

# Inspection of a good school: Wymondham High Academy

Folly Road, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 0QT

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Inspection dates:

26 and 27 September 2023

## **Outcome**

Wymondham High Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Chris Smith. This school is part of Enrich Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Russell Boulton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jeffrey Lansdell.

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

Pupils who attend Wymondham High Academy are proud to be part of a school community that looks out for each other. They are considerate and kind to all. Older pupils provide support for younger ones. This sense of care pervades through the school. It means that bullying or any form of unkindness is extremely rare.

Pupils speak positively about how their teachers have high expectations for what they can achieve. They understand that to meet these expectations they need to work hard, and they do. As a result, they produce high-quality work that reflects their constantly increasing knowledge. Pupils' learning prepares them well for public examinations, where they perform very well.

Pupils are polite and respectful. They behave well in lessons. Learning is rarely interrupted. If it is, pupils know that teachers will respond quickly, consistently and fairly. Pupils move around the large site purposefully.

Students in the sixth form are a visible and respected presence around the school. They understand that younger pupils see them as role models. They view this as a privilege. Students develop a deep and rich understanding of the subjects they have chosen to study. They produce work that is of extremely high quality.

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

The school has designed a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. The school recognises that pupils need to follow a broad curriculum. All pupils study two languages when they start in Year 7, and all take at least one language through to the end of Year

11. While the school has decided to condense key stage 3 into two years, this does not narrow the experience for pupils.

Subject specialists have identified the key knowledge and skills pupils need to learn. They have organised knowledge in a logical order. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to recall important facts. This helps pupils remember more. As they get older, pupils become more adept at successfully using this knowledge. They apply what they know to different situations. They become confident problem-solvers, and are able to use what they learn both when verbally explaining and through their written responses.

In most cases, teachers use their checks well on what pupils know to identify if pupils have understood what they need to move on. They use a range of strategies to determine where gaps in understanding may exist. The exactness of checking precisely identifies the nature of misunderstanding. When this is the case, teachers are able to address and remedy issues quickly. However, not all teachers do this effectively enough to accurately assess pupils' understanding. In these situations, there is a lack of clarity about exactly what pupils know and do not know. Some pupils are set tasks they have not secured the knowledge to complete. They struggle to engage. In these instances, pupils lose learning time patiently waiting for teachers to spot that they are struggling and intervene.

The school has equally high ambition for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The SEND team has clearly communicated information about pupils' specific barriers to learning. Teachers use this information to successfully adapt their teaching. As a result, pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum and make progress alongside their peers.

The school has made reading a priority. Pupils enjoy it when teachers read from a wide range of books to them. Pupils who struggle with reading get high-quality support to overcome barriers to reading. Teachers choose books that match pupils' reading levels and personal interest. As a result, pupils become confident and fluent readers.

Sixth-form students flourish in an environment where they are given increasing levels of independence. They benefit from the expertise of their teachers. Students are encouraged to discuss, question and challenge their thinking. As a result, they show a deep and rich understanding of, at times, complex and abstract concepts.

The school has implemented a well-designed personal, social and health education curriculum. The curriculum is planned so pupils can build a deeper understanding of important topics in an age-appropriate way. Pupils learn about different cultures, faiths and lifestyles. They appreciate and celebrate the importance of difference. Pupils value the extensive and inclusive range of extra-curricular activities offered by staff. They enjoy the opportunity to develop new skills and interests. They appreciate the privilege of representing the school, for instance as part of the orchestra or as part of a sports team.

Staff are proud to work in the school. They feel valued and respected. They appreciate how leaders, governors and trustees place a high priority on their well-being.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Not all teachers use assessment accurately to determine where pupils have gaps or misconceptions in their learning. This means that, in some cases, it is not clear when pupils have not secured enough knowledge to successfully move on to the next phase of learning. This lack of clarity means teachers cannot address specific learning issues quickly. Therefore, some pupils are unable to engage in, or complete, learning activities. They lose time waiting for teachers to spot that they are struggling and provide help. The school should ensure that all teachers have the knowledge needed to use assessment effectively to determine what pupils know and if they are ready to move on to the next phase of learning.

## 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2017.

### 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>	137461
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268626
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,650
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	352
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Jeffrey Lansdell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Smith
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wymondhamhigh.co.uk">http://www.wymondhamhigh.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 and 29 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Wymondham High Academy is part of Enrich Learning Trust.
- The headteacher took up post in January 2023.
- The school provides breakfast club provision. This is managed by the school.
- 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 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, including the headteacher, the deputy headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust board, the chair of the local governing body and the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, art and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 reviewed a wide range of documents, including curriculum plans, school development plans, policies and documentation for behaviour and attendance.
- To gather pupils' views, inspectors spent time observing and speaking to pupils.
- Inspectors considered the 226 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the 156 free-text comments submitted.

### **Inspection team**

Dave Gibson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lynn Ayling

Ofsted Inspector

Sally Garrett

Ofsted Inspector

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