

Inspection of St Vincent College

Inspection dates: 5 to 7 December 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Education programmes for young people	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Provision for students with high needs	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

St Vincent College is a small 16 to 19 academy in Gosport. It is part of the Lighthouse Learning Trust. The college provides academic and vocational courses for young people, community learning and education for adults and programmes of learning for students with high needs.

Gosport is recognised as a region with long-standing social deprivation and inequality challenges. The rates of employment, achievement in GCSE English and mathematics and the proportion of the population which is qualified at level 3 or above are substantially lower than the average for Hampshire.

At the time of inspection, there were approximately 700 students aged 16 to 18 years old studying a range of courses from levels 1 to 3. Of these, 242 were in receipt of high needs funding, studying academic and vocational courses as well as programmes to improve their independence, social and employability skills. There were around 260 adult students studying courses, including access to higher education, English and mathematics. A further 175 adults were studying community learning courses such as English for speakers of other languages.

The college does not subcontract any of its provision.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Students enjoy the calm, happy and positive environment at the college. They behave well, are respectful and care for one another. Students take part in 'positive noticing day' to encourage kindness to their peers and staff. Adult students enjoy the relaxed and supportive approach that teachers take. As a result, students contribute well to a positive climate of learning.

Students take pride in their work and are motivated to succeed. Many are ambitious about their learning and progress. For example, students with high needs strive for golden referrals and all students for the prestige of being 'student of the week'. Students value the support of staff to be the best they can be. Students have high aspirations for their futures, whether this be higher education, employment or further training. Many display the personal qualities, resilience and confidence they need to be successful.

Students benefit from opportunities to become tolerant and respectful British citizens and to appreciate the diversity around them. They participate well in a range of activities that develop their understanding of and contribution to their communities and wider society. For example, students raise awareness and money for charities related to neurodiversity. Students with high needs make weekly visits to a residential care home to support elderly residents to socialise. Students from minority groups benefit from the support and care of staff. Consequently, students value multiculturalism and become active citizens who strengthen their communities.

Most students fulfil the high expectations that staff set for them. They benefit from effective support, encouragement and structure. Students facing challenges are helped by dedicated staff to get back on track with their learning. For example, students who are disadvantaged respond well to the help learning coaches provide and the support for welfare available. As a result, most students gain the valuable skills they need for successful learning and employment.

Students benefit from opportunities to participate in a wide range of enrichment activities, such as e-sports competitions, forensic psychology and book club. They learn about how to keep mentally and physically healthy. For example, students enjoy park walks that benefit their well-being. Students with high needs learn how to regulate their emotional health through gardening therapy and using the gym.

While students benefit from a coherently planned tutorial programme, leaders rightly recognise students' need a deeper awareness of current issues that might affect them or their communities.

Students feel safe, including online. They know that staff do not tolerate bullying or harassment. The vast majority of students are confident that staff would take seriously any concerns they have and act rapidly and appropriately as a consequence.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have a very comprehensive understanding of the communities they serve. They have a clear vision and strategy to provide an inclusive education for the people of Gosport. Leaders have designed learning programmes to provide students with the skills and knowledge they need to overcome social inequality and achieve their aspirations. As a result, most students achieve their goals and move on to further learning, employment and independent living.

Leaders, managers and staff have high ambitions for all students, including those who are disadvantaged or with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They offer students opportunities to study courses that are otherwise unavailable to them. They work closely with university partners to increase the participation of disadvantaged students in higher education. They ensure students with high needs benefit from learning programmes that are tailored closely to their needs. As a result, students are motivated to be their best. They achieve their qualifications well, given the context of Gosport, and see a bright future ahead of themselves.

Expert teachers who are passionate about their subjects inspire students to learn and love their studies. They use a range of teaching techniques skilfully, present information clearly and promote discussion effectively. For example, in A-level biology, students analyse case studies to identify viruses such as Ebola and rabies and discuss their symptoms and methods of transmission. Students in carpentry use their joinery skills to make bird baths and other gifts, of which they are very proud. Most students are interested in the subjects they study and they deepen their understanding.

Teachers plan learning carefully and check understanding effectively so students build their knowledge correctly and securely. They return to prior learning so students rehearse their understanding and improve in competency. For example, in applied science, students apply their knowledge of electronic configuration in calcium and magnesium to draw accurate orbital diagrams. As a result, students can apply their knowledge fluently in different situations and demonstrate mastery of their skills.

Most teachers use a broad range of assessment techniques to ensure students embed deeply key points of learning in their long-term memory. They adapt their teaching and provide students with helpful support in response to what they know and can do. Students know how to improve their work and most act on the advice teachers provide. For example, in biology and science, teachers use the outcomes of assessment to repeatedly return to the meaning of command verbs so students understand what is required in examination questions. As a result, most students make the progress expected of them and achieve well.

Managers and staff use effective strategies to improve students' literacy and numeracy skills. They embed these skills well into teaching across a range of subjects. Staff carefully support students with low or no qualifications in English and

mathematics to overcome anxieties in these subjects, before developing their knowledge and skills. As a result, most students who need help with these subjects make very good progress over time.

Managers provide a highly inclusive range of learning programmes for students with high needs. Highly qualified and experienced staff align the curriculum to match students' aspirations and needs closely. They use highly individualised learning plans and ambitious targets to develop these students' academic, personal and social skills. Staff ensure that students with high needs benefit from a wide range of valuable, high-quality experiences and opportunities so that they are thoroughly prepared for employment and life beyond college.

In adult learning programmes, leaders work closely with partners, including local charities and the Job Centre Plus, to respond quickly to the changing needs of the local community. They provide suitable courses to prepare adult students for employment, improve their English and take part in their communities. They have broadened the range of adult and community courses available to ensure that recent refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan have opportunities to learn the skills they need to live in Britain successfully. As a result, adult students improve their employment prospects, become more confident and integrate into society successfully.

Leaders and managers have designed a comprehensive programme of high-quality careers advice and guidance. Students benefit from a range of activities that help them understand the career opportunities available and the pathways open to them. Employers and representatives from higher education institutions provide helpful advice during careers and industry weeks. External speakers discuss careers in their industries with students. Staff provide valuable guidance for students writing their university application statements. Consequently, most students have a good idea of what they will do when they finish their studies.

Leaders and managers evaluate the quality of education effectively and act determinedly to bring about improvement. They put impactful interventions in place, provide staff with useful training and respond to students' views to make the college better. For example, leaders are focused keenly on improving students' attendance, some of whom have had previously poor experiences of education and consequently disengaged from learning. They rightly recognise that this continues to be an area for development. They are taking rapid and appropriate action to further strengthen this area.

Governance is effective. Governors have a clear vision to promote social mobility and community inclusion through the education which the college provides. They contribute to the development of the curriculum and ensure the introduction of further A-levels and T-levels complements the local education offer. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the provision well. They provide leaders with helpful support and effective challenge to raise standards further and fulfil their statutory duties.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Continue to further improve students' attendance across all areas of the college's provision.
- Ensure the tutorial programme is relevant to the needs of all students.

Provider details

Unique reference number	145229
Address	Mill Lane Gosport Hampshire PO12 4QA
Contact number	02392 588311
Website	www.stvincent.ac.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Andy Grant
Provider type	16–19 Academy
Date of previous inspection	21–23 November 2018
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the vice principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising students' work, seeking the views of students, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Mark Hillman, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sara Woodward	His Majesty's Inspector
Pam Richardson	Ofsted Inspector
Kat Morris	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Kent	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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