

Inspection of Wymondham College Prep School

Golf Links Road, Morley, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 9SZ

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Wymondham College Prep School. They are happy and safe. 'Try hard, be kind, be you' is not just a motto - it is the lived experience of pupils. Pupils value the caring, nurturing environment. Staff care deeply and ensure that pupils get the support they need to develop as confident, well-rounded individuals.

Pupils quickly develop a love of learning. Stimulating and engaging learning activities spark their curiosity. Staff have the highest aspirations for pupils. Pupils consistently achieve highly. They show deep understanding of what they learn and can articulate and apply what they have learned exceptionally well.

Leaders place kindness at the heart of the school's values. Pupils learn how to display this through their 'daily 5' activities. They engage in charity work to learn about how to understand the perspective of others.

Pupils consistently behave with kindness and tolerance towards each other. They make highly positive behaviour choices, and bullying is not an issue. Positive relationships mean pupils learn and play together extremely well.

Pupils relish the extensive range of clubs, leadership opportunities, trips and competitions on offer. Their well-being is supported by special experiences, such as animal care. Leaders recently organised for livestock to come on site.

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

Leaders have constructed a broad and highly ambitious curriculum. They have ensured this curriculum has the highest levels of academic aspiration. The 'Prep Life' programme takes the curriculum beyond the expected, with an extensive range of enrichment and character development opportunities.

Children in early years make the best possible start. They learn in an environment that inspires their curiosity. Teachers provide plentiful opportunities, which promotes children's academic, social and emotional development very effectively. For example, teachers skilfully plan and adapt activities based around children's interests, which allows them to collaborate and problem-solve exceptionally well. Teachers support children to engage in complex discussions, which enables them to develop rich and deep understanding of learning.

Teachers are subject experts. Leaders have ensured that staff have the detailed subject knowledge needed to teach the full curriculum well. Pupils plan learning that builds highly effectively on what pupils have learned before. Teachers systematically check what pupils have understood and skilfully adapt their teaching to meet pupils' individual needs. Consequently, pupils recall and apply knowledge exceptionally well and consistently produce high-quality work.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs precisely identified. Leaders carefully plan whether the support in place for pupils with SEND is working well, reviewing these plans with staff, parents and pupils. Staff are highly skilled at meeting pupils' needs. They ensure that pupils with SEND get the adaptations they need to be fully included in learning and achieve as well as they can.

Staff are highly skilled at teaching pupils to read. Pupils quickly learn to read with confidence and fluency. Those who need it get precise support to help them keep up. Teachers ensure that all pupils read from a broad range of genres. Pupils talk passionately about the books they read. They love reading. 'Student librarians' take pride in their role and promote books to others. Older pupils draw complex meaning from texts, as teachers skilfully support them to develop deep comprehension ability. For example, pupils recently engaged in informed and detailed debate on environmental speeches.

Leaders ensure that pupils behave exceptionally well. The school values about how to treat each other are firmly embedded and understood by all. Pupils do not disrupt learning, as they find lessons so engaging. The playground is a warm and friendly place. Playground buddies help to take responsibility for this, but most pupils make the right behaviour choices without help.

Pupils experience an exemplary range of personal development opportunities. Through 'Prep Life', they learn about British values. They talk in depth about what these are and how they apply them to their own lives. Pupils develop leadership skills and responsibility through an extensive range of meaningful opportunities. The range of clubs, activities and trips pupils participate in are vast. Leaders ensure that all pupils can benefit from these. Pupils develop their spiritual understanding through prayer and study of other religions. Pupils learn to be empathetic, kind and tolerant young people.

The trust sets a highly ambitious vision for the development of this new school. Through effective challenge and support, leaders have turned this into a reality. Leaders are highly engaged with staff, who are extremely positive about how effectively leaders consider their workload and well-being. Parents are highly positive about how leaders involve them in school life.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate and regular training to keep pupils safe. Staff identify safeguarding concerns effectively. Leaders ensure that concerns are accurately recorded and followed up diligently. They collaborate effectively with other organisations to support pupils.

Leaders ensure that appropriate systems are in place to support safe recruitment of staff. Checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work in school are thorough and

accurately recorded. Leaders carry out the necessary checks on external staff and visitors.

Pupils are confident to report any worries or concerns. Those who board are confident about the independent adult they can talk to, if needed.

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](#)' 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

Unique reference number	147857
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10255005
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Rout
Headteacher	Simon Underhill
Website	www.wymondhamcollegeprepschool.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school was opened as a free school by Sapientia Education Trust. The school is on the same site as Wymondham College, which is run by the same trust.
- The school moved from temporary accommodation to a permanent site in September 2021. The school's purpose-built boarding provision, Underwood Hall, was completed at the same time.
- The current headteacher took up his post in September 2022.
- The school has entry points in Reception and Year 5 and has operated a phased opening of year groups.
- The school currently has Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6 classes. The school is set to grow, year on year, until it reaches full capacity in 2025.
- The school does not make any use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: history, early reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- In addition to meetings with the headteacher and senior leadership team, inspectors met with leaders in the following areas: behaviour and attendance, early years, personal development, safeguarding, and pupils with SEND.
- The lead inspector spoke with trust representatives throughout the inspection. The lead inspector met with trustees and the chief executive officer regarding governance and the work of the trust.
- The lead inspector spoke to pupils and examined a wide range of books to explore the quality of the wider curriculum.
- To gather their views on the school, inspectors spoke in formal meetings with groups of pupils. Inspectors spoke with pupils around the school site while they observed break and lunchtimes. Inspectors also considered the 21 responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- To evaluate the school's safeguarding culture, inspectors viewed safeguarding records and procedures and met with a range of pupils, staff and leaders. The lead inspector spoke to a specific group of boarders, to establish their views.
- The 122 free-text responses made by parents to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, were considered. Inspectors also took account of the 30 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

James Chester, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Charlotte Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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