

## St. Andrew's College Cambridge

13 Station Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB1 2JB

### Inspection dates

1–3 May 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for students	<b>Good</b>
Sixth form provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the boarding provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- High-quality leadership and management, well supported by the proprietor, have ensured good and improving provision. The independent school standards are met in full.
- Leaders have refreshed the curriculum so that it is now more closely matched to students' changing needs.
- Teachers know their students very well. Teaching and learning over time are typically good.
- Positive working relationships lead to a calm learning environment, good behaviour and the good development of students' personal skills.
- Effective careers information, advice and guidance prepare students well for the next steps in education.
- Students attain well but some of them are held back by limitations in their English language skills.
- A few teachers do not make enough checks to ensure that students understand, or ask questions to challenge students to deepen their learning.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding. All staff give high priority to keeping students safe.
- Safeguarding training is regularly updated in education but not in the boarding provision. Record-keeping is not as precise as it should be in boarding.
- The school does not fully meet the national minimum standards (NMS) for boarding schools.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for boarding schools

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.
- The school must take action to meet the national minimum standards for boarding schools and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to raise standards and students' attainment at the highest level by:
  - ensuring that teachers' questioning is consistently focused on challenging students to deepen their learning, as well as checking on learning, systematically, at each stage in their lessons
  - encouraging students to make best use of every opportunity, in and out of lessons, to develop their English language skills.
- Senior leaders must take action to meet the NMS for boarding schools and associated requirements by ensuring that:
  - the school follows and maintains the policies and documents described in Appendix 1 (NMS 13.7)
  - the school has, and follows, an appropriate policy on recording and responding to complaints that is compliant with the relevant regulatory standards (NMS 18.1).

## Inspection judgements

<b>Effectiveness of leadership and management</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leaders and managers in the boarding provision</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected in the boarding provision</b>	<b>Good</b>

- Senior leaders and the proprietor have ensured that the school meets all of the independent school standards. Although aspects of the national minimum standards for boarders were not fully met, the minor shortfalls were quickly rectified during the inspection and did not compromise students' safety and/or welfare.
- Leaders at all levels are unwaveringly ambitious for students' performance. There is a resolute determination to secure systematic improvement in the good provision that exists across all aspects of the school's work.
- Senior leaders have high expectations, coupled with a secure understanding of what is working well and what needs to change. The proprietor and directors evaluate the school's performance accurately and so they are able to hold their teams to account very effectively to bring about further improvement.
- Leaders' collective skills and knowledge have established firm foundations for further improvement very effectively. For example, this is demonstrated in the increasing proportion of sixth-form students attaining the highest grades in A-level examinations over the last three years, after a previous dip.
- Almost all staff share senior leaders' vision for ongoing improvement. In their responses to the Ofsted staff survey, they spoke highly of the leadership team and the support they offer.
- As one staff member said, 'The school management is very approachable. Students' welfare is very important and managers go the extra mile to ensure that they achieve.' In echoing the range of positive comments, another said, 'There is a staff counsellor for welfare problems. It is a happy working environment.'
- Management structures have been strengthened further recently. Formal meetings are now a termly requirement, with clear expectations, systematic approaches and follow-up actions. Improvement targets are a standing agenda item. Meeting notes are shared through clear lines of accountability and a full academic report is produced.
- In recognition of feedback from the school's own surveys and the changing cohorts of students joining the school, leaders have taken steps to refine the curriculum. While almost all also students are post-16, the few younger students follow a pre-A-level pathway in arts, science and humanities and a GCSE mathematics course.
- The sixth form offer includes a full range of A-level subjects, alongside university foundation courses. This gives students an appropriate choice of entry routes to higher education.
- Leaders have taken appropriate action to improve the quality of careers information, advice and guidance the school offers. A new careers coordinator role has been created to raise students' awareness of the different pathways to higher education, employment

and/or training. While most students aspire to, and are successful in, gaining university places, senior leaders have recognised the need to extend this aspect of the school's work. In doing so, they aim to raise students' awareness of wider opportunities, including higher-level apprenticeships.

- New systems are in place to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. All teachers are observed regularly by members of the senior leadership team. The information gathered is used appropriately, in collaboration with subject leads, to share good practice and to provide support where aspects of teaching need to be improved.
- Routine collection of students' progress information provides a highly detailed picture of performance in each subject. Results are collated and analysed, by senior leaders and in team meetings, to identify where extra help is needed and to ensure that any interventions are making a difference in meeting students' learning needs.
- The director of care and house managers have worked hard to continue to develop the good-quality boarding provision. Significant investment in the halls of residence has led to improvements, for example in provision to ensure students' health and safety and in internet speed. Internet access is important to students for their studies, as well as for the high number of students who are studying far away from home to keep in touch with their families.
- Monitoring and review processes are systematic and regular. The director of care is typically accurate in evaluating what is working well and what needs to improve. Positive action is taken to seek out boarders' views and to use their feedback to continue to develop the boarding provision.
- The boarding staff work well together as a team. They share the whole-school leadership vision for ongoing improvement, taking pride in the contribution that their roles make to the quality of students' overall experiences and daily life in the school. In discussions with inspectors, boarding staff said that they feel well supported by the director of care and the wider senior leadership team.
- Many team members go above and beyond the general expectations of their role, taking care to ensure equality and inclusion and providing individual support, for example in making suitable adjustments to meet the cultural needs of boarders, most of whom are studying far away from their families and home nations.
- Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure that boarders are aware of what to do in the event of a complaint. While records show the outcome and the nature of the complaint, the investigation information recorded lacks the details of how the complaint outcome was reached.
- Although records of complaints about boarding provision are not always completed in line with the provider's complaints policy, evidence confirms that all complaints are responded to appropriately and investigated carefully.

## **Governance**

- The proprietor plays a full role in identifying the school's improvement priorities. Working closely with other directors, he is fully committed to ensuring that St Andrew's College students experience high-quality education and care. As a result, he is a regular visitor to the school.

- Since the previous inspection, the proprietor's links with school leaders have been strengthened through the appointment of two directors from within the senior leadership team. Together they ensure that leaders at all levels have a sharp understanding of the quality of provision and the things that need to improve.
- The proprietor and other directors understand their responsibilities to keep students safe. However, some administrative arrangements, for example linked to training updates for the welfare team and the recording of information about complaints, do not meet the NMS for boarding schools fully. Nevertheless, the proprietor and directors make sure that the school's systems to ensure students' welfare, health and safety are secure.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy meets current requirements and is published on the school's website. All relevant recruitment checks are made on school staff. The single central record is regularly scrutinised to make sure that it is up to date and meets statutory guidelines.
- Staff are vigilant and approachable. They know their students extremely well because of the regular checks they make on well-being in tutorials and through routine discussions. Any concerns are reported quickly and swift action is taken. There is a deep culture of safeguarding across all aspects of provision.
- Suitable safeguarding training is in place for the education team. This is regularly updated. Similarly, all boarding staff receive safeguarding training, but this is not updated as a matter of routine. As a result, current practice in boarding does not fully match the commitment set out in the provider's own policy. Nevertheless, staff are clear in their understanding of what they need to look out for and the things they need to do if a concern is raised.
- Administrative shortfalls, rectified during the inspection, were also noted in the application of the recruitment policy processes for boarding staff.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They are experienced in their specialist areas. Typically, they use their knowledge and understanding well to inspire students in a relaxed but purposeful learning environment. Inspectors' findings reflected the views of students when they said, 'our teachers are knowledgeable and professional'.
- Consistently high expectations were a common feature of the lessons that inspectors observed during their time in the school. In most instances, teachers' careful planning gives appropriate consideration to the different learning needs and range of abilities of students working in the same group.
- Senior leaders' strong focus on the use and development of students' English skills means that teachers typically afford high priority to establishing students' knowledge of the subject-specific language. Teachers' questions often encourage students to build on prior learning so that they extend their responses and, in turn, deepen their learning.
- Students say that the small groups they work in help them to develop their knowledge

and understanding in a secure learning environment. They value the support they receive from all staff, including the time allowed for them to adapt to the English education system after very different experiences in their home countries.

- The learning culture fostered by teachers in lessons reflects the school's aim to develop good learning behaviours that enable students to become self-directed and resilient learners.
- Teachers build students' confidence through the homework and research activities they set to be completed independently. These tasks are effective in laying the foundations for the next steps in developing students' expertise in class.
- In a few lessons inspectors observed, teachers did not take the time to check students' understanding before moving on to the next task. A few teachers did not use questioning techniques effectively to build on students' prior learning and take it to the next level.
- Although education staff give high priority to identifying any required interventions and support needs, some students are held back by weaknesses in their spoken and written English language skills.
- Teachers work hard to develop students' love of reading, in particular in English lessons. Appropriately, inspectors observed teachers in most subjects encouraging students to read aloud from the text and articles they were using to help them learn.
- Students are given plenty of opportunities to discuss their work and, more generally, life in school and in the boarding accommodation. Regular tutorials track student's academic and personal progress. Where extra help is needed, teachers take swift action to put this in place.
- While the school does not have any students who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities currently, a qualified member of staff is available for any students in danger of falling behind. She is also there to support students identified as the most able. Weekly meetings are arranged, in addition to the routine tutorials, to plan these students' next steps in learning and to challenge them to achieve their very best.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote students' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school is a friendly and welcoming community. Leaders and school staff give high priority to the development of students' personal skills and are successful in supporting most students to become confident learners.
- St. Andrew's students are polite and eager to speak about their work. They are proud to be students at their school and they value the caring and nurturing approaches teachers use to support them. They told inspectors how this helps them to settle in quickly at the start of their course and how it keeps them on track during their time in the school.
- Students said they feel safe. They were able to explain to inspectors how they learn about keeping safe in a range of different settings, including when online. They know there are staff they can speak with if they have any personal or welfare concerns. Importantly, they are confident in the knowledge that issues will be dealt with once raised. They were keen

to point out to inspectors that bullying is not tolerated in any form and, if it were to happen, swift action would be taken. As one student said, 'Teachers are always watching out for us'.

- Students have opportunities to take part in sporting events, charity fund-raising and a range of different clubs held in school. However, participation rates are relatively low.
- Some students gain useful insights into the world of work through initiatives such as the Young Enterprise scheme, or work locally as volunteers.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous to staff, visitors and to each other.
- Most students attend school regularly. The attendance officer ensures that any rare incidences of absence are acted on. Attendance patterns are monitored to identify any cause for concern and to determine any further actions that may need to be taken.
- While students' overall attendance has been over 96% for the past three years, senior leaders are not complacent. In order to sustain the focus on further improvement, an attendance action plan, with enhanced targets, has been put in place for the current year.
- As in the school, in the boarding provision, incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Bullying is not a concern. Boarders are respectful to house managers and abide by 'house rules', for example, by returning home on time, or informing staff if they are running late.
- Occasionally, when boarders' behaviour falls short of leaders' expectations, host family accommodation is discussed as an alternative option. In line with the school's disciplinary procedures, this is a natural consequence for the few boarders who are unable to manage their time and regular school attendance independently.

## Outcomes for students

**Good**

- Examination results in 2017 demonstrated an improvement on the previous year as a result of curriculum changes, in particular the reduced GCSE offer. The proportion of students attaining the highest grades in their A-level examinations also improved.
- Students' attainment in GCSE mathematics and across A-level subjects is above the national average. Most students, including the most able, make good progress in their chosen subjects, and many of them work hard to develop their spoken and written English.
- While the school offers good provision to support students who struggle, a few do not achieve the high grades they are capable of because of limitations in their English language skills.
- Students are well prepared for their university applications. Many of them gain places in their first choice institutions and all students typically gain a university place.
- Students leave the school ready to take the next steps in their education, with good levels

of attainment, mature attitudes to learning and well-developed study skills.

### Sixth form provision

**Good**

- The curriculum is suitably planned to meet the needs and interest of the students who gain places at the school. Programmes are well matched to each individual's aspirations and ability.
- In 2017, students' attainment on A-level courses was above the national average. A year-on-year improvement in the proportion of A\* and A grades achieved over the last three years, in particular in mathematics and art, represents a turnaround from a previous dip.
- A carefully planned programme of induction ensures that students have opportunities to socialise with their peers and get to know their teachers. Consequently, they settle in to school quickly and get off to a good start with their studies.
- Students' high level of satisfaction with their chosen courses is reflected in their equally high rates of attendance, retention and successful completion of their programmes of study.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. The effective working relationships they establish with their students, coupled with typically good teaching, learning and assessment over time, lead to good outcomes.
- The school reports regularly to parents and carers on students' progress. While many students' families live overseas, leaders make every effort to keep parents up to date and well informed, often through the use of external agencies to bridge the geographical and language barriers that exist.
- The range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer to students includes team sports, debating society, charity work and a variety of clubs held on one of the school sites. Some work as volunteers in charity shops and at the local hospital.
- Although students speak very positively about these experiences, participation rates are variable. As a result, some students miss out on important opportunities to develop their English-speaking skills further.
- Students are generally well prepared to take their next steps in education and are successful in gaining places at their chosen universities. Nevertheless, leaders have recently enhanced arrangements for the provision of careers information, advice and guidance. This is so that students can make even better informed choices in getting ready for life beyond school.

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the boarding provision

**Good**

- Boarders' positive experiences of living in halls make a good contribution to their personal development. They benefit from being with friends and enjoy the community and social experience of boarding. As one boarder described the experience, 'Being in the halls of residence helps me academically because I am with other students who are studying'.
- The boarding staff share the whole-school culture of high aspirations and high



expectations, and these features underpin the calm environment conducive to study that is reflected across the provision.

- The halls of residence are spacious and well appointed. Bedrooms have study space and en suite shower rooms. House managers know their boarders well and provide good personalised care. To make boarders feel at home, they make an effort to provide some meals with an international flavour, alongside traditional British menus. These efforts are appreciated by boarders and support their good relationships with the staff team.
- Pastoral support and well-being is given a high profile. Designated trained pastoral care staff support boarders in regard to their mental health. The school works hard to encourage boarders to recognise where support is needed and access pastoral services. One boarder said, 'If there is an issue someone will sort it out'.
- The services of a specialist counsellor and several opportunities to meet each week with academic and pastoral staff combine effectively to support boarders during examination periods, times of stress and illness.
- A high proportion of boarders are away from their family and friends for the first time and so they naturally form friendship groups within their own nationality. Although boarders are encouraged to speak English in the halls, as they are in school, this encouragement is not always successful.
- The range of social and extra-curricular activities offered in the halls is limited and so this restricts wider opportunities for boarders to mix with each other to develop their English-speaking skills further.

## School details

Unique reference number	110932
Social care unique reference number	SC015288
DfE registration number	873/6019
Inspection number	10043518

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The inspection of boarding provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent boarding school
Age range of pupils	15 to 22
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	106
Number of part-time pupils	0
Number of boarders on roll	100
Proprietor	Mervyn Martin
Headteacher	Wayne Marshall
Annual fees (day pupils)	£15,300 - £19,950
Annual fees (boarders)	£25,320 - £34,050
Telephone number	01223323718
Website	<a href="http://www.standrewscambridge.co.uk">www.standrewscambridge.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:wayne.marshall@standrewscambridge.co.uk">wayne.marshall@standrewscambridge.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	10 February 2015

## **Information about this school**

- St. Andrew's College provides international education and was registered as an independent school in 1976.
- The school is located on two sites in the centre of Cambridge.
- It is registered as an independent boarding school for boys and girls.
- There are currently 110 students on the roll. Almost all students are international students from a range of different countries.
- Most students stay in boarding accommodation located on several different sites across the city, or with host families. A few older students live in private accommodation.
- Study programmes are offered for up to 122 students between the ages of 14 and 22. The courses available include GCSE mathematics, A-levels and university foundation courses.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The most recent inspection of the boarding provision was in October 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- The boarding provision was inspected by social care regulatory inspectors, alongside the education provision, during this integrated inspection.
- Inspectors observed 30 lessons, or part lessons, some jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, directors, the proprietor and members of staff and students in education and boarding settings.
- Formal and informal discussions took place with students on the different school sites and in boarding accommodation.
- Inspectors observed students' conduct in lessons, as they moved around the school and in the halls of residence.
- Inspectors evaluated a range of documentation provided by the school. This included: the school's self-evaluation and development plan; assessment information; school and residential accommodation policies; records of behaviour and attendance and records related to students' safety and welfare.
- Alongside the school's own survey of students', staff members' and parents' views, inspectors considered 11 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire for school staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for students.
- This report refers to 'students' rather than pupils throughout because that is the term used by the school.

## Inspection team

Christine Dick, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Copping	Ofsted Inspector
Deidra Keating	Social Care Regulatory Inspector
Natalie Burton	Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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