

St Vincent College

16 to 19 academy

Inspection dates

21–23 November 2018

Overall effectiveness			Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good	Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good		
Outcomes for learners	Good		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Leaders and managers have maintained and improved the good quality of teaching, learning and assessment through a comprehensive and well-focused programme of staff development.
- A high proportion of students achieve their qualifications and go on to further education, employment or an apprenticeship.
- Most study programme students benefit from challenging lessons that result in students making good progress.
- Students studying on vocational level 3 courses achieve well and make outstanding progress from their starting points.
- Students benefit from very good careers advice and guidance that helps them to make decisions about their further education, training and employment.
- The proportion of students who achieve grades 9 to 4 in GCSE English and mathematics is higher than that at similar providers.
- The vast majority of students aged 16 to 18 who complete their programmes successfully progress to employment or the next level of study.
- Leaders and managers have a clear and effective strategy to develop provision that meets the needs of the community, including the most vulnerable students.
- Leaders and managers have created an ambitious culture for their staff, students and local community.
- Staff promote high standards. As a result, students' behaviour is exemplary.
- Students' attendance is still too low.
- Staff do not set clear targets for students early enough in their programmes. As a result, students do not know how to improve their work from the outset of their courses.
- On a small minority of study programmes and courses for adults too few students achieve their qualifications.

Full report

Information about the provider

- St Vincent College is a small sixth-form college in Gosport, Hampshire. It is part of the recently created Lighthouse Learning Trust. The college provides a wide range of academic and vocational courses from pre-entry level to level 5. Most students are enrolled onto full-time study programmes, with a large majority studying at level 3. Over 170 students are in receipt of high-needs funding.
- Gosport is a predominantly White community and has several wards with unusually high levels of economic and social deprivation. The proportion of school pupils achieving five GCSEs at grade 4 to 9 including English and mathematics is well below the regional and national rates.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Managers should make sure that students' attendance improves in all courses and in tutorials. Teachers should make sure that students understand the importance of attending all lessons regularly and punctually.
- Teachers should set aspirational targets for students earlier in their programmes of study so that all students are clear about what they need to improve and have the time to make such improvements.
- Leaders and managers should implement their well-considered strategies to improve the proportion of students achieving their qualifications and closely monitor the impact of their actions.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal, governors and senior leaders have a clear strategic vision for the college and high ambitions for students. They are passionate in protecting and promoting the inclusive nature of the college and understand the needs of the local community well. They have made sure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has continued to improve, and that the large majority of students achieve their qualifications and make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders and managers have strong and effective relationships with local organisations and employers. They use these relationships well to plan the curriculum and to make sure that courses are aligned well to the needs of the local community. Senior leaders work closely with the local enterprise partnership to identify and respond to local, regional and national skills priorities. For example, they have created a Solent Careers Hub that helps students and other learners into work or further study.
- Managers are effective in improving the quality of provision. Leaders and managers work closely together to identify strengths and weaknesses that they share with staff and governors. They have high aspirations and set challenging targets for staff. They plan effectively and support staff to achieve these targets.
- Leaders and managers react swiftly to problems and concerns. If courses do not meet the needs of students or the quality of provision drops, they assess the cause effectively and act quickly to remedy the fault or improve the curriculum offer. For example, after a trial period, leaders decided not to continue offering A levels in further mathematics and ancient history because these courses did not meet learners' needs and were not thriving.
- Leaders plan very well to improve teaching. They carefully research and test the strengths and weaknesses of classroom practice. They then accurately identify key themes for development and training to help staff improve their skills. For example, their 'great expectations' project runs throughout the year and helps teachers to identify and improve particular aspects of their classroom practice.
- Leaders' and managers' introduction of a 'LEAP' initiative ('Learn, experience, achieve progress') has resulted in a consistent and highly effective induction for students. This process allows staff to understand how to improve students' expectations and conduct when they join the college. Students improve their time management and develop important study, research, note-taking and proofreading skills.
- Leaders and managers successfully improve students' literacy and numeracy skills. They have developed literacy and numeracy strategies that clearly define the skills that they expect teachers to develop. They use lesson observations effectively to comment on how well teachers embed literacy and numeracy in their lessons. Despite this, not all students develop their written English skills effectively.
- Leaders and managers do not yet use data effectively to bring about quick and prompt rapid improvements to attendance. Because of changes to college data systems, leaders and managers are unclear about how well students attend lessons, or the impact of actions they have taken to improve attendance.

The governance of the provider

- Because of academisation and the formation of the Lighthouse Learning Trust in November 2017, governance arrangements have changed. Each college in the trust has its own local board of governors, the chair of whom sits on the board of trustees. The college's board of governors now focuses more closely on quality improvement, with reference to teaching, learning and assessment, and safeguarding. The board of trustees acts more strategically. Governors are clear on their role as members of the full governing body or as a trustee, and carry out their roles very effectively.
- Governors have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the college, and the needs and demographics of the local area. Frequent and detailed reports from senior managers and the principal enable them to understand the quality of the college and to support and challenge leaders and managers effectively.
- Governors have been fully involved in the move to academisation. They have a good range of skills and expertise which help them be effective in their roles. Governors involve themselves fully in the life of the college, which helps them understand and improve the student experience.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Students feel safe and are safe. Leaders and managers place a high emphasis on the safety of students and have recently introduced new security processes to make the open access site more secure.
- Managers responsible for safeguarding record and monitor safeguarding incidents well. They have good links with external agencies, including the local 'Prevent' officer that they use effectively.
- Staff receive frequent training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty which makes sure they are familiar with the current risks to students. As a result, they know how to respond to safeguarding concerns. However, not enough students and apprentices have a detailed knowledge about local risks of radicalisation and extremism and the potential effects on their lives.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Students enjoy their learning and often produce work of a very high standard. Teachers on study programmes, adult courses and provision for students with high needs use a good range of teaching, learning and assessment methods to engage and motivate students. Because of this, students make good or better progress.
- Most teachers use the information about students' pre-existing skills and knowledge well. They plan learning carefully and make sure all students make a good start to their programme of study. Students who need additional support are swiftly identified so that such support can be introduced. Students are encouraged to access additional support through a range of drop-in and targeted sessions. A large majority of students are entitled to additional support, for example with examination arrangements. This support

is carefully planned to ensure that students are supported calmly to be successful. Students are very positive about how this helps them to settle into college life and meet the demands of their new studies.

- The very large majority of teachers check students' understanding effectively. They use questions well to probe and challenge students to develop independent thinking skills. Students at all levels benefit from a good range of activities within lessons. Students use technical and theoretical language well. For example, GCSE English students improved their understanding and use of key literary techniques such as alliteration and repetition through reading a passage from 'The veldt' by Raymond Bradbury.
- Teachers develop students' analytical and evaluative skills successfully. This is particularly the case on A-level courses where students are encouraged to explore and challenge theories to deepen their understanding and ability to apply them. For example, history students were animated in their small group discussions on the key problems facing Henry Tudor in becoming king during and following the Wars of the Roses.
- Teachers assess students' progress well and the large majority of students benefit from good-quality, helpful and concise feedback on assessed work. For example, students in sociology refined their understanding of Weberian theory of equality and social class following succinct and clear feedback on the inclusion of a feminist critique. However, a small number of teachers on programmes for students with high needs do not give students feedback that is clear and precise enough to help them to improve.
- Most teachers have high expectations of students, including those with high needs. They support them successfully to achieve their personal and educational goals. Teachers are enthusiastic and are good advocates for students in receipt of high needs funding. Teaching in the discrete provision is focused and challenging, and highly appropriate to individual learners' needs.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not provide sufficient challenge for all students, especially the most able, and as a result some students become bored. Some science lessons lack enough challenge to meet all students' needs and abilities.
- In a few lessons, teachers' checks on what students had learned were superficial. Teachers did not allow students enough time to answer questions and were too keen to answer themselves.
- Too many teachers place too little emphasis on the importance of good written English in assessed work. They do not routinely correct spelling errors and incorrect use of capital letters and apostrophes. As a result, students repeat the same mistakes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Students' behaviour in lessons and around the college is very good. They are respectful to each other and to college staff. They work well together and are polite. The vast majority have a positive approach to learning. Students are confident and able to talk thoughtfully about their studies and what they are learning. There is a good range of spaces for independent study and group work, and students use these spaces well.
- Students are supported well to settle into their studies and are quickly introduced to the college's 'skills matrix' that explains the behaviours they need for successful study. Students speak positively about how they have been supported to adapt to college life

and the demands of their new programmes of study.

- Leaders and managers make sure that students benefit from high-quality and purposeful work-related learning and work experience. As a result, students see the relevance of their course and can apply their emerging skills well. For example, music students play at the Victorious Festival in Portsmouth alongside world renowned artists, sports students offer massages at a local half-marathon and carpentry students have produced playground equipment for local primary schools. Students can explain what they have learned and how their activities link with their main programme of study.
- Leaders and managers place a strong emphasis on the importance of good careers advice and guidance. The vast majority of students are clear about what they will do after their courses. The careers manager and a team of dedicated specialist staff support students well to plan for their futures. Staff offer an 'Aspire' programme for the small group of high-ability students, with a clear focus on raising their aspirations and giving them the confidence to apply for courses at the top universities. Nearly two thirds of students progressing to university are the first to do so in their family.
- Curriculum areas promote progression to higher levels of education very well. For example, in applied law classrooms the 'class of 2018' display shows photographs of each of the earlier cohort of students, their grades and their destinations.
- Teachers and managers monitor students' progress effectively through a thorough review process. However, teachers do not set aspirational targets early enough in the college year. This means that students are not always clear from the start about what they need to improve.
- Students' attendance is too low, especially in English and mathematics lessons and tutorials, and for those students who do not receive bursary payments.
- Most students have a basic knowledge of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. However, too many are not able to relate this to their own lives and careers. Lessons and tutorials do not include any regional or local examples of extremism and students were not able to demonstrate how such dangers might impact on their local community and working lives.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- The large majority of students aged 16 to 18 complete their qualifications and achieve well. Achievement rates for courses at levels 2 and 3 are high when compared to similar providers and have improved over recent years. Students of all ages achieve very well on level 3 courses, which make up two thirds of provision.
- Students who retake GCSE English qualifications at the college achieve exceptionally well. Students taking GCSE mathematics qualifications achieve higher than the low national rate.
- Students develop useful mathematics skills for work and the large majority achieve the qualifications needed for their programme. Students taking level 2 functional skills qualifications in mathematics achieve at a higher rate than at similar providers.
- Students are making around the expected progress from their starting points in A-level provision, and excellent progress in BTEC National Diploma level 3 qualifications. Overall

achievements for BTEC National Diploma qualifications are in the top 10% nationally.

- Students' progression is a strength for the college. Students achieve qualifications and skills that help them to move to their chosen careers, to employment or to further training. Teachers prepare students well for their next steps. Almost all students who complete their courses at lower levels move on to higher programmes of learning at the college. Most students on two-year level 3 courses stay and succeed in year two. A high proportion of students gain entry to their first-choice university.
- Leaders and managers track and monitor the progression and destinations of students very well. They know how students use the skills and knowledge gained from their courses in their job roles. As a result, they can successfully plan the development of learning programmes. All adult students gained places at university on successful completion of their access to higher education course.
- Students with high needs achieve well on vocational courses. These students develop their skills and make good progress to a higher level of study and towards employment through supported internships.
- Most students stay on their programmes until the end of their course. Leaders and managers track student retention well and monitor effectively the reasons why students leave the college before completing their courses. For example, they can account for the destinations of all their early leavers in 2017/18.
- Achievement rates for apprentices in 2017/18 were low. Before then, leaders and managers had already made the strategic decision to remove apprenticeships from their curriculum offer.
- Leaders and managers analyse differences in achievement between specific groups of students well but have not been successful in closing all gaps. For example, disadvantaged students and those with a declared learning difficulty and/or disability do not achieve in line with their peers. Female adult students' achievement is much higher than for male adult students.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The 780 students on study programmes account for around two thirds of all students at the college. The large majority of these students are studying at level 3. They enrol on a wide range of vocational and academic courses.
- Study programmes are well planned to meet the needs and interests of the local students. Students benefit from taking part in a wide range of high-quality work experience and other work-related activities. They improve their mathematics and English skills to help them in their future careers and jobs.
- Most lessons are well planned, with a good range of interesting and relevant activities. Students make good progress and are keen to learn, developing useful skills for work and further education. For example, carpentry students work out angles of trusses to cut wood to the correct slope. Public service students use internet search skills to analyse government priorities in public spending for the police, ambulance service and fire

brigade.

- Teachers plan engaging lessons and use their teaching skills well to develop a positive learning environment. This supports students of all abilities to make progress. Students develop independent learning skills, reflecting on earlier learning and make good progress. A small minority of students with high needs are not supported well on mainstream programmes. Because of this they make less-than-expected progress.
- Teachers have high expectations for their students and apply the skills they have gained through well-planned and focused staff development effectively. For example, they use questioning skilfully to develop deeper and higher-level thinking skills in their students.
- Teachers support students to develop good spoken English skills in the classroom. They ask students to spell out words and technical terms used during their learning, such as parallels, elevations, projection and polynomials. This raises the importance of literacy skills among students for future learning and work.
- Most students produce work of a good standard and make good progress from their starting points. They develop relevant technical, vocational and theoretical vocabularies that prepare them for further education or employment.
- Students receive useful careers information, advice and guidance before starting at the college and during their programmes. This helps them to know that they are on the right programme of study to achieve their career plans.
- Students are developing good personal, social and work skills. They do this through a wide range of high-quality additional activities related to their subject of study. For example, media and information technology students take part in a computer club; public services and sport students take part in archery and coaching activities.

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

- At the time of inspection, the college had 174 students in receipt of high needs funding. Most of these students study on discrete programmes; around one fifth are studying on a range of study programmes at all levels across the college. Twelve students are on supported internships.
- Leaders and managers have a clear strategy for development of this provision. The numbers of high needs students supported on mainstream provision has increased significantly this academic year. Leaders and managers use the funding for students with high needs well, and the large majority of resources and accommodation are very good. As a result, students develop new skills, build their confidence, make good progress and achieve their qualifications.
- The discrete provision within the college for students with high needs prepares them well for work or a higher level of study. Students benefit from a programme of study that focuses on developing their independence and work skills. Most students take part in a range of good-quality work experience or work-related activity. For example, they work at the historic dockyard as a 'secret visitor' to advise on access for people with disabilities.
- Students on the supported internship programme receive good careers advice and guidance that supports them well to progress into employment or further education and training.

- Leaders and managers have worked well to make sure that students make a smooth transition from school into college. Students benefit from visits to the college before they join. This helps teachers and support staff to identify students' needs and place them on the most appropriate course with the correct level of support.
- Most students work towards accredited programmes that are appropriate to their needs. Staff record non-accredited learning well to show students' progress. Students are proud to share their achievements.
- Most teachers plan learning that takes careful account of different students' needs and abilities. In a few sessions students make slow progress. These lessons lack pace and the most able students are insufficiently challenged. Although most students receive effective feedback on their progress, a small minority of students are not given clear information on how to improve their work and achieve their full potential.
- A small minority of students in the school of personalised learning are not sufficiently clear about the vocational qualifications they are studying. As a result, they are not able to identify which progression routes they can follow, or which career opportunities or jobs are available to them.

Provider details

Unique reference number	145229
Type of provider	16 to 19 academy
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	2,300
Head of college/CEO	Matt Atkinson
Telephone number	02392 588311
Website	http://www.stvincent.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	151	171	157	182	420	133	0	6
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	1	13	1	14	0	0		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	174							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the vice-principal for teaching and learning, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

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Ann Monaghan	Ofsted Inspector
Alun Maddocks	Ofsted Inspector
Fadia Clarke	Ofsted Inspector

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