

St Andrew's College

Lowther Adolescent Services, Billing Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN1 5DG

Inspection dates

22–24 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Sixth form provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Students make exceptionally strong progress from their starting points because the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.
- Senior leaders and staff have an excellent understanding of how to motivate and inspire students who experience significant personal barriers to successful learning.
- The college provides appropriate individual timetables for every student based on an accurate assessment of their starting points on entry. Students enjoy their learning and state that teaching staff understand their needs.
- Post-16 students make excellent progress from their diverse starting points. The most able students are making strong progress with their A-level studies.
- Leaders and managers have established an outstanding culture of success. Through effective teamwork, they ensure consistency in the high quality of students' experiences at the college.
- Leaders and staff enable vulnerable students to keep safe and successfully address their significant emotional and social difficulties.
- Students' confidence and trust in the college staff contribute strongly to their outstanding personal development, including their behaviour, and their ability to make positive choices about their future pathways.
- Senior leaders, supported strongly by governors, implement excellent arrangements to check continuously on the quality of the college's provision and to secure positive improvements.
- Leaders' analysis of students' progress demonstrates the excellent progress they are making but does not compare this clearly with national averages.
- Occasionally, staff do not encourage students, as required by the school's policy, to take sufficient responsibility for fully developing their oral and written answers.
- The proprietor and senior leaders have ensured that the school meets all of the independent school standards.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reinforce students' learning consistently across all subjects and teaching groups through appropriate opportunities to discuss, reflect and take responsibility for the quality of their own work, as required by the school's policy.
- Ensure that the analysis and reporting of students' achievements celebrates their progress from their starting points compared with national benchmarks.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The proprietor and leaders have ensured that the college meets all the independent school standards.
- The school's leaders work effectively with the proprietor to create an ambitious culture that demonstrates high expectations of staff and students. They demonstrate an uncompromising commitment and considerable success in improving life chances for vulnerable and disadvantaged students. Leaders and staff focus continuously on improving outcomes for the whole child.
- The excellent quality of relationships within the college and across the multidisciplinary service ensures that all staff share a common understanding of the individual challenges faced by each student. Subject leaders develop a secure understanding of the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility, through systematic monitoring and effective review.
- Leaders have consistently high expectations that all students will experience success. This permeates the excellent approaches to learning that the college provides. Teachers are motivated and trusted to take responsibility and to innovate through the development of the curriculum and the quality of their teaching.
- Staff are unanimous in their view that the college is well led and managed and that they are proud to be members of staff at the college. This common sense of purpose and commitment is evident throughout the day-to-day activities of all leaders and staff.
- Leaders continuously refine their approaches to the analysis of students' achievement. They successfully address any underperformance in particular subjects or among any groups of students. The college enables vulnerable students to overcome very significant barriers to learning and to demonstrate substantial progress in their outcomes.
- The personalised curriculum provided for each student contributes exceptionally well to students' behaviour and welfare, in addition to their personal development. The college provides each student with a personalised timetable that reflects their current stage of achievement. Staff challenge all students to succeed with appropriate accredited courses.
- Leaders and teachers promote fundamental British values through a highly effective, systematic and planned programme of activities. They ensure that all aspects of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contribute to their readiness to take their place in the adult community.
- Leaders and staff share a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and overcoming barriers to learning and success. This is demonstrated throughout the college's educational provision.
- Leaders and teachers have an excellent understanding of the achievements of individual students. They do not always analyse and present progress information in a way that demonstrates the extent of students' progress from their starting points, compared with national benchmarks.

Governance

- Governors provide systematic challenge to college leaders and staff. They demonstrate high expectations for what the college can achieve.
- Governors have a secure understanding of all aspects of the college provision and outcomes. Their meetings' structure and effective reporting by the headteacher provide regular analysis of the effectiveness of the education provided.
- Governors support strong internal systems for self-evaluation and improvement planning. They promote and secure an ethos of continuous improvement.
- Governors oversee an effective programme for the management of staff performance. They respond positively to recommendations from the headteacher to support the further training and professional development of staff arising from the college's effective system of staff appraisal.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff work effectively and cooperatively across the multidisciplinary service to ensure that all students are safe.
- Students state that the staff listen to them and understand their individual needs. Exemplary protection, support and ambition for vulnerable students are at the heart of the college's vision and actions.
- The college safeguarding policy is comprehensive and has regard for the latest statutory guidance. A copy is available to download from the college website. All aspects of the policy are implemented and monitored to an extremely high standard.
- Arrangements for the recruitment and training of staff, together with secure oversight of all aspects of premises and fire safety, contribute effectively to students' well-being and safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers provide excellent support and challenge to students to enable them to learn and achieve effectively. All staff demonstrate high expectations of how students will respond and of what they can achieve in their learning. As a result, students make strong progress from their different starting points.
- Students are motivated and excited by a broad range of imaginative, well-planned approaches to teaching. Their attitudes to learning are consistently positive due to the exemplary teaching they receive. Post-16 students in a business studies lesson responded positively to the challenge of testing a production line method against a single specialist producer, when making Christmas cards.
- Teachers respond flexibly to the learning needs of individual students. They provide tasks and activities which build continuously on each student's previous successes.
- Students make rapid progress because teachers make maximum effective use of available learning time. Students learn how to explain what they have learned and to apply the skills developed in their lessons. Students in a science lesson were able to explain refraction and convergence of light using different lenses. The teacher challenged them with high-quality questions which stimulated them to reconsider and reshape their oral answers.

- Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and an excellent understanding of how to use this in ways which enable each individual student to engage and enjoy their learning. Students in a post-16 science lesson developed their understanding of how the earth's atmosphere is changing, using stimulating video clips, and received continuous reinforcement by their teacher of the essential subject-related vocabulary.
- Staff understand, and respond effectively to, the learning needs of the most able students. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge effectively to provide learning experiences that enable students to make strong progress towards appropriate GCSE results in a number of subjects.
- Staff use an internationally recognised structured approach to the teaching of students with autism. Students learn to communicate effectively, to interpret and understand instructions, and to take account of the feelings of others. They make excellent progress because of the sensitivity, patience and high expectations demonstrated by staff.
- Teachers use high-quality oral questioning to probe students' understanding effectively during lessons. They allow students to reflect and consider their responses before contributing to informative discussions.
- Students experience an effective balance between support from teachers and the requirement to accept responsibility for their own learning. They learn how to work independently and to evaluate the quality of their individual achievements. In a mathematics lesson, students made rapid progress in working out how to measure the surface area of a box because the teacher required them to take responsibility, to work out problems for themselves and to justify their decisions.
- Teachers assess students' progress accurately. They identify students' successes and continuously advise them about how they may improve their work. They ensure that students recognise their successes and understand what they need to do next by appropriate oral and written feedback.
- Students develop the skills that they require to enable them to reintegrate into mainstream education or to move on successfully to further education or employment. The college provides excellent opportunities for students to take part in work experience within a variety of sheltered settings on the St Andrew's site. Two students, for example, prepared to operate a coffee bar at a school event by visiting a café, which is open to the public, and gathering information about prices and popular drinks. At the same time, they successfully developed their social skills in a public setting.
- Occasionally, teachers do not provide sufficient time for students to organise their own ideas, to present their understanding orally, and to take sufficient responsibility for their own learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The college's work to promote students' personal development and welfare is outstanding. College leaders and staff plan and manage individual students' programmes that develop their skills for independence and reintegration very effectively.
- The multidisciplinary approach at St Andrew's brings together clinical and educational

staff who work together exceptionally well to address students' needs. Relationships between staff and students are consistently strong. The great majority of students state that they enjoy school. This represents outstanding progress in their self-esteem and ability to cooperate with others.

- Students develop a broad range of skills that will help them to contribute effectively to wider society through their work experience, charity work and volunteering.
- Through participation in nationally accredited awards, students enhance their understanding of rights and responsibilities within the wider community. They make outstanding progress in their development of skills of cooperation, collaboration, resilience and teamwork.
- Students are kept safe and they state that they feel safe. The college, for example, implements robust procedures and vigilance to keep students safe online, together with dedicated programmes that enable them to develop healthy lifestyles. The secure setting protects students from external threats and enables them to trust the adults in their daily lives.
- Students develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally through a broad range of opportunities, including external trips and visits. Students also have opportunities to mix with visitors from different faiths and cultures. They are encouraged to develop their spiritual understanding by exploring ideas, feelings and meaning through art and music.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Leaders and teachers have high expectations of students' conduct and behaviour. As a result, the college is calm and well disciplined.
- Vulnerable students with acute needs demonstrate outstanding, sustained improvements in their behaviour and attendance. There are no cases of persistent absenteeism.
- The college code of conduct focuses on developing mutual respect and students' success in this regard is evident throughout the college. Students respect their teachers and other adults working alongside them in classrooms. Students do not distract others or interfere in their ability to learn effectively.
- Students are polite and cooperative; they behave well and demonstrate persistence and resilience in their approach to learning.
- There have been no incidents of serious misbehaviour, bullying or unsafe practice within the college setting since the time of the previous inspection.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Students make exceptional progress from mostly low starting points, often well below the average for their age. They develop knowledge, understanding and skills rapidly across a wide range of subjects.
- Students make substantial progress in English and mathematics and steadily close the gaps in their learning resulting from disruptions to their previous education. The extent of students' progress is mostly exceptional, given the individual emotional, social and mental health conditions that all students are addressing.
- Disadvantaged students and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities

make sustained, better than average progress in English, mathematics and a range of additional subjects.

- Students with established levels of reading, read fluently and with understanding.
- The most able students achieve GCSE results which demonstrate excellent progress from their starting points. A small number of students have moved on from their GCSE successes to study A-level subjects at the college.
- Overall, students make outstanding progress across a range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), art and physical education. Progress in mathematics and science has been stronger than in English, although recent GCSE results demonstrate good improvements in English.
- In addition to success in external examinations, students achieve creditable success in sports leadership, swimming, outdoor education and food hygiene certificates.
- Students make strong progress from a variety of starting points, including those working towards unit awards, entry-level certificates or GCSE.
- The college prepares students exceptionally well for the next stage of their education, training or employment. A large majority return to non-secure settings on leaving St Andrews. Others move on to a variety of sheltered or secure adult environments.
- The college achieves its aim of enabling students to move forward in their lives through education.

Sixth form provision

Outstanding

- The college provides post-16 students with excellent opportunities to make up for time lost in previous settings because of their complex barriers to learning. Their individual timetables ensure that they are able to complete qualifications at levels suited to their starting points. The text in earlier sections of this report applies to students across the full age range of the college.
- The small number of the most able post-16 students are making good progress with recently introduced A-level courses in English, mathematics, statistics, biology, psychology and art. These courses build effectively on students' earlier achievements in GCSE subjects. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to enable students to extend their understanding and independent research skills in their individually chosen specialist subjects.

School details

Unique reference number	135785
DfE registration number	928/6071
Inspection number	10020808

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Secure adolescent mental health provision
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	64
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	St Andrew's Healthcare
Chair	Peter Winslow
Headteacher	Richard Walker
Annual fees (day pupils)	£Nil (inclusive within placement)
Telephone number	01604 614331
Website	www.standrewshealthcare.co.uk
Email address	college@standrew.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–29 November 2013

Information about this school

- St Andrew's College is situated in the grounds of St Andrew's Healthcare, which is an independent, charitable, mental health facility in Northampton.
- The college provides education in a secure setting in two buildings, Lowther and Malcolm Arnold, which are attached to nine secure residential wards for male and female adolescent patients.

- The adolescent services provide mental healthcare including therapy, psychiatric nursing and residential care. These services are registered and inspected separately by the Care Quality Commission.
- The students who attend the college range in age from 13 to 19 years and are placed by the National Health Services across the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.
- Students have complex mental health conditions and challenging behaviour. All students have a care plan equivalent to an education, health and care plan.
- The great majority of students are from White British backgrounds. Fourteen students are in the care of their local authorities.
- The college does not currently use the services of any alternative education providers.
- The college is due to move shortly to new purpose-built premises within the grounds of St Andrew's Healthcare.
- The previous inspection of the college was in 2013.
- The college aims 'to inspire young people to move forward in their lives through education'.

Information about this inspection

- The college provides all students, including those of sixth-form age, with individualised timetables that take account of gaps in their previous education. All students have access to a range of qualifications suited to their individual starting points. For this reason, the text and judgements throughout this report refer to students across the full age range of the college.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 19 lessons, covering 10 subjects, across the full age range of the college. They scrutinised examples of students' work in a variety of subjects.
- The inspectors had discussions with the proprietor's chief executive officer, the headteacher, senior leaders and teachers. In addition, they considered responses to inspection questionnaires submitted by 12 members of staff.
- The inspectors considered 55 responses to Ofsted's annual questionnaire for students. There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire for these to be taken into consideration.
- The inspectors scrutinised a number of school policies, procedures and records in order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

David Young, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Fielding	Ofsted Inspector

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