

St Andrew's School

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	926/6145
Unique Reference Number	121252
Inspection number	329420
Inspection dates	11 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Ian Naylor

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).

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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, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

Information about the school

St Andrew's School is a small independent day special school catering for pupils aged 6-12 with autism or social and communication difficulties. There are currently seven pupils on roll. They are placed either privately by parents or by local authorities. Pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The school is a religiously-affiliated Quaker school that has charitable status and which is administered by a board of trustees. It is housed in the former village school.

Evaluation of the school

St Andrew's offers a good quality of education overall. There are a number of outstanding features. The school provides expert teaching skills in specialist structured teaching programmes giving pupils with social and communication difficulties the best opportunities to succeed in overcoming them. It is a close-knit and friendly school community, with a calm orderly atmosphere and predictable routines. This enables staff to nurture each pupil's talents. It is well led by a very experienced headteacher. She inspires her staff team to work successfully together with a high degree of skill and cooperation. The school has met the recommendations of the last report and complies with all the regulations for independent schools. Pupils feel their school is good and 'they have made a lot of friends', whilst their parents feel the 'school is brilliant'.

Quality of education

The curriculum is outstanding. There is an extensive range of very interesting and well-chosen activities that help to stimulate pupils' interest and motivate their learning. In particular, the school's use of the TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication handicapped CHildren) task programmes and techniques is exemplary. Individual targets in English and mathematics are set with pupils working at their own levels and speed. Staff achieve this in a carefully structured one-to-one climate using pupil 'workstations' to reduce distractions and help pupils to focus. Another very successful feature of the curriculum is the way

that it uses a variety of real experiences for pupils through a wide and varied programme of outings and visits, and visitors into school. This makes the curriculum come alive for pupils, engaging and exciting their interest. It also provides extended opportunities to reinforce social interactions and communication skills. Every opportunity is made to widen pupils' social horizons and to build their self-esteem. There is a specific emphasis on social and life skills. The small nature of the school community means that pupils always know what is happening. There is a carefully thought out approach by staff to pupils' social and play activities. This helps them to focus better on learning and promotes self-confidence. All subjects of the National Curriculum have sufficient time allocated. Daily assemblies with an act of worship reinforce a Christian ethic. There is especially good emphasis on life skills across most areas. However, the school does not do enough to support specific literacy and numeracy skills across the subjects.

Teaching is good. It is outstanding in the use of the TEACCH programmes. There is generally good planning for lessons in literacy and numeracy, with careful identification of what pupils will learn linked to their individual education plan (IEP) targets. A few lessons in subjects other than English and mathematics need to set out more clearly what pupils will learn by following the best practice as seen in science. A particularly successful feature is the way that staff work very closely together as a team with no distinction in role between teacher and assistants. All have a key part to play in the preparation and teaching of lessons. Staff form a close bond with pupils and know their learning and emotional needs very well. They employ a range of approaches to reward the positive behaviour of pupils and encourage appropriate attitudes to school and to learning. Staff are able, by working closely together as a team, to minimise and handle disruptive behaviour, effectively following school policies. They help pupils to establish good work habits and consequently this supports their good learning. As a result, behaviour is generally good and pupils respond very well to praise and reward.

Assessment is good. Pupils' learning is recorded in detail. There are daily and weekly discussions between staff about each pupil's progress. The key worker coordinates and monitors IEPs closely to evaluate progress. Assessments are made each term and these feed into end-of-year reports to parents. Much of this work is done on an informal basis between staff. The headteacher carefully tracks the progress of each child.

Pupils make good progress in their academic attainments. In the specific TEACCH tasks for literacy and numeracy they make excellent progress. They also make exceptional progress in their social and communication skills. Pupils make excellent progress when they first join the school. Pupils also make good progress in their preparations for transfer to other provision. For example, transition to high school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils' personal development is extremely well promoted by the range of activities and opportunities available. Lessons in social and living skills form a key area of success for all pupils. The calm and friendly ethos of the school is a main contributing factor in promoting the highly successful development of pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Pupils become successful in socialisation as shown, for example, in photographic records. Behaviour is generally good and pupils respond extremely well to positive reinforcement techniques. Pupils show increased ability to manage their daily lives due to improvements in their communication skills. Pupils' attendance is good. This is because their attitudes to attending school are significantly enhanced by their successes and they enjoy school. They make an excellent contribution to their school community and to the local community. There are many examples of fund raising for local charities. There are contacts and aid links with a school in Africa. Pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their education through their increased skills in basic literacy and numeracy, together with improved social and communications skills. There is an exceptional range of opportunities presented to pupils to explore different social settings and to become familiar with community institutions, such as the work of the police and fire brigade, local government departments and hospitals.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

Provision for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety is good. The school has a careful programme of support for pupils in all aspects of their safety and health. Pastoral care is outstanding. Staff understand pupils' needs well and give them exceptional support. Each pupil has a key worker who coordinates and sets their IEP targets and tracks their progress. High staff-to-pupil ratios ensure that supervision is excellent at all times. Pupil and parent questionnaires show that pupils feel very safe in school. There are clear policies and procedures for safeguarding, health and safety. Staff undertake risk assessments for every trip out of school, plan trips well and provide good supervision. New staff are given good induction. All staff have regularly updated training in first aid and child protection procedures. They promote good attitudes in pupils towards being healthy. Food technology lessons focus on healthy eating. Healthy exercise is encouraged through twice daily walks and through regular swimming and physical education activities. There are clear procedures in place for ensuring equality of opportunity for pupils in the curriculum. However, the school has only recently identified issues relating to accessibility to the school premises and has yet to implement its new three-year plan to address these.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005.

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:

- Complete the work begun on developing cross-curricular links for English and mathematics in the foundation subjects.
- Ensure that all lesson plans have clear learning objectives and match best practice as seen in science.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils	√			
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	√			
The behaviour of pupils		√		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		√		
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School details

Name of school	St Andrew's School		
DCSF number	926/6145		
Unique reference number	121252		
Type of school	I		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1988		
Age range of pupils	6-12		
Gender of pupils	MI		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 5	Girls: 2	Total: 7
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 5	Girls: 2	Total: 7
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	From £13,000		
Address of school	Lower Common East Runton Cromer Norfolk NR27 9PG		
Telephone number	01263 511727		
Fax number	01263 511727		
Email address	head@standrewseastrunton.wanadoo.co.uk		
Headteacher	Ms Gillian Baker		
Proprietor	St Andrew's School Trust		
Reporting inspector	Ian Naylor		
Dates of inspection	11 December 2008		