

Future Education

168b Motum Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR5 8EG

Inspection date

11 May 2023

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 1, 3, 3(a), 3(d)

- At the time of the standard inspection in June 2022, this independent school standard (the standards) was not met. Not all subjects were coherently planned and delivered. Some plans did not consider what pupils should learn, and when, as closely as they might. Leaders did not make sure that teachers delivered the curriculum as intended, building knowledge up step by step based on prior learning.
- Occasionally, teachers taught curriculum content out of order and repeated work when pupils returned from a period of absence. This meant that the learning of the majority of pupils became disconnected.
- The reading curriculum was weak. Teachers did not take sufficient account of pupils' reading ability. Pupils who struggled to read sometimes had difficulty reading the texts that teachers provided. Phonics teaching was not well planned, and there was not a structured systematic phonics programme in place. The reading culture in the school was not strong. This hampered some pupils' access to the curriculum and others from developing enough of a rich body of knowledge and vocabulary over time.
- The proprietor body submitted an action plan to the Department for Education (DfE) intended to address the areas of weakness in the quality of education. This action plan was evaluated by Ofsted in November 2022. It was deemed acceptable by the DfE. The evaluation stated that the standards that had not been met at the previous inspection were likely to be met if the action plan was implemented.
- Leaders have implemented the action plan successfully. In doing so, they have reviewed their curriculum. Plans now identify clearly what pupils should learn and when. Pupils' learning builds incrementally on prior knowledge. Leaders have introduced a flexibility to the curriculum, which meets the learning needs of pupils more effectively. This is because teachers plan the curriculum to take into account pupils' starting points and gaps in what they know. They do this while maintaining the logical order in which pupils' knowledge and skills are developed.
- Leaders have trained and supported teachers effectively to implement the curriculum

well. Teachers plan and use activities that are matched closely to the intended learning. Leaders have also reviewed their processes for supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, staff use effective strategies to support pupils' access to the curriculum. This means that pupils develop detailed knowledge and achieve well. Pupils focus on and take pride in their learning. The curriculum supports their long-term goals, such as progressing to college or employment. This includes pupils who attend alternative provision.

- Leaders have prioritised reading. There is now a culture that celebrates it. Leaders have chosen a phonics scheme and approach that meets the needs of pupils. All staff have been trained to deliver this. As a result, phonics is taught systematically and well. Leaders check pupils' reading progress regularly. Both pupils studying phonics and more fluent readers read texts that are appropriate for their knowledge. Those who need extra help get it. As a consequence, pupils are making positive progress with their reading. Those still in the early stages of reading develop fluency quickly. Pupils build up their vocabulary and use this in writing tasks.
- Pupils who learn at home because they are not well enough to come to school no longer experience a disconnected curriculum. Attendance has improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection. That said, leaders know that improving pupils' attendance remains a key area of focus. They ensure that pupils at home learn the same content as those at school. Occasionally, the way leaders check on the effectiveness of this could be more rigorous. However, in most cases, pupils who are absent are supported well to access the curriculum and build up what they know.
- The standard is now met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 6, 7–7(b), 9, 9(b)

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection in June 2022. The inspection report stated that not all staff were following the behaviour policy consistently. This led to instances of poor behaviour. The rate of suspensions, while reducing, was too high.
- The action plan stated that leaders would review their behaviour policy and their processes for monitoring and analysing behaviour incidents and attendance, in order to put in place processes that improve the timeliness and effectiveness of interventions. Leaders stated they would train staff in applying the reviewed policy, and monitor how well staff do this. The plan proposed that leaders would create an inclusion base to help pupils' well-being and self-regulation.
- Leaders have implemented the actions in the plan effectively. They have put in place a coherent new behaviour policy. This is designed to address the underlying causes of misbehaviour. Leaders have trained staff on how to use the policy. Staff understand and apply it well. Leaders check on the consistent implementation of this. The use of the new inclusion base and other interventions help pupils to regulate their behaviour. Suspensions have come down significantly, and behaviour has improved. Pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff and each other. They experience a calm and purposeful environment. Any bullying is resolved quickly. If pupils get upset, staff are skilful at managing it. Parents praise the education and pastoral support their children receive.
- The previous standard inspection judged safeguarding to be effective. This continues to

be the case. The school has an appropriate safeguarding policy. Leaders have published this policy on the school's website. The culture of safeguarding remains vigilant. Records show appropriate actions are taken, and these are prompt and thorough. Appropriate checks are made on new and current staff. Leaders do this diligently, such as making extra checks than those legally required when using supply staff.

- The standards in paragraphs 9 and 9(a) are now met. The standards in paragraphs 6 and 7 to 7(b) continue to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- These standards were not met at the previous inspection. The report states that the proprietor body had not ensured that the standards were consistently met. While the proprietor body and governors undertook checks and asked questions of leaders, they were not rigorous enough in holding school leaders to account.
- The action plan proposed to increase the capacity of the leadership team, such as by training leaders to enhance their leadership skills. The plan stated the proprietor body would ensure that meeting the standards is a regular focus of leaders. They would monitor how the standards are being met, and train governors so that they know the standards and can check effectively on compliance with them.
- The proprietor body has acted to secure improvements. They have invested in effective developments in reading, the management of pupils' behaviour and aspects of the curriculum, including home learning. The proprietor body has increased the capacity of the leadership team and has ensured leaders get high-quality training to enhance their leadership skills.
- The proprietor body has worked closely and effectively with leaders to rectify the issues regarding the unmet standards. They ensure that leaders monitor their compliance with the standards regularly and closely. The proprietor body has trained governors so that they know and check on the standards. Governors now understand the standards well. They have the knowledge and skills they need to check on leaders' work effectively. They challenge and support where needed, such as on the rate of suspensions.
- The local authority is positive about the provision and direction of the school.
- This standard is now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets 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.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 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; and
 - 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.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	135859
DfE registration number	926/6160
Inspection number	10277589

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 special school
Age range of pupils	13 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	42
Number of part-time pupils	5
Proprietor	The Nr5 Project
Chair	Daniel Childerhouse
Headteacher	Debbie Edwards
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,672.31
Telephone number	01603251310
Website	www.futureeducation.org.uk
Email address	n.davy@futureeducation.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	7 to 9 June 2022

Information about this school

- The proprietor is The Nr5 Project, known as Future Projects. The Nr5 Project is a registered charity.
- The school provides education for pupils with SEND, particularly pupils with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Pupils are referred by the local authority. Most pupils have experienced significant disruption to their schooling.
- The school's recent inspection history is as follows:

- In October 2022, the proprietor submitted an action plan that was evaluated to be acceptable.
- In June 2022, at a standard inspection, the school was judged as requires improvement.
- In October 2021, there was a progress monitoring inspection, which evaluated that not all the standards were met.
- In January 2020 the proprietor submitted an action plan that was evaluated to be not acceptable.
- In October 2019, there was a progress monitoring inspection, which evaluated that not all the standards were met.
- In July 2019, the proprietor submitted an action plan that was evaluated to be not acceptable.
- In March 2019, at a standard inspection, the school was judged as requires improvement.

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.
- This was the school's first progress monitoring inspection.
- To check compliance with the standards, the inspector met with the headteacher, the chief executive officer of the proprietor body, who is also the chair of governors, two other governors and other leaders. The inspector spoke with staff and pupils. The inspector held a conversation by phone with a selection of parents. He also spoke by phone with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of curriculum documents, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. The inspector looked at the school's policies, the action plan and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector discussed the safeguarding processes with leaders and scrutinised the school's single central record of vetting checks for new staff.

Inspection team

Charlie Fordham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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