

# Inspection of St Andrew's College

Billing Road, Northampton NN1 5DG

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Inspection dates: 29 June to 1 July 2021

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Staff build effective relationships with pupils. They work with care staff on the wards to support pupils when they are admitted to hospital. They use a 'trauma informed care' approach to help pupils to feel settled and engage in learning. Teachers teach pupils on the wards where necessary. Pupils attend lessons at the school when teachers assess they are ready to do so.

The school is a calm, caring environment. Structured, well-established routines help pupils to feel safe. They are closely supervised and supported well by skilled teachers. The large majority of pupils are positive about the school. They say that staff listen to them and help them to manage their emotions and behaviour. This support helps pupils to behave exceptionally well when they are in school.

Teachers plan learning to help pupils develop resilience to overcome barriers to learning. Parents are positive about the school. They told us that the school has changed their children's lives for the better. Pupils gain qualifications and enjoy experiences that prepare them well for their future lives and learn about their local community. For example, pupils raise money for local and national charities.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Teachers assess pupils' needs carefully when they are admitted to the hospital. Leaders offer pupils an ambitious curriculum. Pupils choose from a broad range of subjects to inspire and interest them. Each pupil has a curriculum personalised to their needs. Teachers know pupils well. They work effectively with health and social care staff. Together they plan individual curriculum timetables for pupils. The timetables support pupils' therapeutic, academic and personal development needs.

Curriculum subjects follow recognised accredited schemes of work. Curriculum plans show how pupils build knowledge over time. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. They work with pupils one to one in lessons. They support pupils to be resilient and develop their self-esteem. They check often what pupils know and can remember. Teachers use skilful questioning and flexible approaches in lessons. These strategies help to keep pupils motivated and engaged in their learning.

Pupils, including post-16 students, continue courses that they started at their previous schools. They complete academic courses such as GCSEs. Leaders are ambitious for what pupils can achieve. They take every opportunity to support pupils to gain accreditations in a broad range of subjects. Leaders are keen to improve pupils' life skills for when they leave school. Where pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan), learning is appropriately linked to the stated outcomes and reviewed regularly.

Leaders assess how well pupils can read when they arrive at the hospital. Staff support pupils who struggle to read to develop their skills. For example, trained staff

deliver extra lessons to help pupils to use their phonics knowledge to work out unfamiliar words. However, reading is not prioritised across the school. Pupils do not consistently have the opportunity to read for enjoyment, or on a frequent basis to develop their skills.

Pupils' personal development is a high priority. There is a strong focus on preparing pupils for their potential next steps in life. A suitable programme is in place to teach pupils about their options for future careers. Pupils receive independent advice and guidance about further education, employment and training.

Staff and pupils develop strong, trusting relationships. Staff help pupils to develop their strength of character. They support pupils to develop independence and increase in confidence. For example, they encourage pupils to excel in their area of interest. They can take part in art, music, drama and sports activities. They discuss and debate relevant issues such as diversity and equality. Yet, pupils do not have enough opportunities to extend and broaden their experiences in different circumstances. They are not able to fully develop their wider interests. When restrictions caused by the pandemic are eased, leaders have plans in place to develop these opportunities for pupils.

Most pupils attend well. Health, social care and school staff work together well to ensure pupils can attend school. If pupils are not well enough to attend school, teachers deliver lessons to them on the wards. Pupils' behaviour when in school is exceptional. They are respectful, calm and enthusiastic to learn. Staff set clear expectations so that pupils understand what to do.

Staff are very positive about working at the school. They feel highly valued by leaders. They receive strong support from leaders for their well-being and to manage their workload. There is effective teamwork between staff in the school and across the hospital to meet the needs of pupils.

The proprietor has a good understanding of the unique context of the school. The governing body carries out regular checks on the performance of the school. Governors and the proprietor ensure that the school meets the independent school standards. The chair of the proprietor board meets often with the headteacher. They discuss the progress of the plans for the school's improvement. Leaders have ensured that the move to the school's new premises has been smooth. The proprietor commissions regular health and safety checks to make sure that the school building is well kept. Leaders make sure that school policies and procedures reflect the latest statutory guidance. The school's safeguarding policy is available on the school's website. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The proprietor ensures that the necessary checks are carried out on the suitability of staff to work with pupils. Staff receive guidance through extensive safeguarding

training. They receive daily information and frequent updates from clinical staff caring for pupils on the hospital wards. Leaders and staff share an in-depth knowledge of pupils and the potential risks pupils may face. Relevant information is communicated effectively. Professionals work with pupils across the hospital and school services. They share a system to record any concerns they have about pupils.

Pupils learn how to take responsibility for their own safety. They say they feel safe in school and can talk to staff about any worries they have.

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

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- Pupils do not have consistent opportunities to improve their reading skills. This may hinder their ability to read fluently and with enjoyment. Leaders should ensure that pupils receive the support they need so that all can read a range of texts confidently and for pleasure.
- Pupils do not have a wide, rich set of extra-curricular experiences. This can limit the chances for pupils to develop their talents and interests. Leaders should ensure that pupils are able to take advantage of more opportunities to learn new skills in a wider variety of situations.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135785
<b>DfE registration number</b>	941/6071
<b>Local authority</b>	West Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10194707
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	13 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	22
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	14
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	St Andrew's Healthcare
<b>Chair</b>	Katie Fisher
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cheryl Smith
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	Nil (inclusive with placement)
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 614800
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stah.org">www.stah.org</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:college@standrew.co.uk">college@standrew.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 to 24 November 2016

## Information about this school

- The school is located in the grounds of St Andrew's Healthcare, which is an independent, charitable, mental health facility in Northampton.
- The school provides education in a secure setting. It is attached to three secure, residential wards.
- Pupils have complex mental health conditions and challenging behaviour. Approximately half of the pupils who attend the school have an EHC plan.
- The school is registered to provide education for up to 45 pupils.
- Since the previous standard inspection, the school's leadership has changed. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2020. A new chair of the proprietor board was appointed in September 2018.
- At the time of the inspection, the chair of the proprietor board had not registered her details correctly with the Department for Education (DfE). During the inspection, the DfE confirmed that they had received the necessary details for the chair.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision
- The school's last standard inspection took place on 22 to 24 November 2016. A material change inspection took place in November 2020 to approve the school's relocation to its current premises.

## Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. We discussed the impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in our evaluation.
- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the chair of the proprietor board and three members of the governing body.
- We looked closely at the quality of education in four subjects: English, mathematics, physical education and personal, social, health and economic education. We met with subject leaders to discuss these subjects, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, met with teachers and spoke with pupils.
- We discussed the school's approach to safeguarding pupils with the designated leader for the school and the designated leader for the charity. We reviewed

records related to safeguarding and the school's single central register. We spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding.

- We looked at a range of documents, including those relating to the school's policies and procedures, school improvement, curriculum plans, information about attendance and behaviour and examples of pupils' EHC plans.

### **Inspection team**

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector      Her Majesty's Inspector

Peter Stonier      Her Majesty's Inspector

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