

Future Education

168b Motum Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR5 8EG

Inspection dates

19–21 March 2019

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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The proprietor, headteacher and the governing board do not make full use of the information they have to make improvements. Not all of the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been resolved.
- Overall attendance remains low. Pupils' persistent absence limits the progress they make.
- There are inconsistencies in teaching and in the use of assessment information to plan learning for pupils of different abilities.
- The school does not meet all of the independent school standards.
- A significant proportion of pupils do not receive their full entitlement to the curriculum. Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Detailed schemes of work are not in place for all subjects, including pupils' personal, social health and economic education.
- The recording of actions taken to safeguard pupils are not routinely checked by the governing board to see if they work well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Recently appointed leaders are providing the school with further capacity to improve.
- The school's 'secure base' therapeutic approach ensures that pupils who have been excluded and have missed long periods of their schooling feel safe and can re-engage in learning.
- Staff provide pupils with high-quality care and support. They are adept at forging relations with pupils, finding out about their needs and interests, and welcoming them back into education.
- Parents value highly the school's work.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Gain consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teachers make full use of assessment information to plan learning suited to pupils' different abilities
 - checking that teachers make full use of the time available in lessons for learning, that they mark pupils' work in line with the school's agreed procedures and give pupils time to complete all of their work
 - raising expectations of pupils and encouraging them to take care and pride in their work
 - using the school's procedures for managing the performance of staff rigorously and systematically.
- Raise achievement by:
 - strengthening the school's procedures to raise attendance and reduce persistent absence, so that all pupils attend much more often than they currently do
 - increasing the time available for learning for those pupils who receive significantly less than 20 hours of education each week
 - increasing the time allocated to teaching English and mathematics each week so that pupils acquire essential literacy and numeracy skills
 - providing pupils with a well-organised, suitably planned programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE)
 - evaluating the impact this revised programme of PSHE has on enhancing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
 - ensuring that all subjects have detailed schemes of work in place to enable teachers to plan learning effectively.
- Improve the school's leadership and management by:
 - making full use of the information gathered about pupils' attendance, behaviour and welfare, and the school's overall performance to secure and sustain improvements
 - as new leaders become established, review their roles and responsibilities so that workloads are manageable and evenly shared
 - adding further rigour to the monitoring and evaluation carried out by the governing board to ensure that all of the independent school standards are met
 - checking routinely the records of actions taken by the governing board to safeguard pupils to ensure that they work well enough
 - promoting all forms of equality by broadening pupils' understanding of groups with protected characteristics.

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, which provides for the matters specified in subparagraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and the written plans and schemes of work:

- take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupil, including those with an education, health and care plan
- do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- give pupils a broad experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education
- enable pupils to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills
- provide pupils with personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the school's aims and ethos
- encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act
- prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

(paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(i))

■ The proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school:

- 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
- involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
- shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons
- demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught
- utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range
- 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
- does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- does not discriminate against pupils contrary to Part 6 of the 2010 Act.

(paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(i), 3(j))

■ The proprietor must ensure that the standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school:

- actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law,

individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

- ensure that the principles are actively promoted which enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
- encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely
- enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of respect for public institutions and services in England
- promote further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures
- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England
- precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school
- takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils while they are attendance in school, while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school, and in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

(paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii))

■ The proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that:

- the written behaviour policy is implemented effectively.

(paragraph 9, 9(b))

■ The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:

- demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
- fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently
- actively promote the well-being of pupils.

(paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c))

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Changes in staffing and leadership have slowed the school's improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher rightly acknowledges that 'we're behind where we wanted to be this stage'. Additional capacity provided by new leaders is aiding improvement, but they need more time to demonstrate their full impact.
- Until recently, not enough has been done to tackle weaknesses in teaching. Leaders have not rigorously applied the school's procedures for managing the performance of staff.
- Staff duties and responsibilities changed last year. Some new staff were appointed. Since then, improvements have been made, but at a slower rate than expected. For example, schemes of work have been updated in some subjects, but not in others. In mathematics and science, complete schemes of work inform lesson planning. This is not the case in other subjects.
- The systems and procedures used by senior leaders to collate information about pupils, staff and the school's overall performance are too cumbersome. Leaders have a limited range of analysis and evaluative information to illustrate the impact of their work. For example, leaders record pupils' attendance and behaviour in detail, but do not analyse sufficiently this information to spot patterns and trends, or inform actions to improve them.
- Steps have been taken to improve the quality of the curriculum but currently it remains underdeveloped. The headteacher's vision for the school is firmly based on finding out about pupils and their backgrounds, and then providing a curriculum that stimulates their interest and encourages them back into learning. A wide range of activities and therapies in music, art, cooking, sport and learning outdoors motivate pupils and re-engage them in school life.
- Not enough time is allocated to teaching English and mathematics each week. This prevents pupils from gaining essential literacy and numeracy skills.
- All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Almost all have an education, health and care plan. A recently appointed leader responsible for these pupils and for managing assessment ensures that their needs are quickly identified and that they receive support tailored to their different needs.
- A newly appointed deputy headteacher has quickly identified shortfalls in the school's procedures for monitoring teaching and for recording safeguarding information. Her prompt action has significantly strengthened these aspects of the school's work. Currently, she has responsibility for leading improvements in these important areas. The headteacher acknowledges that this needs careful management so that overall responsibility for school improvement is evenly spread throughout the senior team.
- Plans for improvement are suitably prioritised and are based firmly on an accurate evaluation of the school. Leaders are using these plans effectively to monitor the impact of their actions.

Governance

- The proprietor is fully supportive of the headteacher's aim to provide a secure base for

pupils with high social, emotional and behavioural needs who have missed long periods of schooling due to exclusion. He has provided additional resources and new leaders to support the headteacher in his work to develop the school further.

- A governing board holds termly meetings to oversee the school's work. These meetings are attended by the proprietor and the headteacher, who act as trustees. This enables all stakeholders to gain a full understanding of the school's effectiveness.
- The governing board acted decisively last year to challenge underperformance. They also controlled the number of pupils joining the school to maintain the school's capacity to manage behaviour and meet the high level of need presented by pupils.
- They are kept informed by written reports from the headteacher but do not rigorously check this information by finding out for themselves. The board's most recent review of the school identified that all of the independent school standards were met. This is not the case. These procedures are not sufficiently rigorous.
- The governing board know most of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are realistic and say, 'We're not perfect, we know what to do and recognise there's a long way to go.'

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a suitable safeguarding policy published on its website.
- The single central record is complete. Records show that all the necessary checks are made when appointing new staff. Checks are not made on supply staff as the school does not make use of them.
- Effective action is taken in a timely way to protect pupils from harm when staff raise concerns. Procedures are known well by staff and applied consistently.
- Until this year not enough attention has been paid to recording every action taken to follow up concerns and ensure that they are fully resolved. Leaders acknowledge that this has not been monitored well enough and gaps have appeared in the school's record-keeping.
- The deputy headteacher has acted swiftly to tighten up the school's record-keeping. Concerns are now logged in chronological order, and supporting evidence is stored to show what actions have been taken.
- Links with parents and carers, social services, the police and the local authority's safeguarding team are well established. Effective communication ensures that vulnerable pupils at risk are well known and kept safe.
- Training in safeguarding, including 'Prevent' duty for all staff, is up to date.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is inconsistent in quality. Leaders are not using the procedures in place to manage systematically the performance of staff. Their evaluation and improvement planning acknowledge that their monitoring of teaching needs to be done much more robustly.

- Teachers do not make full use of the time available in lessons to maximise pupils' learning. Expectations are not always high enough, so too much time is spent chatting rather than learning. Pupils' books show that over time not enough attention is paid to the quality of work they produce. A lot of work is left unfinished and is untidy. In some subjects, teachers provide pupils with good-quality feedback about their work, in line with the school's agreed marking procedures. This is not the case in all subjects. Without this feedback, pupils continue to make common errors in their spelling and grammar.
- All pupils have individual education plans and most of them have a personal education plan that is reviewed each term. Pupils are assessed on entry to identify what they already know, understand and can do. Improved assessment procedures enable staff to gauge how well pupils are progressing. However, teachers do not use this information to plan learning suited to pupils' different abilities. Tasks are often much too easy for the most able pupils. Teachers do not have sufficiently detailed schemes of work to refer to when planning lessons in some subjects.
- Good staffing ratios ensure that pupils get regular, one-to-one support in lessons. This helps to resolve any misconceptions they may have and keeps them focused on learning. It is particularly effective in mathematics and science, where pupils are supported well but are also helped to work by themselves to develop resilience and independence. Relations between staff and pupils are very good. Praise is used well to reward and reassure pupils. Staff show great patience and understanding when dealing with challenging behaviour or poor attitudes.
- A range of practical activities are used well to capture pupils' interest and motivate them to learn. Pupils are able to work for sustained periods of time in cooking, art, music technology and outdoor learning because they enjoy practical tasks and are shown what to do by enthusiastic staff.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their books confirms that they have regular lessons to promote their personal, social, health and economic education. This includes learning about substance misuse, unhealthy relationships and prejudiced behaviour. However, this is not planned well enough as there is no scheme in work in place to inform pupils' learning.
- Pupils show a limited awareness and understanding of British values. Not enough is done to teach them systematically about the different cultures and beliefs in society, and the risks posed by radicalisation and extremist views. Their understanding of people and groups with protected characteristics is not promoted well enough because coherent planning is not in place. They take part in some ceremonies and events in school, but their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding remains underdeveloped.
- Pupils say that school is a safe place to be. They feel that staff know them well and provide a safe, welcoming environment for them. Staff meet at the start and end of each day to review the welfare and progress of each pupil and identify what further support may be needed to retain them in learning.

- Pupils speak favourably about the good relations they have with staff and the care and support provided for them. One pupil said, 'I love it here, and don't want to leave.' Another commented on the good care and support provided by staff saying, 'I'm getting along great here, staff support me when I'm in a bad mood or not comfortable, they talk with my family when I'm having problems.'
- Leaders ensure that pupils attend an interview with a specialist careers adviser to raise their awareness of the opportunities available to them at the end of Year 11. Last year, most pupils secured a placement at the local college to continue their education and training.
- Two pupils engage in vocational learning at a local provider. Suitable procedures are in place to ensure their safety, including daily checks of their attendance and welfare.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Leaders' records show that at times a minority of pupils continue to display very challenging behaviour. Staff are adept in managing this carefully by applying the school's agreed procedures to keep them and others safe and avoiding the need for restraint or exclusion.
- No pupils are permanently excluded from school. However, records show that the proportion of pupils temporarily excluded from school has risen this year. This is due to a higher number of pupils on the school roll and also their more challenging social, emotional and behavioural needs. Leaders do not make enough use of this information to inform their actions to limit poor behaviour, identify the different types of bullying and why incidents occur, or reduce the number of pupils excluded from school.
- Records show that there are very few incidents of bullying. Pupils feel that this rarely happens, and when it does, they can approach any member of staff for help.
- Overall attendance is low. The majority of pupils join the school having missed long periods of their education due to their poor behaviour and exclusion from mainstream school. Leaders can show that almost all pupils settle quickly and make significant gains in their attendance. However, currently too many pupils are regularly absent from school.
- Pupils' behaviour during the inspection was generally calm and cooperative. Pupils share good relations with staff based on mutual respect for one another. Breaks and lunchtimes are positive social affairs where pupils and staff eat and chat together.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Despite the positive action taken to re-engage pupils in learning, high absence rates present a barrier to the learning and progress of a significant minority of pupils. Too many of them continue to be regularly absent from school. They are unable to benefit from the welcoming environment, positive, caring relations and personalised approach to learning because they do not turn up often enough.
- Leaders accept pupils into school with ingrained poor attendance. They know that these are often the 'hard to reach' pupils that other mainstream and specialist schools have been unable to deal with effectively. The school's outreach service does ensure that those

unable or unwilling to attend school regularly are taught at home or in community venues. This also ensures that pupils remain in education. However, this is minimal and does not enable them to make sufficient progress.

- A significant minority of pupils are on part-time timetables. For some of them this is well below 10 hours of tuition each week. Overall time for their learning is minimal. This presents a significant barrier to their progress and welfare.
- Those who attend school regularly make notable gains in their personal development and subsequently in their academic progress. Pupils' education, health and care plans are systematically reviewed but not all of them contain sufficiently challenging targets that stretch the most able pupils. Therapeutic approaches using music and art and in speech and language are used effectively to overcome pupils' anxieties and promote their learning and personal development.
- Staff prepare pupils for learning effectively by providing them with a caring, supportive environment in which to learn. They get to know pupils really well, finding out what interests them, their plans for the future and the best ways of managing their behaviour and attitudes. The few parents who responded during the inspection praised the school's work in re-engaging their child in learning and the efforts of staff to provide them with the chance to gain the help they need.
- Currently, pupils follow GCSE courses in art and science, and most of them study entry-level awards in English and mathematics. Observations carried out jointly with senior leaders confirmed that good subject knowledge, positive relations and effective management of pupils are leading to sustained progress in mathematics and in science. Pupils made less progress in English lessons.
- Pupils develop good social skills when working with staff and their peers in practical learning activities. Clear instructions and good demonstration enable pupils to prepare and cook their own meals. Boys working towards the John Muir award for outdoor learning could articulate clearly what they were doing and how the skills they were learning could help them in the future. Pupils attending alternative, off-site provision are routinely monitored to ensure that they gain suitable skills in the work place. The majority of Year 11 pupils have secured placements at college or other local provision this year.

School details

Unique reference number	135859
DfE registration number	926/6160
Inspection number	10056569

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	29
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Daniel Childerhouse
Chair	Mike Stonard
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	6–8 June 2017

Information about this school

- Future Education is a day special school in Norwich operated by the Future Projects charity.
- It is registered to educate 44 pupils. At the time of the last inspection in 2017 it had 19 pupils. It currently has 29 pupils on roll. There are four pupils in key stage 3. The majority of pupils joined part-way through key stage 4.
- All pupils are placed and funded by Norfolk County Council. All pupils have SEN, mainly social, emotional and behavioural needs. All but one of them has an education, health and care plan.

- The school receives pupil premium for approximately one third of its pupils, including enhanced pupil premium funding for three pupils who are looked after by the local authority.
- All pupils have missed long periods of their education prior to joining the school. Some of them have been out of mainstream school for up to two years. The school aims to re-engage pupils in learning through a range of on- and off-site enrichment activities, awards and national curriculum subjects.
- The school's philosophy is founded on Secure Base, a framework for therapeutic care given to pupils to build security and resilience by providing them with the care that they need. It aims to understand the different attachments of each pupil and ensure that this is considered in every interaction with them.
- A small team of staff provide outreach support for pupils in their own homes and in community settings.
- The school uses one alternative provider, Laboratory Media Education, Norwich, to enable pupils to learn vocational skills in print media.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed jointly with the deputy headteacher, pupils' learning in lessons and in outdoor learning activities.
- Meetings were held with the proprietor, senior and middle leaders, two members of the governing board and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector met with a small group of pupils to gain their views.
- The inspector looked at safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of governing board meetings, records of pupils' attendance and behaviour, monitoring of teaching records and other information provided by school leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' books in lessons.
- Inspectors considered five responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 10 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff. No responses to Ofsted's survey of pupils' views were received.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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