

# Education and residential inspection summary for Wilds Lodge School

Stamford Road, Empingham, Oakham, Rutland LE15 8QQ

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Inspection dates: 7 to 9 February 2024

## Outcome

The education overall effectiveness judgement is: good

The judgement for the experiences and progress of children in the residential provision is: good

## What is it like to attend this school?

- Most pupils like being part of Wilds Lodge School. They value the care given by staff. Many pupils show determination to overcome difficulties. They are persistent in their learning. An older pupil typically commented, 'This school has meant the world to me.'
- Pupils gain from the school's rural settings. The range and quality of facilities are excellent. Pupils like having the animals on both school sites. Randall, one of the pigs, is much liked.
- Pupils' behaviour improves during their time at school. Staff are skilled in helping pupils to reflect on, and develop strategies to regulate, their emotions and behaviours. At times, some pupils are unkind. Pupils say that when bullying happens, the school deals with it effectively. The school's approach to positive behaviour is bringing about a reduction in suspensions and physical interventions.
- Leaders set high expectations for pupils' attendance. Most pupils' attendance improves over time. The school is effective in supporting and challenging parents and carers whose children do not attend regularly.
- Parents have polarised views of the school. Most value and appreciate what the school provides for their children. However, others are less positive, especially when they are unclear about the benefit of changes brought about in recent years.

The inspectors made **three recommendations** to help the school improve, covering: the consistent implementation of the planned curriculums across all subjects; the effective use of summative assessment; and improving communication with parents.

The school **meets all of the independent school standards**.

## What is it like to stay at this school?

- Children make progress in all areas of their development. Staff provide children with consistent care, with a stable core staff team that enables children to create positive memories and experiences. Staff have a nurturing approach and keep children at the centre of everything they do. Staff have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of children's individual needs. Children form trusted relationships with staff and benefit from good-quality care and support.
- Children are encouraged by staff to participate in a variety of activities, both on site and within the community. Community-based activities after school mean that children meet others with shared interests. For example, some children attend cadets and others play football and attend running clubs. This develops children's confidence.
- Staff help children to have high self-esteem and a positive body image. They are skilled at sensitively supporting children who are exploring their own sense of identity. Staff make sure that children do not feel judged or stigmatised.
- The staff provide excellent support to help children make progress in education. Children that have faced previous barriers to education are supported to overcome these, improving their attendance in education, which in turn improves their educational outcomes.
- Children benefit from individualised support that is responsive to their known and emerging needs. Well-thought-out routines that are designed to bring predictability are implemented in a way that enables children to have structure and stability so that they can participate in everyday life. Underpinned by the team's enabling attitude, this has resulted in children making good progress in many aspects of their lives.
- Staff understand children's needs from when they first move to the home. Managers and staff celebrate the children's progress and achievements, no matter how small they might be. For example, children develop age-appropriate independence skills, making their beds and having personal hygiene routines and a healthy sleep routine.
- One child has developed their independence skills and confidence to enable them to travel home on their own, and others have been able to gain work experience and have part-time jobs. This is significant progress, providing children with increased responsibilities and new experiences, which in turn increases their self-esteem and confidence.
- When older children leave this home, they are encouraged to follow their interests and goals. Children are focused on what careers they want to achieve,

and staff encourage and support this enthusiasm. Good-quality multi-agency working with partners from the careers service, school and college has meant that children's future aspirations are developed, and they are more likely to succeed.

The school **meets all the national minimum standards**.

The inspectors made **no recommendations** to help the school improve.

- View the full inspection report for the education provision:  
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/27/134938>
- View the full inspection report for the residential provision:  
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/10/SC069231>



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