

# Inspection of New Direction

New Direction, Ringer Villa Farm, Ringer Lane, Clowne, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S43 4BX

---

Inspection dates: 10 to 12 October 2023

---

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
------------------------------	-------------

---

The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	<b>Good</b>
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate
--	------------

Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>
--	------------

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud of their school. Typically, a pupil spoke for many, saying, 'The best things are the people and the support.' Pupils are cared for and feel safe. They know that adults look out for them, listen and provide help when needed. Pupils are happy to be at school. They are welcoming and polite.

Staff set high behavioural expectations. These are mostly met. Pupils reflect on their emotions. They learn to regulate their feelings and behaviour. Many pupils' conduct and attendance improve over time. Staff enable pupils to rebuild relationships when there are misunderstandings, or when friends fall out.

The school has a calm and purposeful environment. Pupils enjoy horse care, pony club and forestry lessons. They like having Tommy, the school cat, around. They have fond memories of the annual 'Pony Camp' residential.

Pupils learn well. They meet the school's challenging learning expectations. Pupils gain a range of suitable qualifications.

Parents and carers are very positive about the school. One parent, whose comments were typical of many, wrote: 'All staff are kind and supportive. My son is happy to go to school, and always happy when he comes home. The staff are amazing. He has grown so much in confidence.'

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders lead with a strong moral purpose. They have a solid, shared vision for the school. Staff live the school's motto 'Creating a positive present. Working for a positive future.'. There is a robust culture based on community. Staff work together. They are proud to be part of the school. They care deeply for pupils.

The school provides a broad and ambitious curriculum. Pupils learn well in a range of vocational and academic subjects. The school specialises in its equine provision. Subject curriculums build pupils' learning over time. The school is mindful of gaps pupils may have in their learning due to interruptions in their previous school experiences.

Staff identify the key knowledge and skills pupils need to learn and when. For example, in mathematics, younger pupils build their knowledge of place value over time. Others deepen their understanding of line graphs. In horse care, pupils learn key knowledge about equipment and tools. For example, they build knowledge about bridles and different brushes. They develop their safe pony grooming skills.

Staff have good subject knowledge. They use resources well. Teaching is well structured. Staff communicate clearly and mostly give pupils time to reflect. For example, pupils develop team, communication and problem-solving skills when using equipment to measure tree branches in a forestry lesson. Staff check pupils' learning

in lessons. They identify, and help to resolve, pupils' errors and misconceptions. However, the school has not embedded its approach to checking the long-term learning pupils gain. Pupils achieve appropriate qualifications in literacy, numeracy, subjects and vocational subjects. They are proud of their achievements.

The school identifies and knows well the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff strive to overcome barriers to learning that these pupils experience, including by adapting how they teach. For example, staff break tasks down, give clear guidance and model good practice. Pupils with SEND are challenged appropriately. They develop positive attitudes to work and learning. They build confidence and resilience. Pupils with SEND persevere and do not give up when challenged.

Leaders are developing a culture of reading. Pupils are exposed to a range of literature from different genres. They listen attentively to a class novel being read each morning. The school has introduced a phonics scheme to support those pupils who are at an early stage of reading. Staff are being trained in this. However, phonics support for those pupils who require it is in its early stages of being delivered.

Post-16 students have access to the same breadth of curriculum as their younger peers. They build on the learning and qualifications that they have already achieved. The school prepares them well for their next steps in education or training. Staff support students to become mature and responsible.

Pupils behave well. The school supports individuals to develop positive attitudes. Staff recognise and act quickly to help pupils manage their emotions and behaviours calmly. Staff praise and reward positive conduct. Pupils appreciate this. Leaders review behaviour to inform pupils' support plans and risk assessments. The school develops good habits for learning. The school is calm and orderly.

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. Pastoral care is very strong. The school has developed a personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum that supports pupils' preparation for their lives now and in the future. Pupils have opportunities to learn about healthy living. Staff provide appropriate relationships and sex education. Pupils learn about consent, as well as healthy and unhealthy relationships. They gain an understanding of equality, including of different cultures and some aspects of religions and faiths. Pupils deepen their understanding of right and wrong. They gain from a range of experiences by being involved in the local community. The school supports pupils' social development well.

The school provides pupils with opportunities to understand the world of work. Pupils explore different options when considering their futures. They are nurtured to become self-confident independent individuals. They are prepared well for their next steps.

Leaders have a strong understanding of the independent school standards (the standards). The school meets all the standards securely and consistently. The

premises are well maintained. Risk assessments reflect the school's policy. Leaders comply with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Key information and policies are readily available on the school's website, including the school's relationships and sex education, safeguarding and complaints policies.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- Pupils who are at an early stage of reading are not fully supported to become fluent readers. These pupils do not improve their reading knowledge and skills quickly enough. The school must ensure that these pupils receive the support needed to become fluent readers, develop a love of reading and be able to access the wider curriculum.
- The school has not embedded a consistent approach to summative assessment in all subjects. Staff do not clearly know what pupils have learned securely over time. The school needs to ensure that all staff know how best to use summative assessment in all subjects to help inform comprehensively their planning for pupils' next steps in their learning.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	134395
<b>DfE registration number</b>	830/6027
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10267634
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent day school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	27
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	New Direction Inclusive Education Limited
<b>Chair</b>	Yvonne Evans
<b>Headteacher</b>	Luke Collins
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£55,575
<b>Telephone number</b>	01246 810456
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.new-direction.org.uk">www.new-direction.org.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@new-direction.org.uk">admin@new-direction.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 to 15 July 2021

## Information about this school

- The school is located in Clowne, Derbyshire S43 4BX.
- The school is registered to provide full-time education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Many pupils have a diagnosis of autism. The majority of pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school is operating beyond its registration agreement. The school is currently registered to admit 21 pupils. There are 27 pupils on roll.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2022.
- The proprietor has two new directors, who were appointed in June 2022. The previous headteacher and director is the current chair of directors.
- The school uses the services of one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in July 2021, when it was judged inadequate. It received progress monitoring inspections in January and December 2022.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator. Inspectors met with a range of staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of directors. He met with the school's educational consultant.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English and reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited sample lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans, spoke to leaders and visited lessons in other subjects, including PSHE, horse care, forestry, pony club and creative arts.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; reviewed safeguarding records; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about various aspects of school life.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation. They looked at the school's website and published information about the school's provision, including policies related to health and safety, curriculum, teaching and complaints. They reviewed the school's self-evaluation and development plan.
- The lead inspector toured the premises to review the suitability of the accommodation.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who completed the Ofsted survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They reviewed the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Davies, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Stevens

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023