

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)

School Context

Wetheringsett Manor School is a co-educational independent day school for pupils aged 7–18, currently with 100 pupils on roll. All pupils have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), with primary needs relating to SEMH and ASD, alongside a wide range of complex additional needs including medical, neurological and mental health diagnoses. The school serves four local authorities (Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Hertfordshire) and has a significantly higher-than-average proportion of looked-after children.

The school is set within a converted manor house in 17.5 acres of grounds in rural Suffolk. Pupils typically arrive following extended periods out of education (average 2.4 years). The school operates a high staff-to-pupil ratio (typically 1:3) and delivers an integrated therapeutic and academic curriculum.

There is a continued focus on vocational learning and life skills work throughout all key stages which are designed to prepare pupils for the wider world.



The main manor building



Key Stage 2



Animal Care



Sports Hall



Therapy provision



Recreation area

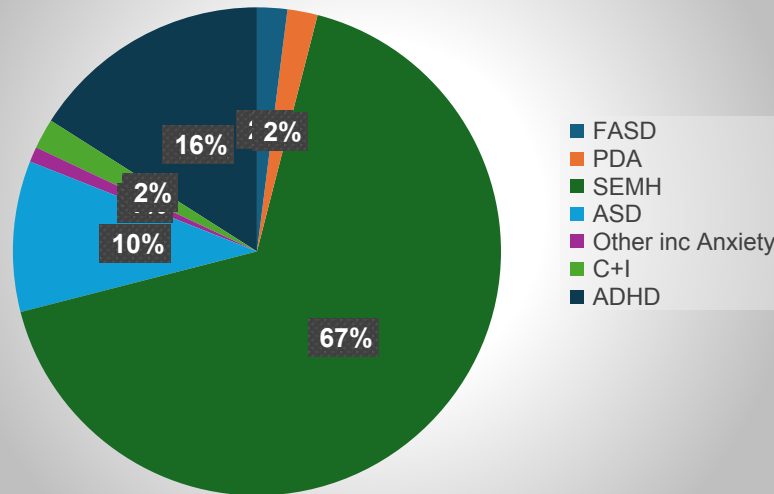
Cohort breakdown

The needs of pupils at Wetheringsett are varied and in relation to support required, continually changing. Staff have become very adept at developing their understanding of these needs and have created positive working relationships with pupils so they can thrive. Although primary need is stated it is also vital we remember that our pupils have a co-occurrence of conditions which can influence them on a daily basis.

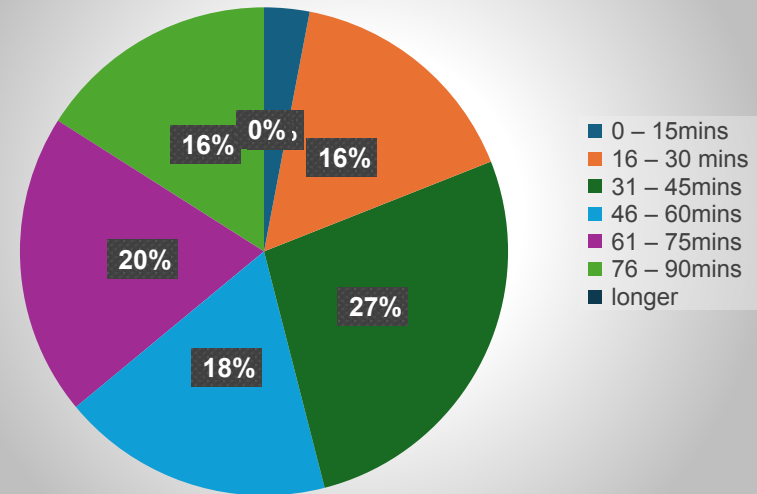
We recognise that all pupils have differing needs at any given time of the day and understand that travel, is a huge factor in determining how pupils arrive at school. Early starts and lack of breakfast prior to leaving their house is supplemented by a soft school start at 8:30 with breakfast available to all. This has seen engagement from 9am improve across all key stages. (SiP report Feb 2026; [SIP Note of Visit Wetheringsett February 2026.docx \(1\).pdf](#)).

SEN Primary need %						
FASD	PDA	SEMH	ASD	Other inc Anxiety	C+I	ADHD
2	2	67	10	1	2	16
Clinical needs				LA support		
SpLD	OT	Psych	CBT	LAC	Split home	Fostered / Other
14	20	28	14	6	28	4
Social care need						
Domestic Violence	ACE's	CIN	FSP	CP	Social services	Other
5	7	2	2	1	8	0
Travel distance						
0 – 15mins	16 – 30 mins	31 – 45mins	46 – 60mins	61 – 75mins	76 – 90mins	longer
3	16	27	18	20	16	0

Primary need



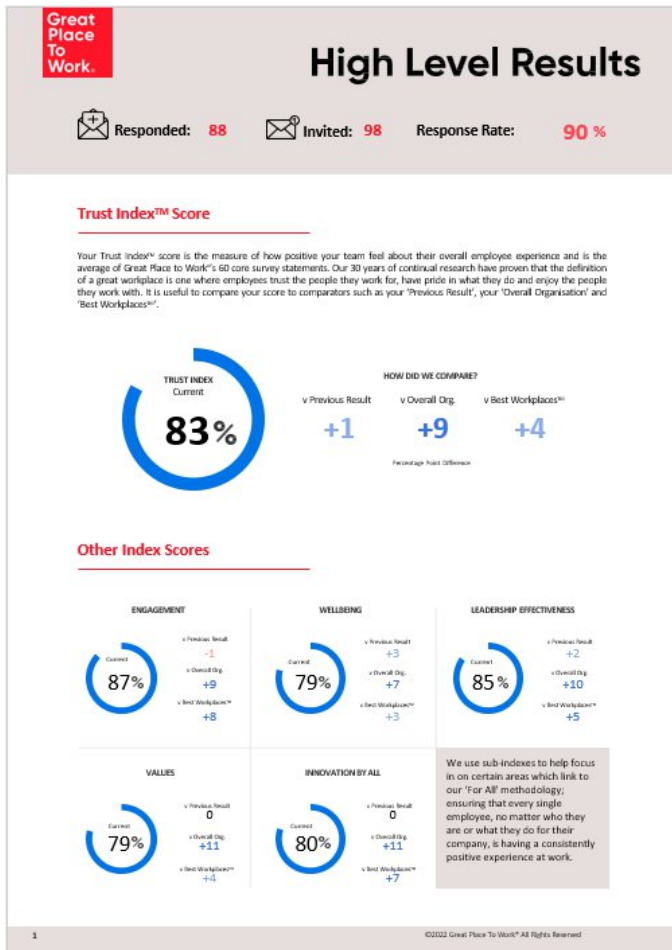
Travel distance to school



1. Leadership and Management

Strengths

- Leaders demonstrate a clear and accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness and areas for development, supported by robust self-evaluation and external validation (Ofsted, QA visits, SIP reviews).
- Governance is effective, offering strong challenges and support. Governors have a detailed understanding of safeguarding, quality of education and pupil outcomes.
- Leadership capacity has been strengthened through a newly implemented middle leadership structure across key stages, improving accountability, communication and workload management.
- Recruitment and deployment of staff are closely aligned to pupils' needs, including expansion of therapeutic provision and vocational leadership.
- Leaders ensure compliance with the Independent School Standards, including curriculum, safeguarding, staffing and premises requirements.
- Staff are well supported through a strong well-being culture, including a four-day working week, structured CPD pathways and mental health support.
- Leaders track pupil destinations carefully; all recent leavers sustained education, employment or training placements.



Section 1: Executive Summary - Management Team View ONLY	
Risk Profile Score - to assist with the suggested areas of improvement, the following risk ratings are used:	
Outstanding (90 - 100%)	
Good (80 - 89%)	
Requires improvement (70 - 79%)	
Inadequate (1 - 69%)	
Your audit score is:	96%
Comments:	
<p>Mark, Andrew and their team were very welcoming and their knowledge and detailed records made the whole experience a pleasure. The school continues to expand, and facilities and staffing are actively involved with the management of health, safety and fire taking account of the vulnerability of the pupils they are responsible for.</p> <p>Refurbishment work was undertaken in 2020 NFA Group Contractor McBans 26 Finsbury Square London and there are still issues and concerns being raised by the school regarding the final refurbishment and condition of some areas of the works around fire doors, escape routes etc. During the visit it was not clear what were the protected escape routes and there was an over use of fire doors one set even being fitted to a general store cupboard.</p> <p>The facilities team are responsible for the majority of the property and site compliance and maintenance. They have specific risk assessments for their tasks, equipment. Information, instruction and training is provided as required. Risk assessments are updated periodically as agreed with the Headmaster and Committee or significant change or following an incident.</p> <p>Curriculum areas include vehicle maintenance, woodworking and beauty, with skilled staff recruited to ensure these operate to a high standard. All department heads are responsible for preparing their own risk assessment relevant to the tasks, equipment, substances they use and are outside of the FM's control. Although the Headmaster and FM are always there to support the production of them.</p> <p>The following actions from the last H&S Audit dated 3rd December 2024 have been completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wet chemical fire extinguisher removed from kitchen. - Vehicular and Pedestrian Segregation in car park - new one way system and additional pedestrian walkways had been completed and were working well but FM continue to monitor in case further changes are required. <p>The final action from the previous H&S Audit had not been completed and this was identified during the visit and is within this years audit actions.</p> <p>The following areas were not inspected on the day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cottage - Gym and Sports Hall - Majority of Grounds other than those to and from the separate buildings, car park, assembly point. 	

Every year the company engages with the great place to work survey (GPTW). We have consistently scored above 80% and this year we recorded an 83% score. This was slightly down on the previous year (87%) which we attribute to several staff applying for internal promotions which had a limited head count, causing some disappointment, and also a high number of new starters who answered "neither agree or disagree" to questions. This affects the positive score percentage although these marks are not negative.

We also have a 96% health and safety audit score with all actions from the report being completed within the same term.

Areas for Development

- Further expansion of senior leadership capacity to support continued school growth and increased pupil numbers.
- Mentoring for MLT to enable greater autonomy in terms of organizational daily running of the provision.
- Continued refinement of performance data, particularly in KS2, to strengthen benchmarking against national standards.
- Continued analysis of inclusion data to strengthen pupils' skill and understanding by meeting a larger proportion of their individual needs.

2. Quality of Education, Training and Recreation

Strengths

- The curriculum is broad, balanced and personalised, meeting the ages, aptitudes and needs of pupils with SEND and EHCPs.
- Academic provision is carefully sequenced and aligned with EHCP outcomes, supported by provision mapping and the phased implementation of Evidence for Learning (EfL).
- A strong vocational offer complements academic pathways, enabling pupils to achieve meaningful qualifications.
- Teaching is consistently strong, with staff adapting pedagogy effectively for pupils' complex needs. The mantra "I do, we do, you do" is prevalent across all areas of the school.
- Therapeutic approaches are embedded across classrooms.
- Baseline assessments and CAT4 data inform individualised learning pathways and targeted interventions.
- Pupils benefit from specialist teaching across a wide range of subjects, including practical and creative disciplines.
- Careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) is accurate, timely and supports informed decision-making.



Catering



Construction



Forest school

Areas for Development

- Adaptation of pedagogy across all subjects to fully embed the agreed learning model (“I do, we do, you do”) with all staff, not explicitly teaching staff.
- Completion of whole-school Efl implementation to establish a single, integrated monitoring system.



Mechanics



Science

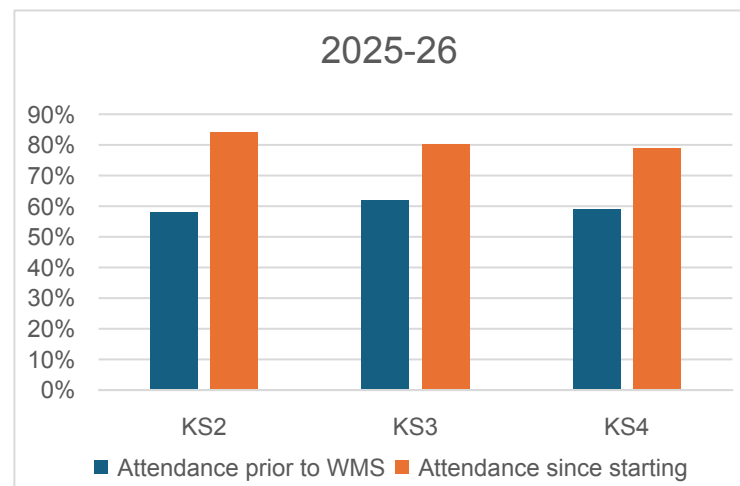
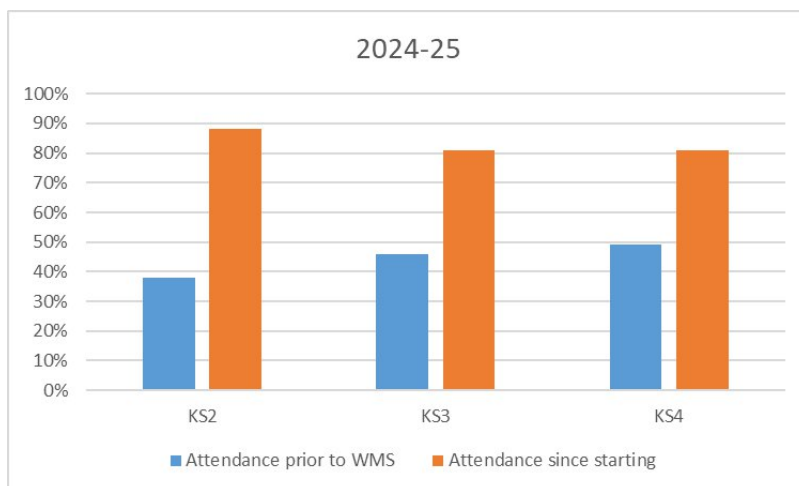


Hair and Beauty

3. Pupils' Physical and Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Strengths

- A comprehensive therapeutic curriculum operates alongside academic provision, including OT, SALT and psychotherapy.
- Pupils are well supported through a key worker system and a strong ‘team around the child approach. This is supported by weekly meetings to ensure best working practice.
- Attendance is strong compared to national averages for similar settings, particularly given pupils’ prior disengagement from education. <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england>
- Pupils report feeling safe, supported and listened to, as evidenced by pupil surveys and school council feedback.
- A highly personalised rewards and behaviour support system enables pupils to regulate emotions and manage behaviour successfully.
- The school’s ‘Wetheringsett 101’ programme promotes independence, resilience and life skills.
- Opportunities exist allowing pupils access to life experiences such as concerts or national sporting events that they can attend.
- External visitors come in to school to help support with bespoke needs of pupils and onsite therapy team, work with all external agencies to support pupils needs.



Attendance compares favourably when examining prior pupil placements and Placements at Wetheringsett although we have started to see a slight decline in school attendance. The impact of COVID linking to EBSA now more commonplace in pupils across all provisions. We still compare favourably with other provisions. <https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>

Parents surveys are carried out annually, although feedback is recorded throughout the school year. The feedback is overwhelmingly positive, and we are thrilled that so many parents engage with the school on such a consistent basis. We still record all other feedback on internal monitoring system info tracker.

WMS Parent and Carer Survey Results July 2025



Responded that WMS supports their student to have good attendance...



Responded that they feel their student is making good academic progress.



responded that the school covers Careers well and introduces their student to multiple opportunities Post-16.

“

Wetheringsett Manor has been an absolute god send for my son. After 4 long years out of full time education he is finally able to thrive and grow. He actually has friends and a best friend, he is learning and showing interest in education.

”

There isn't one thing I could suggest need improving at Wetheringsett, just keep doing what you are doing. My son is proof that it works and works very well. From once not feeling like the future would be very bright we are now able to see a positive future full of dreams and adventures and that is all down to the hard work and dedication of all staff at Wetheringsett



parents/carers say they feel supported by the school.



reponded that they feel their student is safe and well cared for at WMS.



feel that their student is listened to at WMS.

From these results, we know that we have to do better with communication with some of you- we're on it.

I can't think of anything that needs to improve. My child has come on loads and gets all the support needed. Always kept up to date with things that are happening. Can't thank the school enough for how far my child has come on since starting at Wetheringsett Manor.

The school has been incredible for my son, He works to gain points and tries his best. He feels supported by teaching staff that know him well and just what he needs. They informed me promptly when they noticed a decrease in mental health and actively supported and encouraged open communication around this. The curriculum offer is diverse and he has enjoyed many trips and rewards, something he was never invited to whilst at primary.

Data is accurate as of July 7 2025. 'Neither agree nor disagree' statements were not included in percentages.

Areas for Development

- Further development of pupil leadership opportunities, including chairing EHCP reviews.
- Continued evolution of reward systems to deepen intrinsic motivation through school council.

4. Pupils' Social and Economic Education and Contribution to Society

Strengths

- The personal development curriculum is extensive and matches pupils' needs, including PSHE, RSE, citizenship and independence skills.
- Work experience continues to go from strength to strength with 74% of pupils in Key Stage 4 attending at least 1 day a week's placement. In two cases leading to apprenticeships.
- Pupils have access to enrichment opportunities such as Duke of Edinburgh, community engagement, trips and residential experiences.
- Strong emphasis on preparation for adulthood, including independent travel and vocational pathways.
- Pupils actively contribute to school life through school council and consultation opportunities.
- Alumni page to celebrate past pupil achievement post Wetheringsett.

WETHERINGSETT MANOR SCHOOL

National Careers Week

02/03/26 - 07/03/26

Form Time

Students took part in a series of short, engaging careers activities during form time, designed to spark curiosity about future pathways. These sessions helped students reflect on their strengths, explore new industries, and build confidence in planning their next steps.

Trips

Students took part in the **Norfolk Festival of Knowledge** trip, enjoying a day of hands-on workshops, inspiring talks, and opportunities to explore new ideas and future pathways. It was a brilliant chance to experience learning beyond the classroom and discover emerging careers in a lively, interactive setting.

Careers Talks

Students took part in some inspiring careers talks:

- **Dr Fiona** offered a fascinating insight into her work as an **NHS Prison Nurse**, sharing the realities of delivering healthcare in secure settings.
- **Sgt Sully** introduced students to the varied and disciplined world of the **RAF Police**, highlighting the skills and opportunities within military policing.
- **All Basketball coach Faye Greaves** rounded off the week with an energetic session on coaching, performance, and pathways into elite sport, giving students a motivating look at careers in the sporting world.

Work Experience

Throughout the week, students took part in a wide range of work experience placements, including **Feline Cat Care**, **Rural Hair & Co**, **Dog Squad**, **RLA Commercial**, **Hammonds**, and **Grange Farm Mechanics**.

These placements offered hands-on insight into animal care, hairdressing, mechanics, customer service, and agricultural engineering, giving students valuable real-world experience and a taste of different career paths.

World Book Day

Students enjoyed a unique World Book Day experience with **former Trailors contestant Fay Greaves**. In the lead-up to the event, Fay worked closely with pupils to build confidence in speaking and listening through drama, debate, and role-play inspired by the show. On the day itself, students took part in their own 'round table' discussions, using clues, body language, and persuasive arguments to identify the 'traitor', making a fun, high-energy celebration of storytelling, communication, and critical thinking.

INCLUSION & CAREERS

Inclusion Updates

What a fantastic term for Inclusion and Interventionals! With the introduction of Lexia and Literacy sessions reading and spelling ages have improved immensely.

More pupils are now attending intervention sessions to support with improving Literacy, Numeracy and becoming more socially confident with the support of ELSA sessions.

Pupils competing in mini-marathons, Gym sessions and animal care placements have proven positive to improve attendance and engagement.

The student council have now fundraised over £1800 and have chosen to donate £500 of this to Cancer research.

Many more exciting plans for next term to look forward to!

Careers Updates

It has been a busy term for Careers, with a number of visits designed to inspire students and introduce them to different sectors.

Students enjoyed a tour of H&L Chocolate Makers, where they learnt about food production before taking part in a chocolate bar making workshop. They also visited the Regal Cinema to explore careers within the film and cinema industry.

In school, we welcomed several visitors including an NHS prison nurse, Dr Fiona, the Norfolk Magistrates, and a local farmer who brought along a tractor for students to sit in.

We have also had several students taking part in work experience placements across a wide range of areas, including hairdressing, mechanics, feline care, farming and working with the dog squad. We are incredibly proud of how our students represent both themselves and Wetheringsett in the workplace.

Recently we celebrated National Careers Week with a variety of events helping students explore different career pathways, including a trip to the Norfolk Festival of Knowledge.

Alongside this, students have been engaging in fantastic lessons and workshops across the school. Highlights have included brilliant engagement with Lexia and our Trailors-style World Book Day event, where students used clues to identify the staff 'traitor' while developing their persuasive writing skills.





101 DAY

What is 101?

At Wetheringsett Manor, we believe every young person should leave school with the practical skills and confidence they need for life beyond the classroom. Our 101 programme is built around **"101 Things You Should Know Before You Leave School"**, a carefully designed list of everyday essentials, real-world tasks and confidence-building experiences. **Led by our 101 Lead, Ash**, the programme runs throughout the year as part of our wider life-skills curriculum.


Why We Teach It:

The aim of 101 is to help students **grow in independence, resilience and problem-solving** by giving them opportunities to try new things in a safe, supportive environment.

From basic first aid and sewing to map-reading, teamwork and communication, the programme blends practical skills with personal development. It's a core part of how we prepare pupils for adulthood, further education and the world of work.

101 Day:

This term we held our annual 101 Day, where students spent a full day rotating through hands-on activities linked to the programme. **Pupils took part in tent-building, sewing, first aid, employer talks, trying new foods, planning routes with maps, scavenger hunts and more.** The day was organised by Ash, who created a fun, energetic timetable that encouraged teamwork, curiosity and real-world learning. It was a brilliant celebration of practical skills and one of the highlights of the term.





<file:///X:/2025-26/Governance/Term%203%20report/Ap%202%20-%20Spring%20Newsletter%20Final.pdf>

Areas for Development

- Enhanced communication of pupils' achievements and qualifications through the school website.

5. Safeguarding

Strengths

- Safeguarding arrangements are effective and fully compliant with statutory guidance.
- Leaders and staff are well trained, vigilant and confident in identifying and reporting concerns.
- Clear systems are in place for recording, monitoring and responding to safeguarding issues, supported by the Sleuth system.
- Strong multi-agency working ensures timely and appropriate support for vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and know whom to approach for help.

Areas for Development

- Continued development of multi-agency engagement and increased challenge to external agencies where appropriate.

Overall Effectiveness

Wetheringsett Manor School provides a highly effective and nurturing educational environment in which pupils with complex needs thrive academically, socially and emotionally. Leadership is strong and aspirational, the curriculum is well designed and personalised, and safeguarding is robust. The school is well placed to continue its journey towards excellence as it grows and develops further.

Review Date: April 2026

Next Review Date: July 2026