

Inspection of a good school: Wyedean School and Sixth Form Centre

Beachley Road, Sedbury, Chepstow, Gloucestershire NP16 7AA

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 October 2023

Outcome

Wyedean School and Sixth Form Centre continues to be a good school.

The principal of this school is Gwennan Jeremiah. This school is part of Wyedean School and Sixth Form Centre 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 Andy Lord.

What is it like to attend this school?

Wyedean school is true to its motto 'Aspire Together, Achieve Together'. Pupils are proud of their school and have positive relationships with adults. Pupils feel safe and part of a caring community.

The school sets high expectations for behaviour. Where pupils' behaviour falls below those standards adults act. The school supports these pupils to improve their attitudes towards their learning. Pupils understand the importance of being respectful towards each other. Bullying does occur, but pupils report it, and adults resolve issues. The school is a calm and orderly environment in which pupils can learn.

Pupils and students in the sixth form take on leadership responsibilities, for example as members of the school council, sports leaders and peer mentors. The new house system excites pupils. They keenly collect house points as rewards for their work. Pupils value the half-termly hero awards that celebrate their successes.

The school develops 'purposeful reading'. Pupils read regularly and experience a diverse range of texts. This helps pupils to build their wider cultural understanding of the world. Pupils can join the 'Wyedean Reads' book club to discuss new books with their peers. There are enrichment opportunities to meet visiting authors and attend literary festivals.

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

The school teaches a broad curriculum. Increasing numbers of pupils are now studying the English Baccalaureate subjects at GCSE. The qualifications offered in the sixth form

have been considered carefully by the school to match students' aspirations. The sixth-form curriculum prepares students well for future employment or further study.

Pupils learn about the distinctiveness of each subject. For example, pupils understand what skills you need as a geographer in order to carry out an enquiry. In most subjects the school has been ambitious when setting out what pupils will learn. However, pupils' existing knowledge is sometimes underestimated. This means pupils are not introduced to new, more demanding content quickly enough.

Teachers are passionate about sharing their subject with pupils, particularly in the sixth form. The school has planned the order in which pupils will learn new topics and content so that they can make links to their previous learning. In some areas of the curriculum, there has been less consideration about what are the most effective teaching methods to support pupils to learn and remember. This hinders pupils' ability to learn more and remember more over time.

The school accurately identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school supports these pupils well to be successful in their learning. The weakest readers develop their reading accuracy and fluency. Once pupils' phonics knowledge is secure, these pupils have regular opportunities to read to adults. Trained buddy readers from the sixth form and local community support individual pupils. This means pupils' reading confidence continues to build.

The school tracks and monitors the attendance of all pupils, including students in the sixth form. Most pupils have high attendance. The school is working with families and other agencies to support those who are persistently absent to re-engage with school life. This work is enabling more pupils to regularly attend school.

The school is currently developing the 'WyeBacc' character development programme. A range of clubs and activities are available to develop pupils' talents and interests, for example performing arts showcases, Duke of Edinburgh's Awards and competitive sports. However, a significant number of pupils do not take up these opportunities. Conversely, students in the sixth form plan and deliver clubs for each other. Year 13 hold a 'freshers fair' to help new Year 12 students choose activities. This means students are actively engaged with enrichment activities.

Pupils follow an age-appropriate personal, social and health education curriculum. This continues into the sixth form. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. The school supports pupils to look after their physical and mental health. Pupils understand about healthy relationships and consent. Pupils are well prepared for adult life in modern Britain.

The school provides impartial careers information to pupils. They learn about the world of work, including meeting employers and work experience. Sixth-form students receive support to make applications to university, apprenticeships or employment. Therefore, pupils can make informed choices about their future destinations.

The school is considerate of staff well-being and workload. Staff value the approachability of leaders. Teachers can take further professional qualifications and complete education research. Those newest to the profession are well supported. As a result, staff feel invested in and are proud to work in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some areas of the curriculum are not ambitious about what pupils can achieve. This means that pupils are not introduced to challenging concepts and ideas early enough. The school should ensure that the whole curriculum is ambitious for all pupils to know more and remember more.
- The curriculum experienced by pupils does not always match the intended learning. This means that sometimes pupils do not securely gain the key knowledge that is set out in curriculum plans. The school should support teachers to consider which pedagogies are most effective to deliver each part of the intended curriculum to pupils.

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 November 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 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	137382
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10288179
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,048
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	227
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Lord
Principal	Gwennan Jeremiah
Website	www.wyedean.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school uses one registered alternative provider.
- 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 discussions with school leaders at all levels. Inspectors also met staff and trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, art and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects, including meeting pupils with their work from a range of subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of the pupil body.
- Inspectors viewed a range of school documentation, including minutes of the trustee meetings and the school's self-evaluation and development plan.
- 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 considered responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, as well as responses to the staff survey and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Sara Berry, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

James Oldham

His Majesty's Inspector

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