



SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

INSPECTION REPORT FOR WYNSTONES STEINER SCHOOL

DfE No: 916/6031

The key inspection judgements for this school are:

The quality of education	Good	2
Pupils' personal development	Good	2
Safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety	Good	2
Leadership, management and governance	Good	2
Effectiveness of the Early Years' provision	Outstanding	1

Compliance with the Independent School Standards:

The school meets the regulatory requirements of schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Compliance with the Equality Act 2010:

The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act.

Compliance with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage:

The school meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Date of inspection: 28-30 November 2017

SECTION A: SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

Wynstones Steiner School provides a good education for its pupils. It meets all of the independent school standards. Pupils' learning and achievement are good. Most pupils make good progress from their individual starting points and by the time they leave the school they reach standards which are in-line with or above those expected nationally. The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Not all teachers mark pupils' work effectively. In the Lower School more able pupils do not progress as well as they should because the teaching they receive is not demanding enough. The curriculum is of good quality and provides excellent opportunities for developing imagination, creativity and musical skills and knowledge. Craft skills are developed to a high level. The curriculum is enriched for all pupils by a varied programme of physical education and outdoor experiences. Pupils acquire a good understanding of the cultures, faiths and lifestyles in modern Britain. They learn about the British values of democracy, equality, liberty and the rule of law. Pupils' personal development is good. They have excellent attitudes to learning; concentrating well and working together effectively. They behave very well in class and respond positively to their teachers. However, attendance is below the national average and a minority of pupils do not arrive promptly. This disrupts lessons and consequently reduces pupils' learning and progress. The school's arrangements for safeguarding and ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are good, including the safe recruitment of staff. Leadership and management are good. The management team are insightful and are very effectively leading improvements. The trustees provide outstanding support and have ensured that the school has continued to improve since the last inspection. The partnership with parents is very strong. They are well informed by school managers and are highly appreciative of the way in which the education manager responds to their views. The provision for the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is outstanding.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

Whilst not required by the regulations, the proprietor should:

- improve the quality of teaching in the Lower School by ensuring that teachers use assessment information to set clearer and appropriately challenging work for the more able pupils;
- ensure that all teachers mark pupils' work regularly and rigorously to provide them with feedback on how to improve and revise their work; and
- improve pupils' attendance by reducing authorised and unauthorised absence and ensuring that they all arrive on time.

SECTION B: INFORMATION

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION:

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service (SIS) in accordance with Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. It follows the inspection framework agreed by SIS and the Department for Education (DfE).

In reaching their judgements, the inspectors observed 20 lessons throughout the school and sessions in the kindergarten. They examined samples of pupils' work and observed the life of the school including at break and lunchtimes. They scrutinised the school's documentation, records and website. Inspectors held discussions with the business manager, the education manager, the chair of council, pupils, staff, parents and trustees. They took account of the views of seventy one parents and thirty Middle and Upper school pupils through the completion of a questionnaire. The inspectors were:

Reporting Inspector:	Mr Jonathan Palk
Team inspectors:	Dr Martin Bradley and Mr Dilip Kadodwala
Steiner Community Consultant:	Mrs Helen Weatherhead and Mrs Jane Morris-Brown

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL:

Wynstones Steiner Waldorf School is situated in a rural location south of Gloucester. The school was founded in 1937 and provides education based on the Steiner Waldorf curriculum alongside GCSE and Advanced level courses in the upper school. A total of 285 pupils between the ages of three and eighteen currently attend the school, including twenty below compulsory school age in the three kindergarten classes and thirteen above compulsory school age in the sixth form. The kindergartens provide education in accordance with the EYFS with agreed modifications and exemptions. Seven are in receipt of nursery funding. There are no pupils who have statements of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or an Education Health Care (EHC) plan, although the school identifies 84 pupils as requiring support for varying degrees of learning difficulty, such as dyslexia. The school has links with other Steiner Waldorf schools in Europe and currently the school roll includes seven German pupils who are receiving support for learning English as an additional language (EAL). A school education manager was appointed in September 2017, and a business manager in September 2016. The school was last inspected in December 2014.

The school uses the Steiner Waldorf system of naming classes and these names are used throughout the report. Their corresponding National Curriculum years are shown below.

Steiner class name	National Curriculum
Kindergarten	Nursery, Reception, Y 1
Class 1 (Lower School)	Year 2
Class 2 (Lower School)	Year 3
Class 3 (Lower School)	Year 4
Class 4 (Lower School)	Year 5
Class 5 (Lower School)	Year 6
Class 6 (Middle School)	Year 7
Class 7 (Middle School)	Year 8
Class 8 (Middle School)	Year 9
Class 9 (Upper School)	Year 10
Class 10 (Upper School)	Year 11
Class 11 (Upper School)	Year 12
Class 12 (Upper school)	Year 13

SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

1. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Pupils' learning and achievement

Pupils' learning and achievement are good and they make good progress from their various starting points. By the end of their time in school most pupils reach the standards expected for their age and a few pupils achieve more than this. GCSE results are above average, although the proportion at the higher end is lower than that found nationally. In areas, such as woodwork, music and crafts, where there are no public examinations, standards of work are high. The 'A' level results for the few pupils who stay on into the sixth form to study a limited range of subjects are similarly high. This enables these pupils go on to the university of their choice.

Pupils are very articulate and use formal and persuasive language well. This raises the quality of discussions in lessons. They have very positive attitudes to learning and settle to work quickly and diligently. Work books are well presented and their handwriting is a pleasure to observe. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who find learning difficult make consistently good progress. The provision is very well organised and there is a high level of individual support both in and out of lessons. The pupils aged over five to seven in the kindergarten are effective learners and achieve well. Their teachers provide the right level of challenge based on regular and accurate assessment. This is supported by excellent organisation and a good range of activities to extend the tasks undertaken by the younger children.

The more able pupils in the Lower School do not consistently achieve and make the progress of which they are capable because expectations are not high enough, and the tasks planned for them do not take enough account of what they have shown they know and can do. Scrutiny of work books and lesson observations provide evidence that these pupils are not being asked to think more deeply in mathematics or to use more exciting vocabulary in their written work in a range of subjects.

The quality of teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teachers have a very thorough understanding of the Steiner Waldorf curriculum. The tasks that pupils are given are interesting and enthuse them, helping to promote a love of learning. Where lessons were most effective the quality of teachers' questioning ensured that pupils' understanding was checked carefully and when necessary, reinforced. Teachers use a broad range of tasks and activities to do this, including pair and small group work, which results in pupils confidently giving their viewpoints and showing their reasoning skills. Pupils are given enough time to consolidate their learning before moving on to the next stage. The quality of homework is good. It is set regularly, extends learning gained in lessons and is suitably challenging.

In the Lower School the quality of teaching, particularly of the more able pupils is variable. Teachers' questioning and the tasks provided for more able pupils are

insufficiently challenging because they take too little account of what these pupils already know and can do. This reduces the progress they make.

The school has modified the assessment procedure since the arrival of the education manager. This now tracks and records individual pupils' progress, most notably in English and mathematics. The procedure is enabling staff to identify those pupils who may be struggling or need adjusted provision to challenge them further. Although there is teaching which makes good use of the assessment information to plan lessons, this practice is inconsistent. Some teachers in the Lower School have not yet sufficiently made the link between the identification of pupils with different needs to devise suitable tasks in their lesson planning and delivering this plan in the lesson. The pace of these lessons is then determined by the slowest pupils and as a consequence the more-able pupils coast and make insufficient progress. The pupils with SEND are provided with additional guidance and extra support during the lessons from teaching assistants. These interventions successfully encourage pupils to have the confidence to try and find solutions for themselves, to improve the accuracy of their responses and better secure understanding.

The marking of older pupils' work, particularly in English and mathematics, helps them to improve its quality. Marking is further supported by teachers' checks on pupils' progress during lessons and giving verbal feedback to pupils. There are some examples of effective marking and pupils' responses to teachers' comments across all classes. However, the quality of some of the marking is poor or not done at all. The routine marking of pupils' work throughout the school is not well-established.

The teaching and assessment of pupils aged over five to seven in the kindergarten classes are highly effective, and have developed extremely well since the last inspection. This has been demonstrated by the continuous refining of planning for the children of statutory school age, keeping this within the Steiner approach to learning and development and providing greater challenges to the older children. Well planned activities are matched closely to their needs and the outstanding social and emotional aspects of the provision boost their confidence when learning new skills. This is supported by excellent organisation which enables the tasks provided for them to extend those planned for the younger children.

The quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and takes full account of the Steiner Waldorf principles. The curriculum reflects the importance of pupils' physical and emotional development, as well as the intellectual and spiritual. A good range of language, mathematics, sciences, creative and expressive arts subjects as well as woodwork, textiles and philosophy are provided. Most pupils in the upper school study GCSE and A level courses and also participate in other non-examined subjects, so that they continue to experience a breadth of learning and make connections with the wider world. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of enrichment opportunities which benefit pupils greatly and ensure a smooth transition into other schools for those leaving after GCSEs. Opportunities include pupils participating in the school orchestra, choral provision, and fundraising. These also make a strong contribution to the local community.

The provision for pupils who have SEND is good. There is an improved and consistent system for assessing their specific needs. The school is adept at accessing external support where necessary and managers are effective in checking the impact of the support provided. Pupils who receive intervention programmes are reintegrated into lessons appropriately. The kindergarten classes provide appropriate activities for the pupils aged over five to seven, extending their skills and knowledge. This has enabled these pupils to make particularly good and often outstanding progress.

2. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The quality of pupils' personal development is good, as is the quality of the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The wide range of activities, both within the curriculum and out of school, strongly support this development. The pupils develop good awareness of modern British society, including its multi-faith and multi-cultural nature. Classes visit a local mosque and the parish church. Other faiths are explored through pupils' own experiences such as being a Sikh. Performances of carols and music in Gloucester cathedral raise funds for Children in Need, whilst other charities, both national and international are supported through other events. For example, Wynstones pupils were joined by those from three other Steiner schools for a music and dance concert in May 2017, raising money for a school in Africa. Links with a school for orphans or with Aids/HIV have been extensive, enabling Class 1 children to consider the South African children's situation, and Class 3 developing their pen pal links. Regular collections are made for a local food bank.

The school reinforces and extends the strong moral code that pupils bring with them from kindergarten and home through a rich experience of storytelling. They learn through a repertoire of fairy tales, myths, legends and their studies of ancient civilisations. They are encouraged to reflect on what is good in the world and give thanks for it. An understanding of British democratic values is an important aspect of the school's approach to developing positive attitudes and behaviour. A recent visit by Upper School pupils to a Gloucester court extended their awareness of the legal system and promoted their respect for British law. This was followed up effectively in discussions in school. Pupils have an excellent awareness of individual liberty and equality through the values of a Steiner education. The school ensures, where appropriate, that pupils receive a balanced presentation of opposing views and that the promotion of partisan political views is precluded from any aspect of teaching or the life of the school.

There are good opportunities for pupils to develop social responsibilities and acquire leadership experience. Within the school, buddy systems link classes and provide opportunities to play, read and cook together. Recycling materials is a long-established part of school life, and each class has a composting box for any food waste from snacks. Classes regularly prepare lunches for themselves and staff, or for the whole school. Pupils in circle time have opportunity to determine the direction of the school and take responsibility for managing some of the improvements such as making playtime resources. The curriculum supports the links between classes. Classes 7 and 8 are responsible for growing and harvesting rushes in the school grounds. This is followed by Class 9 pupils using

the willows for basket weaving. The range of activities also supports personal, social, health and economic education which is good. Class 11 is building a shelter in the grounds for the kindergarten. Fund raising is supplemented by budgeting for catering and other activities. In the Upper School discussions on e-safety lessons have embraced healthy living issues, including sexual awareness. This wide range of activities and the high quality of pastoral support enables the pupils to become caring and sympathetic young people contributing successfully to the school and to wider society. Day to day interactions strongly support pupils' understanding of right and wrong and aids their excellent self-awareness and reflective qualities. Pupils' behaviour in school is exemplary. There is very little unacceptable behaviour recorded and none evident during the inspection.

Pupils receive good, impartial careers information, guidance and advice in a timely manner. Pupils are given opportunities to think about their gifts and talents and how these might be best channelled through future learning and employment opportunities. An external careers advisor provides sessions, including individual meetings, for all Upper School pupils and they also have a week of work experience which pupils can identify for themselves through contacting local establishments, with support from school staff.

3. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS' WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY

Welfare, health and safety is good. The staff look after, care for and safeguard pupils well. Pupils say that the staff are very accessible. They have excellent relationships with their teachers and guardians, who act as tutors in the Upper School. Every student has a personal tutor assigned to monitor their progress and general well-being. The strength of these relationships, combined with the school's effective implementation of policies and procedures, ensures that pupils' welfare needs are met.

The safeguarding team has received appropriate training and understand their responsibilities, including those for preventing radicalisation. The daily routines for keeping pupils safe work effectively. Concerns are clearly recorded and acted upon speedily, including where necessary any referrals to the local children's safeguarding board. Staff knowledge takes account of the new duties expressed in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016. Appropriate checks are made on all staff, including those in the kindergarten before they are employed at the school. This includes seeking references and making the required disclosure and barring checks. A good level of training is provided by the trustees for those staff involved in recruitment and in the maintenance of the single central record. Staff consider they are well supported by trustees and the management group in implementing their responsibilities to keep pupils safe.

The school has appropriate policies for computer use and e-safety which are aligned to local and national expectations. There are a few staff with recent training in e-safety. Whilst this is sufficient to provide guidance to others this has not been made a requirement of all staff. Advice on e-safety is provided for all parents, including those of the youngest classes. There is structured teaching of e-safety for all pupils. The school has an effective behaviour and anti-bullying policy. There have been no serious behaviour incidents recorded this year and

very few over time. Pupils say there is very little bullying and if it does occur it is dealt with quickly. Pupils' high self-esteem combined with their resilience and capacity for resolving issues makes a strong contribution to keeping incidents to a minimum.

The school premises are attractive, well-resourced and are safe. The campus benefits from additional learning spaces. For example, specialist teaching rooms, music rehearsal rooms, two halls and a large and extremely well resourced sports hall. The school also has the use of a large field and numerous outdoor spaces available to pupils at break and lunchtimes. Pupils look after the building well and it is enhanced by the attractive displays of their artwork.

The school's management has ensured compliance with all aspects of welfare, health and safety. The school's arrangements are effective, including for the pupils aged five to seven in the kindergartens. All of the required checks are carried out on the school building and the equipment within it. The potential risk to pupils during activities in school and during visits to places of interest are assessed and appropriate measures are taken to ensure that pupils are safe. Procedures for first aid are all in place and very well organised. Fire precautions and evacuation procedures are monitored regularly by external specialists. The knowledgeable and committed school management group is diligent in responding to any perceived risk.

The admissions and attendance registers are maintained appropriately. However, despite the engaging and diverse curriculum, pupils' attendance is below the national average and a significant minority of pupils are late to school. This disrupts lessons and reduces progress. In spite of the school's efforts to highlight 'good attendance' there are still a high number of unauthorised absences.

4. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management are good. Recent appointments to the senior management group have significantly strengthened the school's capacity for continued and rapid improvement. This is demonstrated well in the high quality and accurate school self-evaluation, and the clarity of roles and accountabilities amongst staff. The group of three managers are highly effective in enabling others to lead; largely because they are experienced leaders themselves but also because they are skilful in communicating the need for development to others. This is seen particularly in the success of the SEND teaching staff and the Upper School guardians in relation to their contribution to pupils' progress. The ability to carry out robust self-evaluation and act on it has ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards. The role of the chair of college is pivotal in ensuring that action once agreed is implemented quickly by staff and reviewed regularly. She is very successful in ensuring that due attention is given both to compliance with the independent school standards and to the development of Steiner pedagogy so that both support one another and lead to school improvement. The development plan addresses the key priorities, but does not yet make clear the cost of developments and how success is measured. The senior management group and trustees work together very

effectively, they regularly review their organisational practices and implement any necessary change. Staff appraisal is now on a secure footing, but the impact of the process has yet to be seen in ensuring greater continuity in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. A wider appreciation of learning from the best is also at an early stage. There is an appetite for improvement evident in greater rigour in lesson planning and an increasing focus on meeting the needs of the pupils' different abilities.

There are good opportunities for continued professional development (CPD), including managing class behaviour and on-line safeguarding training. The school meets the independent school standards for premises and accommodation, information to parents and handling complaints. The school's relationships with parents are very effective with most parents saying that they are happy with all that the school provides. They are highly appreciative of the education manager's presence around the school. However, a few parents feel that they do not always receive enough information about the progress their child is making. Inspectors reviewed the systems in place for reporting pupils' learning and all round development and found these to be frequent and informative.

Governance

The trustees have extensive experience in managing the development of the school and have ensured that the independent school standards and statutory framework for the EYFS is met in full. Trustees work well with the parent body and attend parent meetings. They are skilful at explaining the vision. Trustees have always worked very closely with the college of teachers to ensure they gain a deep insight into the daily workings of the school and have used this knowledge to identify the barriers to improvements. To this end they took the decision to appoint two experienced managers to help them lead the crucial developments in teaching and learning. Their grasp of the strategic vision is excellent and they monitor and evaluate the progress of this through their committees and weekly meetings with the school management group.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS' PROVISION

The overall provision for the EYFS is outstanding. Children make particularly good progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points. Careful planning ensures that the mixed age kindergarten classes meet the needs of all the children, including those with SEND. Children's personal and social development is excellent and they feel safe, secure and happy. The requirements for safeguarding are fully met and the staff have a shared understanding of and responsibility for protecting children. Leadership and management are excellent. The distribution of responsibilities together with shared values and understanding of children's learning and their development have made a major contribution to the continuing success and improvement of the kindergartens' practices.

Leadership and management have high expectations of the children's achievement and their personal, social and emotional development. Classroom management is outstanding. The transition from one activity to another is smooth and maintains the rhythm of the day. Staff appraise each other's classroom practices and provide written comments to assist in further developing their

methodology. Self-evaluation is a major strength of the kindergartens, enabling them to continuously work towards improvement by providing a curriculum which meets the needs and interests of the children and relevant statutory requirements. The children are particularly well prepared for the next stage in their learning. Equality and diversity are promoted effectively. British values are promoted well, with clear expectations of behaviour and respect for the kindergarten's values. Safeguarding arrangements are effective.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding. Staff expect children to realise their best, especially in terms of their behaviour and social development as well as their acquisition of skills and knowledge. Work is underpinned by clear rhythms for the day and the week. The staff know the children very well and this enables assessments to be detailed, informing planning for future activities. The children make good and often outstanding progress. Their excellent speaking and listening skills are particularly well demonstrated during snack times which are orderly and very well managed. Children with SEND have regular reviews. In some cases the recommended action to promote further development does not provide sufficiently specific guidance for the teacher to implement, resulting in an occasional mismatch of expectations. Equality and diversity are promoted well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are strengths of the provision and are outstanding. The kindergarten classes promote a positive attitude which enables the children to be self-confident and successful learners. They are emotionally secure and well behaved. They understand how to keep themselves safe from relevant risks, whilst exercising well and eating healthily. Outdoors, they share activities well, and cooperation is a major feature of their play. The curriculum provides a good range of cultural experiences, including festivals and celebrations.

All children make excellent progress from the different starting points and the great majority meet or exceed the level of development typical for their age. The high quality of resources, indoors and out, serves to challenge the children's development in a positive manner. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Wynstones School			
Address of school:	Church Lane Whaddon Glos. GL4 0UF			
Telephone number:	01452 429225			
Email address:	business@wynstones.com			
Web address	www.wynstones.com			
Proprietor (Chair of Trustees):	Ted Yates			
Person registered with DfE as proprietor under paragraph 20 of Part 4:	Ted Yates			
Chair of College	Marianne Law-Lindberg			
Early Years Manager	Kalihi Hardiman			
DfE Number	916/6031			
Type of school	Independent school			
Annual fees	From £ 4,500 (5 day kindergarten) – £ 9,540 (Class 12)			
Age range of pupils	3-18			
Gender of pupils	Mixed			
Total number on roll	full-time		part-time	
Number of children in registered nursery				
Number of children under-5	Boys:	12	Girls:	8
Number of compulsory school age pupils	Boys:	107	Girls:	145
Number of post-compulsory pupils	Boys:	7	Girls:	6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational need	Boys:	0	Girls:	0
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	Boys:	4	Girls:	3

This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust, and members of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship or Cognita group. The report is available from the School Inspection Service website: www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk.