

St Andrew's School

Aylmerton Hall, Holt Road, Cromer, Norfolk, NR11 8QA

Inspection dates 10-12 November 2015

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Sixth form provision	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher is providing good leadership and receives good support from senior leaders and trustees. Together, they are promoting a strong culture of high expectations for pupils' learning and well-being based on the Quaker ethos.
- School leaders and trustees have ensured that all the independent school standards are met and that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are good. Consequently, all pupils are making good progress.
- School leaders and trustees have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection well. Together, they are ensuring that the school continues to improve.
- The school's efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils are good.
- Pupils make good progress in their personal development and behaviour because staff provide good welfare and support for each pupil's needs.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils' achievement. They maintain good relationships with pupils and manage pupils' behaviour consistently well.
- Teachers make good use of well-chosen resources, including visual and practical aids, to stimulate pupils' learning.
- Good teaching and an effective curriculum ensure that pupils are making good progress in a wide range of subjects. The youngest pupils make good progress in communication, literacy and numeracy. The oldest pupils, including the few in the new sixth form, are making good progress towards their examination courses.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding because a few weaknesses remain.
- Teachers do not always deploy teaching assistants well enough to support pupils' learning.
- Teachers do not always provide pupils with feedback on how to improve their work.
- The sixth form requires improvement because the school's individual education programmes for each learner are not fully implemented.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets 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?

- Improve teaching and raise achievement by making sure that:
 - teaching assistants are always deployed efficiently to support pupils' learning
 - teachers always provide pupils with feedback to help them improve their work.

- Complete the development of an individual education programme for each learner in the sixth form and implement it in full by January 2016.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and trustees have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. They have successfully addressed the failure to meet the one standard relating to pupils' welfare by ensuring that the records for serious misbehaviour are sufficiently detailed.
- The headteacher is ably supported by senior leaders in communicating their vision to provide a good education for all pupils and learners in the new sixth form. They have continued to develop assessment and target-setting procedures to ensure that the progress of each learner is tracked and monitored more precisely. They ensure that policies are regularly reviewed and up to date and they are developing the new curriculum for the oldest pupils effectively. This has led to good achievement of pupils. Staff morale is high, which is reflected in their strongly positive questionnaire responses. Parents also express full confidence in the work of the school.
- Leaders motivate staff effectively so that they share the school's drive for improvement. This is achieved through effective arrangements for managing the performance of staff to improve teaching. Leaders also provide a wide range of training opportunities to develop staff expertise, especially in autism and communication difficulties.
- The school has an accurate view of its work. It uses the information from the evaluation of all its aspects effectively to set clear priorities for improvement. Subject leaders are making a good contribution to the work of the school, particularly in promoting communication, literacy and numeracy across their subjects.
- The school's curriculum is well-organised and meets the regulations as required. It offers a broad range of suitably balanced subjects with a strong emphasis on developing pupils' social, communication, literacy and numeracy skills. It is well-planned to cover a full range of subjects and learning through practical experience, with the use of visual resources to enhance learning given a high priority. The curriculum is individually planned for each pupil so that they successfully re-engage with and enjoy their learning when they enter the school. The school plans to complete the development of individual learning programmes for learners in the sixth form by January 2016. The programme of social and life skills, including careers guidance, prepares pupils well for the next stage of their lives. School trips to museums, local places of interest and visits to the local shops or café help to develop pupils' social skills.
- The oldest pupils and learners in the sixth form follow a wide range of examination courses, including GCSE. They also receive independent careers advice and a programme of work-related learning through the citizenship programme. Pupils' interests are taken into account by making every effort to provide the academic and vocational courses they wish to follow. For example, a small number of pupils participate in a motor vehicle maintenance and construction course at a local school.
- The curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain through well-chosen topics on democracy, the rule of law, respect and tolerance. Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively, with many opportunities to develop reflection and a sense of curiosity to stimulate enjoyment of learning. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively and learn to share and take turns. Leaders promote pupils' moral development well by fair application of the rewards and sanctions system and through topic work on the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drugs.
- Leaders promote safeguarding well through the effective implementation of up-to-date policies and procedures to ensure pupils' safety. They ensure that all staff and visitors are thoroughly checked for their suitability to work with children and they create a safe culture in the school. They work closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure that pupils are safe. They ensure that the safety and well-being of the very few pupils attending alternative provision are carefully monitored: daily checks are made on attendance and behaviour and all potential risks are assessed during their time at the alternative school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The trustees provide good support and challenge leaders effectively on the work of the school. They work closely with leaders to ensure the independent school standards are met and they regularly review and update policies.
 - The trustees have a realistic view of teaching based on their visits to the school and by looking at how well different pupils are achieving over time.
 - They ensure that the school promotes its Quaker values, British values and pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development.
 - The trustees are ensuring that the school meets its legal requirements for promoting pupils' safety and well-being, for example by overseeing the implementation of the health and safety policy and the

policy to prevent radicalisation. They are also ensuring that all training in safeguarding is up to date.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Pupils learn effectively and make good progress over time because teaching and assessment are good. Teachers focus strongly on individual learning, using their good knowledge of autism and of their subjects alongside assessment information to plan a personal education programme for each pupil. Pupils' books and their personal progress files show the positive impact of teaching on their learning and progress in a wide range of subjects over time.
- Teachers make good use of visual resources such as photographs, videos, computers, counters and everyday objects. For example, in a sixth form lesson, the teacher used the computer well to demonstrate the steps required to produce square numbers, which learners quickly understood and applied. Teachers ensure that learning activities are as practical as possible and help pupils to prepare for independent living.
- The teaching of communication skills, reading, writing and mathematics is good and teachers promote these skills well across a wide range of subjects. For example, in a food technology lesson, the teacher stressed the importance of timekeeping and pupils were encouraged to look at the clock and calculate how long the dough should be left to prove before baking. Pupils' writing is promoted well in history, geography and cultural studies.
- Teachers' good management of behaviour and good relationships with pupils were seen in all lessons. Pupils responded well to the systematic reward of points for their good behaviour and their positive attitudes to learning, taking a pride in the points they had earned.
- Teaching assistants often provide good support for pupils' learning when working with individuals. However, occasionally they are not deployed well enough to support pupils' learning during whole-class teaching. On a number of visits to lessons, they were seen passively observing the teacher rather than supporting learning.
- Teachers assess each pupil's attainment on entry, using a variety of standardised tests. They set clear learning targets and use the information about pupils' prior learning to plan individual programmes of work. They track and record progress against pupils' individual targets. Teachers usually give praise and provide comment on what pupils have achieved, but this feedback does not always include advice to help them improve their work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem because the school provides a well-planned, phased transition into school and good pastoral care and guidance for individual pupils. As a result, pupils become increasingly aware of alternative ways to express themselves as they re-engage with learning and become successful learners in school.
- Staff use structured approaches to improve pupils' social interaction and develop their self-control by implementing the 'five golden rules' and providing predictable routines. Staff take note of pupils in the act of being good and reward this with 'Golden Gotcha' heart-shaped displays. These record acts of good behaviour or helping others for all to see in the classroom. This has a marked impact on developing pupils' emotional well-being.
- Pupils are safe in school and say they feel safe. They use equipment, including computers, safely. The school grounds and premises are safe and secure and the school is further strengthening this. High levels of staff supervision and vigilance ensure pupils' safety throughout the school day. All potential risks to pupils' safety in school, during activities and on outside trips are carefully assessed. Bullying is rare and there have been no recorded incidents of bullying or harassment of any kind since the last inspection. Pupils are developing an increasing awareness of the different types of bullying. Parents believe that their children are safe and free from bullying.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They greatly improve their behaviour and conduct in school as they settle into their structured routines. They learn to control their own behaviour because staff provide guidance on alternative ways to express their feelings; as a result, over-reaction such as screaming out, physical aggression or destruction of property is very rare. Detailed school records show that incidents of such severe challenging behaviour rapidly reduces as pupils settle in their routines. Exclusions are rare as pupils abide by the school's code of conduct and respond well to the system of rewards implemented by staff.
- Pupils develop good attitudes to learning, seen in all lessons visited. Their books show they take a pride in their work, which is neat and well-presented. They say that they enjoy learning and their parents agree.
- Attendance also improves significantly as pupils re-engage with learning. Since the last inspection, attendance has risen to broadly average because good attendance is rewarded and nearly all pupils want to be in school. There are very few persistent absentees.
- The very small number of pupils who attend alternative provision also grow in confidence and self-esteem as they engage in learning courses which they enjoy, well supported and monitored by the school. The school's records show that their behaviour and attendance are good.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Individual progress files and pupils' books show that all pupils make good progress across a range of subjects from their low starting points on entry. The school's assessment information shows that nearly all pupils make the progress expected of them and a significant proportion make more than expected progress.
- Primary-aged pupils make good progress in social communication, reading, writing and mathematics because there is a strong emphasis on developing these basic skills. They also make good progress in art, history, food technology, physical education and science.
- Secondary-aged pupils continue to make good progress across a range of subjects, including English, mathematics, computing and personal, social and health and economic education. Older pupils are making good progress towards their examination courses, including GCSE.
- Older pupils receive an appropriate careers education and a school-based work experience programme that includes the kitchen, the laundry and the school grounds. There is a developing programme for those pupils who left Year 11 in July 2015 to become the school's first sixth formers, and this is on course to take place in the spring and summer terms, 2016.
- All groups of pupils, including the very few disabled pupils, those with special educational needs or who are in local authority care, are making good progress towards their individual targets because learning tasks and resources are tailored to their needs.
- The few most-able pupils are making good progress because they are provided with challenging tasks to extend their learning.
- The school's records show that the very few pupils who attend alternative provision are making good progress towards their examination courses in motor vehicle maintenance and construction.
- The school uses its systems of assessment well to plan individual programmes for all pupils, including those who are falling behind, to enable them to catch up.

Sixth form provision

requires improvement

- The sixth form requires improvement because it is very new and individual education programmes to include careers education and work experience from the spring and summer terms 2015 are being completed but have not yet been implemented. Leaders have ensured that these have been identified as priorities for development in the school development plan. The head of sixth form is also ensuring that learners are building on their prior learning from Year 11 by following academic courses at a higher level.
- It is too early to judge the full impact of teaching over time on the progress that learners in the sixth form are making. However, learners' books show that they have made sustained progress since September in a wide range of subjects including computing, English, mathematics, science and geography. Evidence from learners' books and from lessons visited during the inspection suggests that

teaching is good, with good use of resources, particularly computers, to capture learners' interests.

- The plans for promoting learners' personal development and welfare, particularly in relation to careers guidance, have yet to be fully implemented. Learners say that they like the sixth form and feel safe. They are adopting safe practices. They have good opportunities to develop their ability to learn independently through the well-conceived program of life skills where, for example, they learn to budget and to travel safely. Learners' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good.
- Learners' books show that they are currently making good progress in their academic subjects and towards their examination courses. However, it is too early to judge their progress over time, particularly in how well they are prepared for independent living, the world of work and for the next stage of their education.

School details

Unique reference number	121252
Inspection number	10006010
DfE registration number	926/6145

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	Special school for pupils with autism or social and communication difficulties
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	6–19 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	28
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	3
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	The St Andrew's School Trust
Chair	Sheila Goldsmith
Headteacher	Gillian Baker
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,000
Telephone number	01263 837927
Website	none
Email address	head@standrewsschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20–21 March 2012

Information about this school

- St Andrew's is a small independent special school with a Quaker ethos. It is affiliated to the Sheringham Local Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and runs under the proprietorship of the St Andrew's School Trust – a registered charity with a board of trustees.
- The school opened in 1988 in East Runton to admit 16 pupils between the ages of six and 12 years. In September 2011, the school moved to the current premises, a former school. At the time of the last inspection, it catered for 16 learners and was granted approval to increase its numbers to 20.
- Since the last inspection the school requested the Department for Education to increase its upper age range to 19 years and increase the number on roll to 35 pupils. As a result, the school was granted these changes to its registration following a material change inspection visit in July 2015. The school opened its newly refurbished sixth form in September 2015.
- The school caters for pupils of average and above average ability who have autism or social and communication difficulties. There are currently 28 pupils on roll including three learners in the sixth form.
- Typically, pupils have missed significant periods of schooling prior to admission, and transition to full-time education takes place over an extended period of time. All learners have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. They are funded by their local authority – either

Norfolk or Cambridgeshire. A very small number of pupils are in the care of the local authority.

- A very small number of learners attend Side Strand Special School in Norfolk for one day per week as part of their education for motor vehicle maintenance and construction.
- The school's motto is 'I do and I understand'. The vision is to be 'a caring school where children feel safe, where each child is treated as an individual and all children fulfil their potential in all fields of experience and learning amongst adults and other children who treat them with respect so their school life is happy'. At its previous inspection, the quality of education was judged as good and the school met nearly all of the regulations.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited eight lessons jointly with the headteacher to observe the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress. Nearly all teachers were seen.
- The inspector heard a few pupils reading and looked at samples of pupils' work across the school, including the sixth form.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and trustees.
- The inspector took account of the 12 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation, including: the school's self-evaluation document, the school development plan, safeguarding policies and procedures, records of behaviour and attendance figures and pupils' individual progress files.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

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