

# The Wymering School

**Address:** Sevenoaks Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO6 3YB

**Unique reference number (URN):** 149336

## Inspection report: 2 June 2026

|                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| Exceptional        |       |
| Strong standard    | ● ● ● |
| Expected standard  | ● ● ● |
| Needs attention    |       |
| Urgent improvement |       |

### ✓ **Safeguarding standards met**

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

### **How we evaluate safeguarding**

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

## Strong standard ●

### Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders prioritise attendance at school. Many pupils arrive with very low attendance or a history of non-attendance at school. Leaders carefully balance overcoming barriers to increasing attendance with minimising anxiety. The school designs pupils' induction programmes to meet their individual needs while promoting the highest levels of attendance. Where absence persists, the school responds appropriately and quickly. This can involve making reasonable and appropriate adjustments. The school works effectively with parents and multi-agency partners to support attendance. As a result, the vast majority of pupils significantly improve their attendance rapidly on arrival at the school.

Pupils are warmly welcomed into school by staff. They are well supported to be ready for learning and their school day. Behaviour across the school and in classrooms is settled and purposeful. Pupils are respectful of each other and adults. They have very positive attitudes towards learning. They are supported by skilled and knowledgeable staff and learn how to manage their behaviour. Pupils understand what bullying is and staff deal quickly with any unkindness. Staff understand the school's approach to behaviour management and successfully use positive approaches to help pupils to manage their behaviour and learn to make good choices.

### Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders and staff are committed to improving the opportunities available for all pupils and giving them hope for the future. Leaders have established a culture in which staff understand the range of barriers that pupils face to access their learning. High-quality training supports staff and ensures the inclusive culture and practice is well embedded. Staff develop positive, secure and trusting relationships with pupils. As a result of this, pupils settle quickly into the expectations of the school.

Barriers to learning are quickly identified by staff. Ongoing checks of how pupils are doing ensure that the issues that get in the way of pupils' wellbeing and progress are reduced swiftly and effectively. Skilled teachers and support staff are highly responsive throughout lessons. This ensures any barriers continue to reduce over time.

Leaders thoughtfully consider the use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. They identify the many and varied barriers facing the most disadvantaged pupils. They keep a close eye on how the strategy is working. This helps to ensure that it has a positive impact on pupils' personal and academic outcomes. Leaders involve parents and carers closely in plans to support their children. Where necessary, the school also works very well with external agencies, when seeking expert support, advice or guidance.

### Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The school has designed an appropriate and coherent programme of personal development. Leaders use their deep understanding of the school's context to adapt the programme to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils' personal development is prioritised and a deeply

embedded element of the school's work. The curriculum ensures that pupils have clear and engaging opportunities to develop the essential knowledge they need to respect others, develop their social skills and appreciate cultural diversity. This is enhanced by carefully selected visits to deepen pupils' understanding of this work. The curriculum includes appropriate relationships and sex education and health education.

The school provides all pupils with an incredibly rich and ambitious personal development programme. This has been carefully and deliberately constructed based on what the school has identified to be most important for its pupils. The programme directly joins up the planned curriculum with a rich array of wider opportunities. Pupils value these additional opportunities, such as learning how to care for their school pets. Leaders ensure the programme is carefully monitored and adapted to ensure it continues to meet the needs of all pupils and is accessed by them all. Pupils demonstrate secure knowledge across the curriculum. They have developed a detailed understanding of being healthy and staying safe.

Leaders and staff have a thorough understanding of all their pupils. They take a systematic approach to identifying and anticipating the pastoral support needs of individuals and groups. The support provided is highly effective and enables pupils to successfully develop their self-confidence, resilience and self-understanding. This helps them recognise and moderate their own behaviour responses.

Pupils benefit from a broad range of opportunities to explore their post-school education, training and careers options. The school hosts careers fairs, completes travel training and introduces pupils to college in preparation for their transition. This supports pupils to be well prepared for adulthood.

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## Expected standard

### Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils make progress from their starting points across the curriculum and with attendance, behaviour and wellbeing at the school. They are well supported to feel they can achieve and be successful. Staff support pupils well to become increasingly independent. Staff generally use assessment accurately to inform next steps. This work ensures that pupils build key knowledge and skills securely from their starting points. Pupils who need additional help to learn receive effective support. This helps them to close any gaps in their learning.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to leave the school with a range of qualifications. Over time, more pupils are accessing examinations as they progress through the school. Results have improved and pupils have been provided with a wider accreditation offer. Pupils benefit from a broad range of opportunities to explore their post-school education, training and support options. This supports them to be well prepared for their next steps and adulthood.

## Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a curriculum that reflects the school's context. It prioritises the most important elements that pupils need to learn to be ready for their next steps. The curriculum is well sequenced. There is clear progression of knowledge and skills in subjects including writing, reading and mathematics. Leaders check how well the curriculum is being taught and use this information to improve the consistency of practice across subjects.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching across the school. They have made sure that the school's approach has evolved as cohorts have changed and pupils have been at the school for longer periods. Leaders and staff work closely together to identify strengths and refinements. Leaders have made appropriate decisions when they spot areas that need improvement. They use what they learn to make decisions that improve practice.

Effective systems are used to identify pupils' starting points. Pupils at the earliest stages of reading are supported with a phonics programme delivered by trained staff. Reading is prioritised for all pupils. Teachers generally have appropriate subject knowledge. Teachers know their pupils well and check how they are doing in lessons. This helps them to adapt activities to make sure that they are aligned with the appropriate stage of learning for each pupil.

## Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have a clear vision for the school, and they ensure this is shared by everyone involved. They have clear priorities for improvement that are entirely appropriate, based on their accurate self-evaluation. They have high expectations and have created a strong sense of belonging across the school community. Leaders are clear that their focus has been on ensuring the school is a safe and nurturing environment. They understand what the school does effectively and where further improvement is needed. They are focused on improving teaching and learning so that all pupils benefit from the strongest practice across the school.

Leaders are role models of the behaviours and attitudes they want to see. They have ensured the school has improved and developed since opening. Leaders manage the changes that come from changing cohorts and increasing numbers with skill and enthusiasm. The result of their work is a highly collaborative, inclusive and supportive environment that benefits the pupils, families and staff.

Leaders work effectively with families, the trust and external agencies. Staff feel that they are very well supported to manage their workloads. Leaders are highly supportive of staff wellbeing. Leaders ensure they have access to high-quality professional learning. This has supported the developments the school has made since it opened. Those responsible for governance bring a range of experience and expertise that supports their work. They meet their statutory duties and have a clear understanding of the school's performance.

# What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils want to attend school because they know they will be supported very well by kind and caring staff. Pupils develop highly positive and trusting relationships with staff. They know they will help them to do their best. This helps them to be happy and to achieve. Most pupils, many of whom have been out of school for long periods, re-engage with learning effectively. Pupils know their voice matters and that staff will listen carefully to any concerns they have.

Pupils are very well-behaved across the school. They understand the routines and high expectations staff have for them and strive to live up to them. In lessons they show that they are keen to learn. This contributes to a sense of purpose and learning that permeates the school. Pupils are highly positive about their school, each other and staff. Pupils say the school is a safe and happy place to be. They know that staff will support them if they are worried about something. Leaders and staff enable pupils to feel they belong, enjoy learning and achieve, often for the first time. Leaders' work across all aspects of the school supports positive attendance for most pupils. The school successfully lives out its values of togetherness, resilience, enthusiasm and kindness.

Staff get to know pupils quickly and ensure they become valued members of the school community. The school's highly inclusive culture allows all pupils to feel valued and experience success. A carefully considered and effectively taught curriculum helps all pupils to make progress. Leaders and staff have high ambitions for all pupils. Pupils become confident and resilient during their time at the school. Skilled staff support them to learn about themselves and manage their feelings and emotions. It prepares pupils well for the next steps in their education and life in modern Britain.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should continue their work to support improvements in teaching so that the curriculum is implemented consistently well across all subjects and leads to all pupils developing the detailed knowledge and skills they need to consistently achieve well.
  - Leaders should continue to act on their identified priorities for development, leading to further improvements across all areas of the school's work.
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## About this inspection

The school is part of Southern Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), John White, and overseen by a board of trustees, co-chaired by Andy Baker and Mark Grigsby.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders and other staff. Inspectors also met with one of the co-chairs of the board of trustees, the CEO of the trust and the vice chair of the local governance board.

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.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The Wymering School is a special school for pupils with social, communication and interaction difficulties, associated speech, language and communication difficulties and high levels of anxiety. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.

The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.

Since the previous inspection, the previous trust, Delta Education Trust, amalgamated with another trust to become Southern Education Trust.

Headteacher: Sally Rogers

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**Lead inspector:**

Simon Graydon, His Majesty's Inspector

**Team inspector:**

Justin Innes, Ofsted Inspector

## Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 2 June 2026

## School and pupil context

**Total pupils**

**73**

**What does this mean?**

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

### **School capacity**

**66**

#### **What does this mean?**

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

### **Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)**

**54.79%**

#### **What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

### **Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan**

**100.00%**

#### **What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

### **Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support**

**0.00%**

#### **What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

### **Location deprivation**

**Well above average**

#### **What does this mean?**

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

| Year             | This school |
|------------------|-------------|
| 2024/25 (3 term) | 21.0%       |
| 2023/24 (3 term) | 22.1%       |
| 2022/23 (3 term) | 25.2%       |

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

| Year             | This school |
|------------------|-------------|
| 2024/25 (3 term) | 58.9%       |
| 2023/24 (3 term) | 54.5%       |
| 2022/23 (3 term) | 53.3%       |

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard 

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

### **Expected standard**

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

### **Needs attention**

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

### **Urgent improvement**

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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