

St Andrew's CofE High School for Boys

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126094
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	340922
Inspection dates	11–12 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Christine Jones

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	12–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	748
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Evans
Headteacher	Steve Mercer
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2010
School address	Sackville Road Worthing BN14 8BG
Telephone number	01903 820676
Fax number	01903 231880
Email address	office@st-andrews-boys.w-sussex.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 35 lessons and saw 33 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's priorities, analysed recent evidence on students' performance, read 240 parent and carer questionnaires as well as staff and student surveys.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well all students are achieving, particularly in mathematics
- how well provision meets the needs of all students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are more able.
- the contribution students make to the school and the wider community.

Information about the school

St Andrew's is smaller than most secondary schools and was first designated as a humanities college in 2005. The school admits a small number of students into Year 7; they only come from schools outside of the local area. The vast majority of students enter the school in Year 8 and come from the local Worthing area. The school is significantly oversubscribed, particularly into the small Year 7 group. The majority of students are of White British heritage, with a small number from minority ethnic groups. A small proportion of students speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is around the national average. The school has gained the International Schools gold award as well as Sportsmark silver award and Diana gold awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Andrew's is a successful school where students feel very safe and achieve well. This view is supported by parents: as one commented, 'My son has experienced an amazing time at St Andrew's and will achieve his potential in his academic subjects.' Students are proud of their school and keen to take up the opportunities offered. From attainment on entry which is below, and in some cases well below the national average, the students make good progress to reach just below average standards by the end of Year 11.

Students achieve well in English, where standards are improving. Achievement in mathematics is not as good as in other subjects. Standards in mathematics are rising gradually due to improvements in the quality of teaching but are still not as good as in other subjects. Students perform very well in history and geography, the specialist subjects in this humanities school. Achievement in these two subjects is good as teaching engages students and meets their needs. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to the good individual support they receive both from the Additional Educational Needs (AEN) department and in their lessons.

Students enjoy their education, are enthusiastic learners and are eager to take part in, and contribute to, the life of the school and the wider community. Their significant and extensive contributions range from participation in the West Sussex Youth Cabinet (including providing the first Youth Mayor), to students carrying out their own 'mini-Ofsted' assessment of the school. The students' commitment to the school is reflected in their good attendance and punctuality. The school council is well respected and its work is valued by the staff.

Effective teaching results in good learning in lessons where students are engaged and interested in a wide variety of well-planned activities. Teachers know their students very well and many are very skilful in developing and consolidating learning. Students behave well both in and out of lessons although they sometimes become restless when teaching does not meet their needs. Appropriate strategies are in place in most subjects to ensure students know the level they are working at and how to improve their work. The curriculum is currently under review and the school is aware of the need to update some areas, especially those related to vocational courses. The range of extra-curricular activities and other activities on offer is very impressive. For example, the opportunity to work in Kenyan schools was described by one student as 'a life-changing experience'. The very good relationships between staff and students make a significant contribution to the strong community life of the school. The school takes good care of the students and is committed to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Some safeguarding policies need updating to incorporate the best elements of recommended good practice.

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Staff work hard to get to know their students as individuals and liaise very effectively with both families and agencies to ensure all students receive appropriate support and help. As one boy said, 'if I'm having a bad day, someone's always there for me.'

The quality of education is improving under good leadership. Middle leaders are growing in confidence and are rising to the challenge of holding their teams to account for the achievement and well-being of students. There is good capacity for further improvement as the leadership team has an accurate picture and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and knows what needs to be done to improve performance, especially in mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement and improve progress in mathematics by:
 - making sure that the good and outstanding teaching methods used in many classes are disseminated widely and used in all lessons '
 - promptly identifying individual students who are underachieving and helping them to improve.
- Widen the diversity of the curriculum, especially in relation to vocational education, to allow a flexible response to the changing needs of individual students.
- Ensure that recommended good practice is followed in all areas of safeguarding.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The school is working hard to improve students' achievement and there is no significant difference in the performance of different groups. The percentage of students gaining at least five GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics is just below the national average. This represents good progress when the students' low starting points are taken into consideration. This is supported by some very good outcomes in the specialist humanities subjects and rapidly improving outcomes in English. Outcomes in mathematics are slowly improving as the quality of teaching improves, although good practice is not disseminated widely enough. Underachieving students are given support but are not always identified promptly. Students were judged to be making good progress in the majority of lessons seen during the inspection.

In lessons, students are keen to learn and work effectively when tasks are appropriate and engaging. The quality of students' behaviour in lessons is directly related to the effectiveness of teaching and, in the best, is outstanding. Students are well aware of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles and are keen to be involved in the good range of sporting activities provided by the school. All students feel very secure and know how to keep themselves and others safe in lessons and around the school. They do not feel that bullying is an issue but know who to speak to if they have concerns. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and felt by students to be central to the life of the school. As a result, students are maturing into thoughtful reliable citizens with their own clear views, well-considered opinions and a good understanding of right and wrong.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Good lessons are demanding and proceed at a brisk pace that keeps students on their toes and focused on their learning. Humour is an essential component of these lessons, where both teachers and students enjoy working and learning together. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well by teachers to support learning. In the best lessons, teachers are skilled in modifying and adapting their teaching during lessons to meet the students' changing needs and students are able to learn actively rather than simply listening to lengthy presentations from the teacher.

Underachievement is quickly identified through rigorous use of the school's tracking systems and students are given appropriate support. Students' work books are usually marked regularly and success is clearly identified, with good guidance given on how to improve. The school has a good group of skilled teaching assistants who provide valued support in lessons.

The good curriculum is increasingly flexible for all students with a growing emphasis on the development of learning skills. The range of vocational courses does not yet fully complement the good range of GCSE subjects offered. The school's specialist humanities

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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status has been used to very good effect in extending the curriculum and there are some innovative examples of joint-subject initiatives such as a geography/ English project that focuses on developing students' critical thinking and skills in analysis. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities was described by parents and carers as 'fantastic' and by students as 'awesome' and are all well attended. School trips are particularly highly valued and one parent commented that they 'play an important part in meeting our son's educational needs'.

Good transition arrangements from primary and middle schools are appreciated by parents and carers, many of whom commented that their children settled into their new school 'easily and happily'. The welfare of students is monitored carefully. Students who are vulnerable or at risk are identified effectively and given very good support and the school works well with external agencies. In particular, parents and carers were very pleased with the extra support given to students whose attendance at school was limited by serious illness.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and his effective senior team are united in their commitment to helping all the students in their care to achieve their best. Thorough self-evaluation draws on a wide range of information to focus on key priorities for improvement. Most managers routinely make use of the outcomes of secure monitoring procedures to plan for successful improvements. Challenging performance targets are used successfully in most areas to raise achievement. Progress towards meeting those targets is monitored carefully to ensure good value for money.

No form of discrimination is tolerated and equality of opportunity is promoted very successfully. This is illustrated by the good progress made by vulnerable students including refugees, looked after students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. As part of the good quality care the school takes of the students, secure safeguarding procedures are in place to ensure their safety. The senior leadership team is aware of the need to review and update training and policies for safeguarding to follow recommended good practice more closely. The school is active in promoting cohesion within its own community, in the local area and through international links as part of its status as an International School.

The school maintains excellent communications with parents and carers and asks for

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their views regularly. This is well supported by the use of ICT through the school's website where parents receive weekly messages. The governing body has a good understanding of its role in supporting and challenging the school and have a thorough grasp of its strengths and areas for improvement. Governors are reflective and always consider how best they can work with the school and evaluate their input.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The response of parents and carers was strongly supportive of the school. A very small minority felt that the school did not help their children to have a healthy lifestyle, a criticism with which a few students agreed. The inspection found little evidence to support this view. Unacceptable behaviour was another concern raised by a few parents and carers but again this was not supported by the good behaviour observed during the inspection. All of the students who responded said they felt safe in the school and this was supported by almost all of the parent and carer responses.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Andrew's School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 240 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 748 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	30	154	61	17	7	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	81	35	144	61	5	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	91	39	136	58	6	3	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	88	37	128	54	12	5	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	87	37	131	56	12	5	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	71	30	138	56	20	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	20	153	65	22	9	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	69	29	144	61	5	2	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	83	35	138	56	14	6	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	71	31	122	25	21	9	7	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	62	26	138	55	20	8	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	72	31	149	63	6	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	101	43	119	51	7	3	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



13 May 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of St Andrew's CofE High School for Boys, Worthing BN14 8BG '

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and visiting in your lessons. We were particularly impressed by the pride you take in your school. This letter is to tell you what we found.

- St Andrew's is a good and improving school.
- You make good progress, especially in English and humanities subjects.
- Your achievement in mathematics has been weaker in the past but is improving this term.
- You tell us you feel very safe in the school and learn a lot in your lessons when they are lively and interesting.
- You really enjoy school and your attendance is good.
- You make an excellent contribution to the school, are keen to take on responsibilities and really enjoy the extensive range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school takes very good care of you and there is always someone to help if needed.
- Many of your teachers plan lessons that will keep you interested and help you to learn successfully. They are all committed to making sure you are able to fulfil your potential.

We have asked the school to look at the following areas to help you to improve.

- Raise your achievement in mathematics by improving teaching, ensuring teachers keep an eye on your progress in lessons and help you quickly if you are not doing as well as you could.'
- Extending the school curriculum so that you can study more of the subjects that interest you.
- Making sure that all school policies and procedures for keeping you safe are as up to date as possible.

You can do your part to help by ensuring you continue to behave well in lessons and work hard, especially in mathematics. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Christine Jones Her Majesty's Inspector

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