

St Andrew's

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, and under the Care Standards Act 2000 having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

St Andrew's College was founded in 1976 as an independent college and is located on two sites in Cambridge. It is privately owned and provides a range of educational courses for male and female students aged from 15 to 24 years. Boarding accommodation is provided in five boarding houses and with host families. Currently there are 119 students on roll, of whom 12 are of compulsory school age. The vast majority of the students are from overseas, including many from China and the Far East. Students also come from many other countries across Europe, Africa and the Middle East. There are three students funded by a local authority. No student has a statement of special educational needs.

The college aims to create an academic environment in which students can achieve the best examination results. At the same time, it values qualities of responsibility, cooperation, thoughtfulness and determination. The college sees its major role as preparing overseas students both academically and socially to benefit from higher education in the United Kingdom.

Context of the inspection

The education provision of the college and the boarding were last inspected in October 2011. The college was judged to be providing a good education for its students and the overall effectiveness of the boarding provision was satisfactory. The college met almost all of the education regulations but there were some weaknesses in the implementation of the national minimum standards for boarding, resulting in a number of national minimum standards not being met. As a result, the college produced an action plan which was evaluated on 31 January 2012. It was judged to be broadly satisfactory but required improvement in a few areas. A revised action plan dated 27 February 2012 was re-submitted by the college and evaluated on 23 March 2012. The action taken by the college was deemed to be satisfactory within a satisfactory timescale, although implementation was not seen. This is the first monitoring inspection to check its implementation.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The college has made good progress in rectifying the education and boarding national minimum standard failures identified at the time of the last inspection in October 2011. All education and boarding regulatory requirements are met.

The inspection in October 2011 found that the arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders were not robust enough. As a result, regulation 8 was not met. The policy for the administration of medicines was not fully implemented, particularly with regard to the storage and recording of medication and homely remedies. In its action plan the college proposed to write an effective administration of medicines policy and provide all boarding houses with lockable cupboards in which students place all medicines securely. Weaknesses have been suitably resolved. The policy for the administration of medicines had been revised and appropriate medicine records are kept. In all five boarding houses visited, lockable wall mounted medical cabinets were in use.

At the time of the last inspection the college completed fire safety risk assessments, but these were not reviewed regularly, and did not provide a sufficient basis to ensure that the required standards were met. In its action plan the college proposed to complete up-to-date fire risk assessments with a schedule of fire safety work for each of the premises. Improved fire safety measures now exist. Comprehensive fire risk assessments for the premises and accommodation are in place and are regularly reviewed to further improve fire safety.

At the last inspection, no recent safety checks had been carried out on portable electrical appliances. The college planned to bring about improvement. Regular testing of all portable appliances is carried out by a competent person and the outcomes of testing are formally recorded. Education regulations 8 and 13, and national minimum standards 3.1, 3.4, 6.1 and 7.1 are now met.

In October 2011, while boarders were generally pleased with the quality of their accommodation, they wanted more storage space, lockable furniture and more privacy in some twin rooms. To remedy these shortcomings, the college proposed to improve storage facilities; equip all rooms in the boarding houses with secure lockable storage for personal belongings and improve shower facilities to improve privacy. The college has successfully rectified the accommodation weaknesses. All students have new secure storage boxes which they can use if they wish. Improved shower facilities in five twin rooms now ensure students' privacy and there is adequate storage for boarders' belongings. Education regulation 23(t) and national minimum standard 5.1 and 9.3 are met.

At the time of the last inspection, a rolling programme was in place for replacing worn furniture, although responses to requests and attention to maintenance issues was sometimes slow. To bring about improvement the college proposed to introduce a new procedure for the ordering of replacement furniture; to keep students

informed as to when furniture and fittings would be replaced, and speed up maintenance by wardens. The new system is working effectively and weaknesses have been rectified. National minimum standard 5.2 is met.

In October 2011, inspectors found that the recently introduced restraint policy had not been discussed with staff, nor had they received guidance or training in its practical implementation. In its action plan the college proposed to write and implement a new policy on the introduction and sign-off of new documentation. The revised procedure has been implemented effectively. Staff now sign a record that they have read and understood all new documents. All staff have received appropriate training in aspects of restraint such as de-escalation techniques. All wardens report that there has been no use of physical restraint since the last inspection. National minimum standard 12.2 is now met.

At the last inspection there was some exemplary practice in the implementation of policies and procedures, particularly for child protection and the recruitment of staff. However, the routine monitoring of health and safety arrangements were not robust enough. While meetings were held each term with boarding staff, opportunities where not always made available for discussing new policies and national guidance and their implementation. Inspectors also noted that written agreements between the college and persons over 16, not employed by the college but living in the same premises as boarders, did not fully specify the terms of their accommodation in accordance with the national minimum standards. The college proposed to improve the monitoring of health and safety procedures by the Principal; ensure staff discussed policies and practices so that they were implemented effectively and written agreements were produced for persons living alongside boarders. Improved procedures have suitably resolved the three weaknesses. National minimum standards 13.3, 14.3 and 15.3 are met.

The last inspection report stated that back up support was available to cover staff absence and leave. However, relief wardens, who provided such cover, did not receive formal induction training in the day-to-day operation of the boarding houses. In its action the college proposed to provide all relief wardens with induction training. This is now being done. The college has provided all wardens with updated training and they all feel better informed. All wardens have received a formal induction programme as detailed on the central file of training records. National minimum standard 15.4 is met.

At the last inspection, two further areas for improvement were identified. The college was to make more consistent use of visual resources in teaching to re-enforce learning and support English language acquisition, and to include reference to the Children's Rights Director in its student handbook. Both recommendations have been suitably enacted. In the two lessons observed, effective use was made of new interactive computer whiteboards and bespoke worksheets to promote students' English language development. The student handbook makes reference to the whereabouts of the Children's Rights Director.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school has made good progress and now meets all regulatory requirements.

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Tutorial College		
Date school opened	30 April 1990		
Age range of pupils	14–24 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys:65	Girls:54	Total:119
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys:0	Girls:0	Total:0
Number of boarders	Boys:40	Girls:33	Total:73
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys:0	Girls:0	Total:0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys:0	Girls:0	Total:0
Tuition fees	£4,100 to £5,400 per term		
Boarding fees	£130 to £250 per week		
Address of school	13 Station Road Cambridge CB1 2JB		
Telephone number	01223 323718		
Email address	wayne.marshall@standrewscambridge.co.uk		
Headteacher	Wayne Marshall		
Proprietor	Mervyn & Helena Martin		