

# St Andrew's College

## Independent School

### Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	873/6019
Unique Reference Number	110932
Social care URN	SC015288
Inspection number	322246
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Joan Hewitt
Social Care inspector	Sue Michowicz

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

Inspection of social care (welfare) was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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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. The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided and to inform the Secretary of State at the DCSF as to the school's continued suitability for registration as an independent school.

This report details whether the school meets the requirements for educational provision and outlines the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## Information about the school

St Andrews College was founded in 1976 as an independent college in Cambridge. It is privately owned and provides a range of educational courses for male and female students aged from 15 to 27 years. Currently there are 138 students on roll, of whom five are of compulsory school age. All 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. The college tries to keep small numbers in each class in order to provide a friendly and supportive learning environment for its students.

The college's aim is to create an academic environment in which students can achieve the best examination results. At the same time, it values qualities of responsibility, co-operation, 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. The college is based on two sites, there are two headteachers, one with responsibility for academic progress and one with responsibility for administrative matters.

The education provision of the school was last inspected in January 2004 and the boarding inspection in December 2006

## Evaluation of the school

St Andrews College provides a good standard of education for the young people and cares for them satisfactorily. Its strength lies in the good curriculum it provides and the support students get in acquiring English language. Consequently, students are then able to secure places in higher and further education institutions.

Overall, boarding is satisfactory because some systems are not robust enough to ensure consistency. A strong feature of the boarding element of the school was the care of young people in halls of residence and with host families. The college has done good work to address the areas for improvement raised in both previous inspection reports. It meets most of the statutory regulations.

## Quality of education

The curriculum is good. The college has responded to the previous inspection report by providing youngsters of compulsory school age with a broad and balanced curriculum. It meets all requirements and leaders enhance this with physical education and religious education lessons. The students all follow an English language course in addition to a range of demanding GCSE and A level courses. The college does not always establish students' attainment on entry accurately enough and occasionally students follow unsuitable courses for too long. Students usually attend the college with the aim of securing a place at a university in the United Kingdom and the courses offered are highly successful in supporting them in this aim.

Teaching and assessment are good and, as a result, students make good progress. Small group sizes help teachers to tailor their lessons to individual needs and interests. Consequently, students master the English language quickly and this, in turn, helps them to have access to some of the technical language required in their academic courses. Teachers have a good rapport with their students. The best lessons give students the opportunity to take part in a variety of activities and students take pleasure in their achievements. In less effective lessons, teachers tend to dominate discussions and do not give students sufficient opportunities to give extended answers to develop their language skills further. Teachers mark work regularly and some teachers give their students very detailed advice on how they can take the next steps to improve their work.

The headteachers have implemented a good programme of assessment and they regularly review students' performance. They take action to address any under-performance. Students speak appreciatively of the extra help teachers give them if they are finding their work difficult. Students have a good attitude to learning; they are committed to their studies and so make good progress. Teachers set their students work to do outside the normal teaching hours, which helps them to consolidate the work they do in lessons. The college needs to improve the monitoring of this work to ensure young people spend the appropriate amount of time on these tasks.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The provision for students' spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory. Students from a variety of cultural backgrounds have a shared understanding of the college's expectations and their behaviour is good. They are considerate to each other and have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. They clearly enjoy many

of their lessons and demonstrate positive and sometimes enthusiastic responses to classroom activities. Attendance is satisfactory; the college records any absences and intervenes when it is appropriate. This is particularly rigorous for youngsters of compulsory school age.

The college is a multicultural community that respects differences and individual values. The general studies course and religious education provide opportunities for students, particularly those of compulsory school age, to consider various cultures and beliefs. This also provides an opportunity for spiritual reflection. These elements of the wider curriculum have a less significant impact on the personal development of the older students.

The general studies curriculum includes units of work that enable students to develop an understanding of public institutions and services in England, as do a number of subjects in the curriculum. Students are interested in these activities and appreciate the opportunity to increase their knowledge of the culture in which they are living. The college is not proactive in providing a range of extracurricular activities; students express the view that they would welcome greater opportunities, including an increase in physical and sporting activities. The older students have taken responsibility for organising a student ball, but there are limited organised activities to allow students to contribute to the college and the wider community. Inspectors agree that this is a significant area for development. Students also say that they would welcome a more systematic way of sharing their views about college provision.

## Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students are satisfactory. There is a sound range of policies for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of students. Overall, the college implements most policies effectively, including a range of risk assessments for various aspects of its work. However, the admission register does not include details of previous schools attended and the required emergency contact numbers. The integration of policies and procedures for students' welfare between the academic and boarding staff are largely informal. This limits the extent to which the college meets the needs of individual students in a consistent way. There is no evidence of bullying and the college explains procedures for behaviour management clearly during the application process. However, there have been occasional incidents where the college has applied sanctions which students regard as unfair or too severe. The college has appropriate policies and procedures for child protection but has not renewed staff training systematically.

Induction arrangements ensure that students settle quickly and safely in the environment of the college and the host country. The general studies course provides appropriate opportunities for students to consider the risks associated with substance abuse and the use of the internet. Students say they would like the college to promote healthy eating and healthy lifestyles more enthusiastically.

In its development plan the college has identified the need to draw up further plans to ensure increased accessibility to the curriculum and the school premises.

## Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The college meets all of the requirements for both education and welfare. The school's recruitment procedures are in accord with the National Minimum Standards and provide appropriate safeguards for the welfare of children. Effective procedures are in place for the recruitment and appointment of staff. The school keeps a central register of checks, including a check with the Criminal Records Bureau, which meets current regulations.

## School's premises and accommodation

The teaching accommodation is based on two sites close to the centre of Cambridge. They are within walking distance of each other. There is specialist accommodation for science and information and communication technology. There are sufficient general teaching rooms and although they are relatively small, they are suitable for the size of the teaching groups. The accommodation is clean and in good order.

The location is convenient for students although the college has yet to fully exploit its potential for cultural and leisure pursuits. The Free School Lane site does not offer an outdoor space and the college makes use of local facilities to provide physical education for compulsory school aged children. The Station Road site has a small pleasant garden area and quiet room, which students can use for individual study when they are not in lessons.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The college provides a good level of information for parents and prospective students through its informative prospectus and website. The website is a particularly important means of providing information as most parents and carers live overseas.

The college provides reports each term that give a clear indication about the progress students are making in relation to their targets and makes helpful suggestions about the next steps they should make to improve their work.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The school's procedures for handling complaints meet all requirements, including those for boarders. Students are aware of how to complain, should they need to.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- ensure the headteacher and all permanent staff who work with children must undertake training for safeguarding pupils, with refresher training at three-yearly intervals. (Paragraph 3(2)(b))
- maintain an admission register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. (Paragraph 3(9)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

## What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- ensure systems and procedures to share information between academic and boarding staff are consistent and monitored
- develop strategies to involve students in the community life of the college
- ensure sanctions are proportionate and monitored effectively.

## Evaluation of boarding provision

Young people are supported by health policies which cover such issues as substance abuse. The college does not employ a qualified nurse but there is an identified person available to manage the administration systems to support young people when ill. Young people are well supported by wardens during times of illness with access to a local doctors' surgery by appointment. Staff attend appointments with young people as necessary. There are appropriate policies in place which address such things as smoking and the use of first aid. The college does not administer any prescribed medications to boarders and therefore an administration record is unnecessary. There is an abundance of homely remedies (un-prescribed medications) used by boarders, however, there is insufficient lockable space to safely

store these in young people's bedrooms, leaving young people at risk. Consent from parents for such things as first aid and medical treatment are not held on file, which inhibits the treatment available to young people in an emergency. There is good provision in place for supporting young people to access outside medical services such as dentists, opticians and specialist therapists with accessible information available to young people.

Policies are in place which protect young people from bullying and abuse. Young people feel there is little to no bullying at the college and the policy is available in their handbook. Child protection procedures are in place with a designated child protection officer who is suitably trained. However, there is no formal induction for new members of staff on child protection procedures and they are only provided with documents to support practice which have to be signed as read. There are no formal opportunities for established staff to receive updated child protection training. There is not a strong focus on raising child protection awareness although staff are competent in their roles and maintain a safe environment for young people to enjoy. Young people believe there is a fair sanctions system and they are clear about the rules of the college and halls of residence. They do, however, feel that conflict issues can often be treated too seriously and extreme consequences are sometimes given without taking the young person's view into consideration. A complaints policy is in place, however, young people rarely use this formal process and prefer to speak to their warden or friends about their concerns. The privacy of young people is respected with all bedrooms providing either single or double accommodation. Staff ensure they knock prior to entering bedrooms. There is good emphasis placed on young people respecting each other's privacy. However, in some of the halls of residence shower boxes are provided in bedrooms and those in double bedrooms provide little privacy. The senior management team is exploring ways of improving privacy.

The college implements robust fire safety systems which ensure young people and staff are protected from the risks of fire. There is a fire risk assessment for the college which is regularly reviewed. Young people take part in unannounced fire drills with records of all drills, fire alarm and equipment testing maintained to a good standard. The safety of young people is protected whilst living in the halls of residence with a signing in and out book establishing the last known whereabouts of young people. Any contractors or persons visiting the halls of residence are supervised. Generic risk assessments are in place for the college, however, these do not highlight hazards or potential risks identified at the halls of residence which affect the wellbeing of young people and staff. For example, some of the halls of residence do not have window restrictors on the upper floors. The school operates a robust recruitment system. As there is little staff turnover a high number of the files pertain to staff employed prior to the implementation of the National Minimum Standards. Records maintained for staff employed after 2002 contain the required information. However, information on each applicant is not held together and is in different areas of the college making it hard to track with a potential for incomplete vetting of staff.



Young people feel well supported with a number of people they could turn to for support. The college does have an independent listener who is available to young people by telephone, however, they do not use this service as she is an unknown person. The college has identified in their previous action plan how they can best integrate her into boarders' lives thus making her more accessible and useful to the them. There is a strong emphasis on equal opportunities within the college which is supported by the multi-cultural student body and a committed staff team. There is a good balance of different nationalities in the individual halls of residence, providing the opportunity to mix and learn about each other's cultures.

Informal opportunities are available to young people to contribute to the operation of boarding life which vary across the halls of residence. However, there are no formal opportunities for boarders to express their views which support long term change or improvements to boarding life. Both staff and boarders feel a college council would promote effective communication with senior management and young people and this is currently being considered. Boarders are supported by the college to maintain contact with their friends and family with the wide use of mobile phones. The college provides internet access and telephone facilities. The college contacts parents or agents should there be any issues of concern.

The college provides four halls of residence with additional host families used to accommodate other young people. The host families are committed to providing a high standard of accommodation and support with an emphasis placed on integrating them into family and home life. The college has recently purchased an additional hall of residence which has been refurbished to an extremely high standard providing young people with a comfortable and homely environment to enjoy. Other halls of residence are well maintained and are due to be refurbished as soon as is reasonably practicable to the same standard. All of the halls of residence are clean and tidy providing hygienic and pleasant surroundings for young people to enjoy.

Students and families are provided with a college prospectus and handbook which outlines the aims, key policies and the facilities provided. Information packs are available in each of the halls of residence for staff to refer to. The monitoring of records such as risk assessments, complaints and sanctions is undertaken by members of the senior management team. However, records are not held in a way which allows cohesive tracking to take place. Staff employed have clear job descriptions and are regularly supported by informal supervisions and visits to discuss the progress of young people and any issues that may arise in the day to day management of the environment. All staff who undertake boarding duties receive training to support them in their role. Young people are complimentary of the support they receive and are provided with lists of emergency contact numbers of staff as well as outside agencies. There has been a recent change in the senior management team with the implementation of two heads of college. The college has a proactive senior management team who are well supported by their proprietors.

## What must be done to secure future improvement?

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## Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendations:

- ensure that boarders keeping their own medication are able to store it safely and appropriately (National Minimum Standard 15.11)
- ensure a robust child protection system is developed which includes formal training for all staff to support the awareness of child protection issues across the school and boarding (National Minimum Standard 3)
- ensure risk assessments are formulated for the halls of residence which include fire and highlight hazards and measures to reduce the risk (National Minimum Standard 26 and 47.9)
- ensure all recruitment records are integrated to maintain an easy tracking system and support a robust vetting procedure (National Minimum Standard 38.2)
- ensure there are formal opportunities for boarders to express their views (National Minimum Standard 12)
- ensure that systems enable all of the school's records to be regularly monitored to effectively identify any issues requiring action (National Minimum Standard 23)
- obtain written parental permission to administer first aid and to seek medical, dental or optical treatment when required. (National Minimum Standard 15.14).

## School details

Name of school	St Andrew's College
DCSF number	873/6019
Unique reference number	110932
Unique reference number (social care )	SC015288
Type of school	Tutorial college
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1976
Age range of pupils	15-19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 64      Girls: 32      Total: 96
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0      Girls: 0      Total: 0
Number of boarders	Boys: 64      Girls: 32      Total: 96
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0      Girls: 0      Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7410 - £14960
Annual fees (boarders)	£11935 - £22200
Address of college	2A Free School Lane Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB2 3QA
Telephone number	01223360040
Fax number	01223467150
Email address	wayne.marshall@standrewscambridge.co.uk
Principals	Wayne Marshall and Ashley Collins
Proprietor	M and H Martin
Reporting inspector	Joan Hewitt
Social care inspector	Sue Michowicz SCO
Dates of inspection	14–15 May 2008