

Sewell Park Academy

Address: St Clement's Hill, Norwich, Norfolk, NR3 4BX

Unique reference number (URN): 142058

Inspection report: 9 June 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

The school takes prompt and robust action to ensure that pupils attend well. As a result of leaders' effective strategies, pupils' attendance in all key groups has improved significantly over time. The number of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced significantly over time. Staff intervene rapidly if a pupil does not attend school. They quickly intervene before pupils' attendance drops. The school provides a wide range of strategies to address barriers to pupils' high attendance. This includes effective work and communication with families and external agencies. As a result, pupils receive the support they need to attend well.

The school has embedded a warm and welcoming culture where pupils are happy. Staff have high expectations of pupils' conduct. Lessons are consistently calm. Pupils are keen to achieve well. However, some pupils lack confidence to contribute in lessons as fully as their peers. Any misbehaviour is dealt with fairly and effectively. Pupils are kind and bullying is rare. It is addressed robustly if it happens. A significant proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including social, emotional and mental health needs. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to support pupils to manage their emotions. This enables pupils to successfully engage in learning alongside their peers.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Since the previous inspection, leaders have made notable changes to curriculum and teaching. As a result, more pupils make secure progress over time. The number of disadvantaged pupils in the school, including those with education, health and care (EHC) plans, pupils known, or previously known, to social care, and those in receipt of pupil premium, are above the national average. The school ensures that these pupils receive high levels of care. Typically, pupils who join the school with lower starting points secure the knowledge and skills they need across a broad range of subjects. There is an effective approach to ensure that pupils develop secure foundations in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers use well-chosen strategies to reduce barriers to pupils' learning. For example, they pre-teach key vocabulary to help pupils' understanding. Teachers ensure there is little off-task behaviour. This supports all pupils, particularly those with EHC plans, as it allows them to concentrate on their learning.

Leaders recognise that pupils who join the school with higher starting points have not consistently received the support they need to reach the curriculum's ambition. They are taking effective action to address this. This includes supporting teachers to provide pupils with opportunities to apply their learning and respond thoughtfully to feedback. In many lessons, pupils benefit from these improvements.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

The school supports an above average number of pupils who are disadvantaged. This includes higher than average numbers of those in receipt of pupil premium funding, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with educational, health and care plans and those known, or previously known to social care. The school has robust

systems in place to identify pupils who may require additional support. They use additional funding, such as the pupil premium funding, highly effectively. Leaders monitor the impact of their actions closely to ensure they have a positive impact on pupils. They use a wide range of strategies to ensure pupils feel a secure sense of belonging at school. This support includes emotional help as well as help for pupils to access their learning. The school works well with external agencies. They ensure staff are well trained to use reasonable adjustments effectively. These adjustments reduce barriers to pupils' learning or wellbeing. For example, some pupils benefit from adapted resources, access to sensory circuits, attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) coaching or social stories. The school make use of a small number of off site provision which is in pupils' best interests.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Since the previous inspection, a new chair of trustees, chair of governors, chief executive officer (CEO) and deputy CEO have been appointed. They work effectively with other leaders to accurately evaluate the school. They prioritise the most important areas for development to improve outcomes for pupils. Leaders demonstrate a sharp understanding of the context of the school. They use this information to continually act in the best interests of pupils. This has resulted in steady improvements in pupils' achievement over time.

The school has effective working relationships in place with a wide range of professionals. This includes local schools, the local authority and subject hubs. As a result, pupils benefit in a range of ways both academically and pastorally. Leaders' approach to staff development is closely aligned with raising pupils' attainment. Staff, including early career teachers, are extremely positive about the support and training they receive. For example, staff are well trained to support pupils with lower levels of literacy. Teachers appreciate the impact of the professional learning programme. It helps them to continually develop their practice.

Trustees fulfil their statutory duties effectively. They work well with local governance to drive forward school improvement. Trustees have robust processes in place to challenge and support the school. They have secure oversight of safeguarding processes, including effective links with key organisations, which contribute to keeping pupils safe.

Leaders ensure there are positive relationships in place with parents and carers. Parents, including parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are very supportive of the school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The personal development programme is well planned. Leaders carefully consider the school's context and pupils' needs. As well as personal, social, health and economic education lessons, the school explicitly teaches pupils habits for success and social routines. Pupils learn important information about consent and healthy relationships. The school uses external agencies well, including domestic abuse outreach services, to educate and support pupils. Pupils learn about staying safe online. They understand where to get help if needed, and are confident to do so. The school teaches pupils about risks in their community, such as knife crime.

The school ensures that pupils understand fundamental British values. They learn about the rule of law. To develop their understanding of democracy, pupils vote for their classmates to sit on the school council. Pupils understand about different races and religions. They are respectful of differences.

All pupils participate in the school's SPA+ programme. This supports them to contribute to the school and local community. This programme includes a pupil-led foodbank donation scheme. Pupils work with local charities, for example to promote the local bird population. Pupils' artwork was presented in a gallery at a local café. There is an active citizenship club which planted trees in the local area. These activities help to ensure that pupils feel part of the vibrant area and school community.

The school provides a wide range of opportunities to develop pupils' interests and hobbies. For example, some pupils participate in the school gardening club. Others are involved in the school production, or arts and sports clubs. School trips are popular and help to build pupils' confidence. Pupils enjoyed a trip to Norwich Theatre Royal and the Houses of Parliament.

The school's careers information, advice and guidance is a strength. It supports pupils well to understand their next steps. From Year 7 onwards, pupils start to develop the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about their next steps.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

The school has a significant number of pupils who join with lower than average starting points, including in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders understand the importance of ensuring pupils develop these key skills. They have robust systems in place to identify and meet these pupils' needs. When needed, pupils are given targeted help to ensure they develop these key skills and knowledge.

The curriculum is broad. Some pupils access enhanced provision, including in mathematics. This may lead to studying further mathematics in key stage four. A small number of pupils have well-considered adaptations to their curriculum. This may include accessing outdoor learning provision, extra English or mathematics tuition or small-group nurture provision.

Leaders recognise that some pupils achieve below their peers in national tests and examinations. As a result of leaders' effective action, pupils' results are improving each year. However, some pupils are not as well prepared for their next steps as they should be.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils enjoy learning at school. They have warm and positive relationships with the staff. They appreciate that teachers give them the help they need to access their work. Some pupils face barriers to their learning. For example, they may join the school with lower levels

of mathematics, reading or writing than is typical. Staff are quick to identify these needs and give appropriate help. Some pupils find it difficult to work at home. They like that they can use the quiet library and attend homework club to keep up with their peers. A number of pupils receive extra help to support their social, emotional and mental health. Extra mentoring or other targeted interventions ensure that barriers to their learning are reduced. Many pupils achieve well in national examinations. However, although pupils' achievement is improving each year, not all pupils do as well as they should.

A proportion of pupils have additional vulnerabilities. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those in receipt of pupil premium funding and pupils known or previously known to social care. These pupils are very well supported in school. They are well cared for. Staff know them well. Staff are proactive in ensuring that pupils benefit from enrichment opportunities outside of the classroom. This ensures they feel included in school life.

Pupils behave well at school. They appreciate that there are high expectations for all pupils. These high standards are applied consistently. As a result, pupils can focus on their learning with minimal disruption. Pupils are friendly and kind. They develop positive friendships with their peers. They demonstrate high levels of respect towards each other. Bullying is rare. Pupils feel confident to report any issues should they occur. Pupils feel safe in school. They know the staff will help them if they raise any concerns.

Next steps

- Teachers should ensure that pupils who join the school with higher starting points are given sufficient opportunities to apply their knowledge and deepen their learning.
- Teachers should consistently provide pupils with effective opportunities to respond to feedback, so they achieve well through the curriculum, including in national tests and examinations.
- Leaders should develop a wider range of opportunities for pupils to build their self-confidence, including their oracy skills.

About this inspection

This school is part of Broad Horizons 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 (CEO), Owen Jenkins, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christine Snudden. Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMI. Inspectors spoke with the CEO and deputy CEO, the chair of trustees, the chair of governors, senior leaders and a representative from the virtual schools during the inspection.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved

technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The school currently makes use of two alternative provisions, both are unregistered.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. A new CEO, deputy CEO, chair of trustees and chair of governors have been appointed.

Headteacher: David Day

Lead inspector:

Bessie Owen, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Duncan Ramsey, Ofsted Inspector

Ross Marks, His Majesty's Inspector

Mike McKeaveney, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 9 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

789

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

750

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

41.44%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

6.84%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

18.12%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	29.3%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	29.0%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	27.2%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	39.1	46.1	Below
2023/24 (final)	38.0	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	37.3	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.43	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.48	-0.03	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	16.7%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	15.7%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	16.3%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	30.8	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	29.5	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	32.4	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.96	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.83	-0.57	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	16.7%	53.1%	-36.5 pp
2023/24 (final)	15.7%	53.1%	-37.4 pp
2022/23 (final)	16.3%	52.4%	-36.2 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	30.8	50.4	-19.7
2023/24 (final)	29.5	50.0	-20.5
2022/23 (final)	32.4	50.3	-17.9

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.96	0.16	-1.12
2022/23 (final)	-0.83	0.17	-1.00

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	83%	92%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	84%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	85%	94%	Below

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	10.3%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	10.8%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	12.9%	9.0%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	24.8%	23.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	31.2%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	37.4%	26.5%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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