

Education and boarding inspection summary for Wymondham College

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

Inspection dates: 10-12 October 2023

Outcome

The education overall effectiveness judgement is: outstanding

The judgement for the experiences and progress of children in the boarding provision is: outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

At Wymondham College there is a palpable sense of aspiration. Pupils from all contexts flourish. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get excellent support. Pupils new to the school or sixth form immediately understand and engage with the ethos. Consequently, they do exceptionally well.

Pupils benefit from a high-quality curriculum. From the start of key stage 3 they rapidly build up what they know. Students in the sixth form go onto ambitious destinations. Pupils articulate a rich understanding of their subjects.

Expectations for behaviour are high and established throughout the school. Older pupils model responsible conduct for younger ones. Boarders and day pupils alike live and breathe the school's values of pride, passion and positivity. They show considerable enthusiasm for learning. Respect and kindness are embedded in the safe culture. In all year groups, pupils are courteous and confident.

There is a huge range of opportunities. Pupils enthuse about the quality of these. There are clubs for all, such as in music, debating, martial arts and gardening. Pupils compete at high-level sporting events. They start and run many of the enrichment activities. Pupils espouse the multiple leadership positions and charity events. This helps them develop deep character strengths.

The inspectors **did not make any recommendations** to help the school improve.

What is it like to board at this school?

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children speak with total positivity about their experiences of boarding. They have an extremely strong sense of belonging and community. They say that their experiences have significantly helped them to develop their social, emotional and self-determination skills. Children say that boarding adds exceptional value to their education as well as their social life.

Children's academic progress is impressive. Their academic grades exceed the national average. The education provision for children with special educational needs is exceptional. A parent said that staff provide excellent support for children with SEND. Another parent said that, without the school, her child would not be in mainstream education and would not have the opportunity to thrive as they do currently.

Children benefit from highly individualised support. The staff forge strong, trusting relationships with the children. Consequently, children feel safe. For some children, the strength of these relationships has led to them confiding in staff. This has resulted in significant improvements being made in children's overall safety. Staff have nurtured a culture in which children are confident to speak out. Children are fully aware that staff will advocate for them and do all they can to support them while they are in their care.

Children who are new to boarding are welcomed sensitively. Welcome packs and open days ease children in gently to their respective boarding provisions. Meticulous consideration is given to the mix of children who share dormitories. Such careful planning reduces children's anxieties. It enables them to settle quickly and begin to experience and enjoy all that the school has to offer.

Children and staff talk about their boarding houses as a 'family' and 'community'. The children look out for each other, providing peer support. Older children act as mentors for younger children. Nurturing relationships between children help to develop their sense of belonging. The school has created a culture of a home away from home. Given the size of the boarding provision, this is an impressive feat.

Children have ample opportunities to express their views and influence day-to-day school life. Requests made by children have led to additional resources being provided, such as dedicated reading areas, adaptations to prep time and additional extra-curricular activities. Student council initiatives do well in representing the views of all children. Children are encouraged to use their skills in enterprise to organise and plan a variety of social events. Children plan formal evening events, such as dinner parties and themed nights.

Children benefit from an increasingly expanding range of opportunities and experiences. Some children visited Kenya spending time working at an orphanage and with disadvantaged communities. Staff work hard to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for children in terms of funding support. All children who want an opportunity to go on a fee-paying trip can do so by seeking funding from the school.

Staff encourage children to take part in charitable events. Children have frequently been on walks to raise funds for animal and military charities. They have been involved in initiatives such as 'Sprinting to Somalia' and 'March to Malawi'. The funds raised led to training for two midwives being paid for by the school. Children routinely take part in national and international charity projects. Locally, children have participated in beach litter collections and put food parcels together for those in need.

The school community is diverse. Children can mix with children from other backgrounds and cultures. This nurtures an increased understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Children have a range of exceptionally positive experiences. Children who can go home at weekends often choose to stay in boarding so that they can have fun, be with friends and take advantage of the exceptionally varied sporting activities on offer. Children participate in rowing, paddle boarding, horse riding, boxing, taekwondo and numerous other activities. The school is a vibrant, exciting place to live and study; a place where children absolutely flourish.

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

- View the full inspection report for the education provision:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/23/136481>
- View the full inspection report for the boarding provision:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/1/sc055089>



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