

# Inspection of The Suthers School

Cross Lane, Fernwood, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 3NH

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Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

<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>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Nicola Watkin. This school is part of Nova Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Ashfaq Rahman, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Margaret Monckton. There is also an executive headteacher, Andy Seymour, who is responsible for this school.

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

Pupils at this inclusive school are friendly, polite and respectful. They feel happy and safe. They follow 'The Suthers Way'. The 'TORCH' character strengths of tenacity, optimism, respect, curiosity, and hard work underpin all that the school does.

The school has high expectations for what pupils can achieve, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It has developed an ambitious curriculum that reflects those expectations. Pupils benefit from regular reading sessions that encourage a love for reading.

There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Staff care about their pupils' education and well-being. Clear, consistent routines ensure pupils behave well and focus on their learning within a calm and purposeful environment. They behave well at social times, including in the busy refectory. The school does not tolerate bullying.

Pupils enjoy opportunities to develop their character. They take part in careers fairs and cultural events. The school offers a comprehensive range of extra-curricular activities.

Most parents and carers are positive about the education their children receive. Many agreed with one parent's comment: 'My child continues to mature into a confident and articulate young person who will, thanks to the school and its dedicated and inspiring staff, fulfil their potential.'

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

The school has identified the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. Leaders have identified the core content of the curriculum. They have ensured that the curriculum is progressive so that pupils build on what they know. As a result of this, pupils achieve well.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Lessons start with a 'connect' task to check pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. Teachers check what pupils know and demonstrate what they need to do. When this is done well, it is effective. However, these checks are not made consistently well in all subjects.

The school accurately identifies the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff know these pupils well as individuals. As a result, pupils get the help and support they need.

The school's central focus on reading helps pupils both to extend their vocabulary and develop a genuine love for reading. Pupils read often. Younger pupils read in tutor time and have a weekly reading lesson in the 'Fern'. Pupils at an early stage of reading get the help they need to become confident and fluent readers.

The trustees and the local governing body have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They provide appropriate challenge and support to the school. This helps the school to make the necessary improvements to the curriculum and systems. The school has introduced a revised behaviour policy that includes a clear approach to sanctions and rewards for pupils. This is appreciated and well understood by staff and pupils. Pupils behave well.

The school has developed a rich and comprehensive personal development programme. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, equality and diversity in an age-appropriate way in their 'PD' lessons. They develop an understanding of fundamental British Values and tolerance for others. Pupils enjoy debating and exploring their own views on spiritual and moral issues. They learn how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the local and wider community. They are prepared well for adult life.

The school prepares pupils effectively for their next steps. All pupils receive effective careers education, information, advice and guidance. The school works with local businesses to provide pupils with opportunities to learn about the workplace. Careers fairs and guest speakers help pupils to understand the opportunities that are available to them.

The school is well led and managed. The school is considerate of the workload and well-being of staff. Staff appreciate the opportunities provided for professional development.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- There is a little variability in the implementation of the curriculum. In some lessons, pupils' understanding is not systematically checked. This means that some pupils are not able to benefit from the content being taught. The school should ensure that the checks made on pupils' learning are used consistently well in all lessons.

## **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.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144768
<b>Local authority</b>	Nottinghamshire County Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10324196
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	589
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Margaret Monckton
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Ashfaq Rahman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicola Watkin
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.suthersschool.co.uk">www.suthersschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	1 and 2 March 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The Suthers School is a free school that opened in September 2017.
- The school is part of Nova Education Trust.
- The school uses two registered and 10 unregistered alternative provisions.
- There are currently no students in the sixth form. The school plans to introduce a sixth form in the future.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation. The legislation requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the executive headteacher, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees and the local governing body. They also met with the chief executive officer of Nova Education Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, modern foreign language and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with pupils from a range of year groups, including pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with a range of teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation documents.

## **Inspection team**

Jamie Clarke, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Roche	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Sammy	Ofsted Inspector

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