

# Inspection of Wildern School

Wildern Lane, Hedge End, Southampton, Hampshire SO30 4EJ

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Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

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

Pupils at this school understand that learning is important. Teachers have high expectations for what they want each pupil to know and remember. The majority of pupils are highly motivated and focus well during lessons. Sometimes, pupils are prevented from learning by disruptive behaviour. In most cases this is resolved quickly by teachers.

Pupils benefit from access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Many are proud of the opportunities to compete in local and national sporting competitions. Pupils particularly enjoy opportunities in the arts, such as taking part in school productions.

Some pupils feel unsafe at school because of the behaviour of other pupils, including bullying behaviour. Some pupils are rightly worried that discriminatory language has become normalised among groups of their peers. Many pupils think bullying is a problem in the school and is not dealt with effectively by leaders. As a result, not all come forward and report bullying when it happens. When pupils do talk to adults about problems or worries, leaders act quickly and effectively to provide help.

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

Leaders are rightly concerned about the behaviour of some pupils in their school. At social times, the behaviour of some pupils is sometimes boisterous and disrespectful. Some pupils feel anxious as a result of this behaviour or because others are unkind to them. Leaders are taking action to change the culture in the school by promoting kindness and equality through lessons and assemblies. They have increased the support available to pupils and made it easier for them to report concerns. These changes are recent and some pupils are still developing their confidence to talk to staff if they feel worried.

Over time, the school's approach to personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education has not been effective in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Many pupils lack knowledge about some topics, such as mental health and personal finance. Some pupils find it difficult to explain the harmful effects of prejudicial language and why using it is a problem. Leaders recognise this needs to improve and have introduced strong plans for what is taught in PSHE. These are closely linked to the assembly programme and teach pupils about topics such as tolerance and respect. Although well designed, these plans have been very recently introduced, so the impact is not clear.

A well-considered careers programme is a strength of the school. Pupils have access to careers information, including for apprenticeships and vocational routes from a range of sources. Pupils benefit from work-experience opportunities as well as work-related learning in school.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and ambitious for all pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers understand the needs of their pupils well and adapt learning when appropriate. Leaders have recently introduced new ways of checking what pupils have learned. These are being used more consistently in some subject than others. As a result, sometimes pupils struggle to understand what they need to do to improve their work.

Leaders have identified those pupils who struggle with reading, including some who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have ensured that these pupils receive effective support which helps them to catch up and access their learning in all subjects.

Leaders want the best for pupils. They are driven by their vision to provide the best education to pupils in their local community. Trustees and governors share this vision and know the school well. Staff are proud to work at the school. They say that leaders are mindful of their workload. They value the professional development opportunities which leaders provide for them.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff receive regular and effective training in safeguarding. Staff understand the role they play in identifying concerns and passing them on to the appropriate leader in school. They do this quickly and reliably. Leaders take quick action in response to any concerns raised. They work directly with external agencies where needed to provide support to pupils, as well as referring concerns to the local authority where required.

All necessary checks are carried out on new staff and records are well maintained. Governors carry out their statutory responsibilities with regard to safeguarding by checking that the policies and procedures in place are effective.

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

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

- Some pupils feel unsafe in school as a result of bullying or prejudicial language. They do not always report these issues because they are not confident that leaders will deal with them effectively. Leaders must address these aspects of the school's culture and make sure that pupils feel confident talking to adults in their school when they feel worried.
- Some pupils in the school are not well prepared for life in modern Britain. They do not have a good enough understanding of issues such as diversity or harmful sexual behaviours. Leaders should continue with their focus on improving the

teaching of PSHE. This will help pupils to understand these issues better and in turn increase their tolerance for others with beliefs different to their own.

- Pupils are sometimes unclear about what they need to do to improve their work. Leaders should continue to develop the use of assessment in the school to ensure new approaches are used consistently and effectively. This will help to ensure that pupils understand how to move forward with 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136654
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10229087
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,946
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Glenda Lane
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ceri Oakley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wildern.hants.sch.uk">http://www.wildern.hants.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 November 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- In recent years the school has admitted pupils above its published admission number, so some year groups are currently larger than they would usually be.
- The school uses two alternative providers, one of which is registered with Ofsted.
- The school fulfils the requirements of the Baker Clause, which means that every pupil in Years 8 to 11 has access to unbiased advice about non-academic routes that are available to pupils once they leave the school in Year 11.

## Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with a range of leaders, including the headteacher, executive headteacher and members of the senior leadership team, about their areas of responsibility.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, English, history, languages, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors judged the effectiveness of safeguarding by scrutinising written records, meeting with leaders and talking to pupils, teachers, staff and governors about this aspect of the school's work.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils, teachers and leaders. They considered survey responses, including those submitted by parents through Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees and local governing body.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Ellison, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Zoe Harris	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Hanlon	Ofsted Inspector
Julia Mortimore	Ofsted Inspector
Paul James	Ofsted Inspector

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