

Inspection of a good school: Wyvern College

Botley Road, Fair Oak, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO50 7AN

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2023

Outcome

Wyvern College continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Ben Rule. This school is part of Wyvern College Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lynda Smith.

What is it like to attend this school?

Wyvern College is inclusive with a strong community feel. Pupils respect diversity and feel confident to be different. Relationships are very positive. As one parent said, 'My daughter has flourished due to the positive role models and encouraging culture at this school.' Pupils feel safe and enjoy attending. The school's values of 'think, grow, care' underpin all aspects of school life.

There are high expectations for what all pupils can achieve. The school strives to provide the same high-quality education to all pupils, regardless of their starting points or the challenges they face. Pupils consequently achieve well.

Most pupils behave well. They are polite and friendly. They enjoy collecting PRIDE points for being 'Prepared, Respectful, Involved and DEdicated'. Staff have high expectations of behaviour. Pupils recognise the improvements in behaviour after a dip last year. Most pupils have confidence that any bullying issues will be dealt with well because they trust the adults in the school.

There is a wide range of clubs to enable pupils to develop their talents and interests in sports, the arts and beyond, such as gardening club and chess club. Trips, both local and international, are popular. During the inspection, pupils were enthusiastically rehearsing for their Christmas concert. Pupils talked excitedly about the upcoming production of 'Shrek the Musical'. Leadership opportunities abound, including as prefects, sports leaders and anti-bullying ambassadors.

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

The school provides an ambitious curriculum. In key stage 3, pupils study all national curriculum subjects in depth. This provides pupils with a strong foundation for later study. In key stage 4, a high percentage of pupils study the subjects that form the English Baccalaureate. Alongside this, pupils learn and explore other subjects chosen from a wide range on offer. Most pupils enjoy learning and attend school regularly. The school uses a range of appropriate strategies to support pupils who struggle to come to school.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same curriculum as their peers. Staff are skilled at identifying a pupil's particular needs. Many pupils with SEND learn well because they benefit from high-quality teaching. Some pupils with SEND receive additional bespoke support that helps them learn and achieve.

Subject leaders and teachers have thought carefully about the knowledge and skills they want pupils to acquire and in what order. Courses revisit key knowledge at a more advanced level as pupils work their way up the school. This helps pupils to secure their learning by making links between previously learned and new content. For example, pupils in a Year 9 history lesson on women in the 1920s successfully built on their knowledge of the suffragette movement they studied in Year 8.

In many lessons, the calm and purposeful environment enables pupils to learn well. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They choose topics and activities carefully to motivate and engage pupils. In many lessons, teachers skilfully use a variety of teaching strategies, matched to pupils' needs, to help pupils learn. However, this strong practice is not universal. When teaching is less precise, some pupils can lose focus and not secure the intended learning. More generally, not all teachers check carefully enough that pupils have grasped key concepts before moving on to new content.

All pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure. The library is a popular place. The 'transition' group in key stage 3 supports targeted pupils to develop their literacy skills. Consequently, they build their confidence and fluency in reading.

The school places a high value on developing pupils' character and their understanding of the world around them. Pupils value their religious and personal studies lessons, which teach them how to stay safe and look after their health and well-being. This learning is supplemented by a well-designed tutor-time and assembly programme. This programme is readily adapted to respond to issues that arise locally or nationally. Careers provision is strong. Younger pupils begin to explore career opportunities at an early stage. Year 11 pupils get appropriate advice and support for their next steps, which they greatly appreciate.

School leaders have a strong sense of moral purpose. Staff are proud to work at the school. They believe that leaders consider their well-being and workload. Teaching and support staff, including those in the early stages of their careers, feel supported and valued as they develop their expertise in helping pupils to learn and achieve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the curriculum is not yet securely and consistently embedded across all subjects. This means that some pupils do not make the progress they should. Leaders should ensure that the best teaching knowledge and expertise are shared, so that pupils learn consistently well.
- Sometimes teachers move on to new learning before checking that pupils have understood what is being taught. When this happens, some pupils find it more difficult to understand the learning that follows. The school should ensure that teachers thoroughly check that pupils have grasped key knowledge and concepts before moving on, so that gaps in understanding are addressed in a timely manner.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2014.

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

Unique reference number	138184
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10288019
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,346
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lynda Smith
Headteacher	Ben Rule
Website	www.wyvern.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders make use of two registered alternative providers and two unregistered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- 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.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, staff, pupils, the chair of the board of trustees and four other trustees. An inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

- An inspector held a telephone discussion with a member of staff at three alternative providers.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, history and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- 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 spoke to staff, including early career teachers, about behaviour and their workload in school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff survey. They took account of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text comments. Inspectors considered the views of pupils shared in the confidential pupil survey and through discussions held with pupils throughout the school.

Inspection team

Paula Sargent, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Julia Mortimore	Ofsted Inspector
Dave Euridge	Ofsted Inspector

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