pupils were having regular lessons in English and mathematics, and there were detailed plans in place for these subjects. However, inspectors found that the same standards remained un-met at this point.
- Until very recently, progress in improving the quality of education has been too slow. Since the current headteacher took up her post in July 2021, the rate of progress has increased dramatically.
- Leaders and staff have thought carefully about what they want to achieve in each area of the curriculum. They have written schemes of work, but these are further developed in some subjects than others. For example, the mathematics curriculum is weaker than the English curriculum and requires more development.
- The focus on learning has been strengthened. Every pupil has an individual timetable, which ensures that their school day is used productively. All pupils have three lessons of English and of mathematics each week. These result in either GCSE or functional skills qualifications.

- Leaders have increased the opportunities that the curriculum offers to pupils. They are given a range of options to choose from. As well as GCSEs, pupils can gain other qualifications, including vocational qualifications, in areas such as motorbike valeting, hair and beauty and music technology.
- Leaders have changed the way the curriculum is organised so that the focus is on pupils' 'stage not age'. Leaders have found that this has raised expectations of what pupils are capable of, particularly in classes where pupils are working towards GCSEs.
- Leaders have focused on ensuring that the curriculum is delivered well across the range of subjects. They have established a set of expectations for what lessons should include, such as regular opportunities for pupils to practise what they have been taught. Some weaker teaching remains. Leaders are fully aware of this and are taking appropriate actions to deal with it.
- Although positive, the changes that leaders have made are very new. There have been very clear improvements, but these are too recent for their impact to be certain.
- These standards remain un-met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- This independent school standard was met at the full inspection in March 2019. At the progress monitoring inspection, in October 2019, inspectors judged this standard to be un-met. This was because some pupils said that they did not always report their concerns because they did not have confidence that school leaders would take effective action.
- Leaders have taken a range of effective actions to address this. For example, each class now has a dedicated member of staff who remains with them throughout the day, as they move between teachers of different subjects. Leaders have found that this has been effective in providing pupils with a 'trusted adult' who is easily available to them throughout the day. The timetable has also been adjusted so that pupils spend time with their form tutors at the beginning and end of each day.
- Leaders have strengthened the PSHE curriculum. There is now greater focus on helping pupils to identify risks and potential issues, so that they are in a better position to recognise and raise concerns. Pupils told the inspector that they feel confident to raise concerns, if and when they arise.
- The school's safeguarding policy is up to date and meets requirements. It is easily accessible on the school's website.
- This standard is now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- This independent school standard was not met at the full inspection in March 2019. Inspectors found that leaders had not brought about improvements quickly enough, including in tackling weaknesses in teaching. They also found that the curriculum was underdeveloped, and schemes of work were not in place for all subjects. Procedures for managing the performance of staff were not rigorously applied.

- In their action plan, leaders undertook to strengthen leadership by seeking external guidance and advice. They also planned to review governors' roles and responsibilities to enable them to better hold leaders to account. The action plan submitted to the Department for Education in May 2019 was deemed not to be acceptable when it was evaluated by Ofsted.
- The standard remained un-met at the progress monitoring inspection in October 2019. Following the progress monitoring inspection, leaders submitted a second action plan for evaluation. This was also judged not to be acceptable when it was evaluated by Ofsted.
- There have been two changes of headteacher since the progress monitoring inspection in October 2019. There have also been two periods of time where the deputy headteacher acted in the role of headteacher. This means that almost throughout the period between the monitoring inspection and this inspection there has been instability around leadership and management.
- The school has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In many cases, pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs mean that they have found the pandemic particularly difficult to cope with. Leaders' attentions have, unavoidably, been focused on supporting pupils with this over much of the last two years.
- Progress in improving the quality of education has been slow until recently. Since the current headteacher joined the school, shortly before the end of the summer term 2021, there has been a sustained focus on improving the quality of education. It is too soon to see the full impact of these actions.
- Leaders and governors have a realistic and accurate view of the school's current position. They are determined that the school will continue its recent rapid improvement. There is now sufficient leadership capacity for this to be the case.
- This standard remains un-met.

Paragraph 34(1)(c)

- Leaders and staff have done, and continue to do, a great deal to actively promote the well-being of pupils. They know pupils very well as individuals and provide them with the emotional and social support they need.
- This paragraph is now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet 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.

School details

Unique reference number	135859
DfE registration number	926/6160
Inspection number	10209010

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 status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	33
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	The Nr5 Project
Chair	Daniel Childerhouse
Headteacher	Debbie Edwards
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,672.31
Telephone number	01603 251310
Website	www.futureeducation.org.uk
Email address	office@futureeducation.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	19 to 21 March 2019

Information about this school

- Future Education is an independent special school. The proprietor is The Nr5 Project, known as Future Projects. The Nr5 Project is a registered charity.
- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- There have been two changes of headteacher since the previous progress monitoring inspection. The first headteacher went on a period of extended leave from November 2019, before leaving the school in May 2020. The deputy headteacher acted as headteacher from November 2019 until a second headteacher was appointed in December 2020. The second headteacher left the school at Easter 2021. The deputy

headteacher became acting headteacher again from then until the current headteacher took up her post in July 2021.

- Three pupils currently attend alternative provision part time. The school uses the following alternative providers: Open Road, LAB Media and Century Training.

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 and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- A standard inspection was conducted in March 2019. The school was judged to require improvement and five of the independent school standards were not met.
- The school submitted an action plan following the requires improvement judgement. The plan was evaluated by Ofsted and judged not to be acceptable. The action plan was rejected by the Department for Education.
- A monitoring inspection took place in October 2019. The inspection found that three of these standards remained un-met. A further standard, that had been previously judged to be met, was found to be un-met.
- The school submitted a second action plan following the first progress monitoring inspection. The plan was evaluated by Ofsted and judged not to be acceptable. The action plan was rejected by the Department for Education.
- This was the school's second progress monitoring inspection and was conducted with no notice.
- The inspector met with the chief executive officer of Future Projects, representing the proprietor; the headteacher and deputy headteacher; members of staff; and groups of pupils. The inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- The inspector visited classes throughout the school and spoke with pupils about their work. The inspector looked at a range of school documents, including those to do with the curriculum. The inspector checked the school's single central record of pre-employment checks and other safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Wendy Varney, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work-
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education;
 - 2(2)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) 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;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;

- 3(g) 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.

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.

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

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)(c) The standard about the quality of leadership is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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