

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

St Andrew's School (Rochester)

October 2022

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School's Details

School	St Andrew's S	chool (Roch	ester)		
DfE number	887/6002	887/6002			
Registered charity number	270901	270901			
Address	St Andrew's School (Rochester)				
	24-28 Watts A	24-28 Watts Avenue			
	Rochester	Rochester			
	Kent	Kent			
	ME1 1SA	ME1 1SA			
Telephone number	01634 843479	01634 843479			
Email address	info@st-andr	info@st-andrews.rochester.sch.uk			
Principal	Mrs Emma St	Mrs Emma Steinmann-Gilbert			
Proprietor	Education De	Education Development Trust			
Age range	2 to 11	2 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	363	363			
	EYFS	107	Infants	88	
	Juniors	168			
Inspection dates	4 to 6 Octobe	4 to 6 October 2022			

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1. Background Information

About the school

1.1 St. Andrew's School is an independent co-educational day school in Rochester. Since 1999, the school has been owned and governed by the Education Development Trust, which is a registered charity. The present chair of the proprietorial body was appointed in November 2018.

1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has created a well-being room, refurbished the infant and junior libraries, developed weekly woodland environment sessions for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and provided personal laptops for all pupils in Years 1 to 6.

What the school seeks to do

1.3 The school aims to provide a high-quality all-round education, endeavouring to provide a stimulating environment that enables outstanding academic achievement. It seeks to foster a caring atmosphere in which pupils and teachers are aware of, and are sympathetic to, the needs of others. The school desires all pupils to become responsible individuals who can work together co-operatively and with respect for their peers. It seeks to offer a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop self-confidence to face the challenges they will meet in life.

About the pupils

1.4 Pupils come from a wide range of family backgrounds, mostly living within a 15-mile radius of the school, and reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the local area. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils on entry is broadly average. The school has identified 11 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who are supported by strategies within the classroom or additional support as required. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 34 pupils, 13 of whom receive additional support. Pupils who are identified as the most able are supported by modifications to the curriculum.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as <u>met</u> or as <u>not met</u>. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: <u>The Education (Independent School Standards)</u> Regulations 2014, <u>Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework</u>.

Key findings

2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards)
Regulations 2014 and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years
Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 National Curriculum tests in the years 2018, 2019 and 2022 confirm that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are

appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.14 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.
- 2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.
- 2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.
- 2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
 - Pupils make excellent progress from their various starting points and successfully gain entry to a range of competitively sought senior schools.
 - Pupils achieve excellent levels of attainment across the range of subjects.
 - Pupils' mathematical skills are excellent and are applied well across the curriculum.
 - Pupils' success is underpinned by their enthusiasm and positive approach to learning, their desire to do well and the culture of mutual respect between teachers and pupils.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
 - Pupils show substantial self-understanding and self-confidence so that they feel well-prepared for the next stage of their lives.
 - Pupils demonstrate an excellent awareness and appreciation of diversity, and they show a high level of respect for those of different backgrounds.
 - Pupils have an extremely strong moral sense and, as a result, their behaviour is excellent.
 - From their earliest years pupils readily take on, and are successful in, positions of responsibility.

Recommendation

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
 - Improve pupils' thinking skills by consistently providing meaningful challenge and more opportunities for independent exploration to enhance their learning.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, make excellent progress from their starting points, successfully fulfilling the school's aims to provide a high-quality, all-round education, within a stimulating environment. Nationally standardised test data, lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work, show attainment to be well above average in relation to national age-related expectations. Pupils successfully gain entry to senior schools, including local grammar schools, because the school's broad curriculum and high-quality teaching effectively support their learning, along with effective assessment and tracking, careful planning, and targeted support when required. In the EYFS, children entering with a broad range of ability, make rapid progress, so that by the end of Reception almost all reach the expected levels of development for their age. Pupils of all abilities continue to make rapid

- progress, and the oldest pupils attain well above age-related expectations by the end of Year 6. Responding to pre-inspection questionnaires, all parents agreed that the school enables their child to make progress and the overwhelming majority agreed that their individual educational needs were met effectively.
- Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are excellent. In the EYFS, children develop secure 3.6 foundations to their literacy and numeracy skills through a range of well-planned, engaging activities. In a French lesson, in the EYFS, teaching engaged the children, enabling them to increase their understanding, use new words and make rapid progress in their learning. Similarly, in a Reception phonics lesson, children showed an excellent level of engagement and concentration, all actively involved in sounding out the phonics and choosing letters to build three-letter words. In a science lesson, pupils in Year 1, accurately described the difference between deciduous and evergreen trees and discussed what seeds need to germinate, using correct scientific terminology. Pupils value teachers' helpful feedback and marking which helps them take the next steps in their learning. Appropriate challenge in many lessons enables pupils of all abilities to maximise their progress. For instance, in a Spanish lesson in Year 4, pupils rapidly progressed as they learned to say the days of the week, the date and the month in Spanish. All pupils achieved success in the associated written work because the tasks set provided suitable levels of challenge for different abilities. In science, Year 6 work demonstrated how pupils had developed their understanding of the investigative process through a range of scientific experiments. Pupils produce high-quality work in their art and their creative talents are nurtured and developed as they are introduced to different art styles and artists. For example, pupils in Year 4 had created complex portrait collages inspired by David Hockney, and those in Year 6 produced skilful images of trees in the style of Kandinsky. The vast majority of pupils who responded to the questionnaires agreed that their skills and knowledge improve in most lessons and inspection evidence confirms this.
- 3.7 Pupils display excellent communication skills, applying them well in all subjects. In interviews, pupils spoke confidently, communicating their ideas and feelings and initiating purposeful conversations about their successes, activities and friendships. In a mathematics lesson, Year 2 pupils articulately explained to their class the number patterns they observed in a sequencing activity; while in an art lesson in Year 6, pupils spoke with passion about the artist Kandinsky's use of colour. Pupils say their opinions are listened to and valued. Consequently, there is a strong listening culture and respect for the opinions of others. The youngest children make excellent progress in learning phonics and prereading skills. Year 6 pupils added intonation and expression when reading their class novel, so creating atmosphere and engaging the listener. They showed great empathy for the main protagonist using a varied and rich vocabulary. Pupils say how much they enjoy reading because their teachers have helped them develop a love and appreciation of literature. Pupils' written communication skills are excellent, as they write for a range of purposes and genres. Pupils in a Year 5 lesson were able to explain what journalistic writing means, creating mind-maps and demonstrating a secure understanding of aspects of journalistic writing, and they know what they need to do to write effectively in this genre. The youngest children make rapid progress from emerging mark-making skills in Nursery to formal letter formation in Reception and are encouraged to write in full sentences by the time they reach Year 1. Pupils with SEND or EAL make rapid progress in their communication skills, because teaching develops their confidence and is well-matched to individual needs.
- 3.8 Pupils demonstrate excellent mathematical skills and have a secure knowledge of mathematical concepts, applying their knowledge well to problem-solving opportunities. Children in the EYFS make rapid progress learning to read the numbers one to five and counting out matching quantities of different objects. Pupils in Year 2 made excellent progress with their understanding of subtraction by breaking numbers into parts; in another lesson, Year 5 pupils accurately recalled their prior knowledge of mental strategies to describe different methods for addition and subtraction. They were able to deduce which method was best and explain that written calculation might be better for larger numbers. Pupils say how much they enjoy mathematics and that being taught a variety of methods to resolve problems helps them to tackle new challenges. They confidently apply their mathematical

- skills to other curriculum areas such as creating graphs and tables in geography and science. Pupils' work in books is of a high standard; there was evidence of advanced reasoning in Year 6 books where pupils were applying their skills to find a number of missing angles in a 2D shape using their knowledge of angles to resolve the complex challenges.
- 3.9 Pupils demonstrate strong information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Children in the EYFS were observed using the interactive white board to develop their mark-making skills. Year 4 pupils demonstrated excellent coding skills when working independently to create their own computer games, clearly explaining to inspectors the developments they had made to their game and those they intended to make next. In a lesson in Year 3, pupils developed their expertise to design and create interactive scenes, working confidently and demonstrating confident coding skills for their age. As they progress, pupils become highly competent in using and applying ICT in many areas of learning. These strong ICT skills develop because pupils have ready access to personal laptops and other devices; a result of the commitment of governors and school leaders who have invested in these facilities.
- 3.10 Pupils display excellent study skills. In the EYFS, the *I can progress flower* enables pupils to identify their own developmental and learning targets. Pupils can gather and use information from an increasingly wide range of sources and develop emotional intelligence and ability through discussion and debate and reflecting on their learning. Pupils' work shows that a wide range of study skills are taught, for example: analysing unseen text in English, drawing conclusions from data in science, and developing higher-order thinking skills though mathematical challenges. Pupils in Year 3 showed their skills in analysing, hypothesising and synthesising when, keen to demonstrate their knowledge, they talked maturely about earthquakes in New Zealand and predicted when the next one might be. Most lessons observed created opportunities for higher-order thinking, challenging pupils, who evaluated and reflected upon information provided to predict outcomes and solve complex problems. However, in a few lessons, progress was not as rapid because opportunities for independent exploration were not fully exploited.
- 3.11 Pupils achieve success in a range of activities outside the formal curriculum and spoke proudly about their success in a variety of sports in local competitions. The most able mathematicians showed excellent knowledge and reasoning when competing against over 50 other teams in a local mathematics competition and finishing second. Pupils had also gained recognition in ISA events, including gaining first place in the 2022 handwriting competition, and several runners-up received awards in the regional arts competitions.
- 3.12 Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning which are fostered by the secure classroom environment. Teachers lead by example, modelling positivity, kindness, encouragement and a good work ethic. Pupils feel supported and are prepared to attempt tasks that might seem difficult because they are unafraid of making mistakes. Pupils' books show that they take great care and pride in their work. The school promotes and encourages an approach whereby pupils see the value of mistakes and use them as a springboard for growth and for developing their abilities. Pupils respond positively to the high expectations that leaders, governors and staff have successfully embedded throughout the school.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils have excellent levels of perseverance, confidently responding to challenges. In the EYFS, children show strong self-confidence in their activities and play, responding positively to warm and encouraging interactions with their teachers. Pupils are resilient and reflective learners, developing a self-understanding which stands them in good stead for the next stages of their education. In interviews and informal conversations, pupils were objective about their strengths and discussed with insight what they needed to do to improve. Children in the EYFS change their shoes independently

and add smiley faces to the class reward chart themselves. Scrutiny of work in books identifies that older pupils effectively and accurately self-reflect using the success criteria from a task, with teachers adding supportive comments to further strengthen this area. This encourages pupils to persevere, and they use failure as a learning tool to push themselves outside of their comfort zones. Governors and leadership are highly effective in creating the space and the time for pupils to develop excellent personal skills and self-awareness. Responding to the questionnaires parents overwhelmingly agreed that the school helps their child to be confident and independent.

- 3.15 Pupils are confident decision makers. They take an active part in their school parliament which provides opportunities for pupils representing all classes to meet together to make decisions about school life, for example, deciding which charities to support and decisions about the format of the harvest festival assembly. Pupils make positive choices in their learning, personal development and relationships. For instance, children in the EYFS confidently chose whether to engage in free play in the house or theatre area, and which resources to use. Pupils in a Year 4 mathematics class were presented with the opportunity of selecting from tasks of varying difficulty. The pupils observed did not select the easier task, preferring to risk incorrect answers for a greater level of challenge and potential gains in knowledge and understanding.
- 3.16 Pupils' spiritual awareness is strong because the curriculum provides meaningful opportunities for personal reflection and appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. In the EYFS, short yoga sessions and breathing techniques are highly effective in helping pupils to be calm and reflect. In interviews, pupils were thoughtful and deeply respectful of other viewpoints and beliefs. Pupils in Year 4 commented that they enjoy the weekly assembly in church because of the peaceful surroundings and the community singing; they showed a real appreciation of the spiritual side of life. Pupils explained that they enjoyed finding out more about different religions when visitors from different faiths were invited into school to talk about their beliefs and philosophies. Pupils appreciate nature and the outdoors and look forward to their woodland learning activities and experiencing the natural world. Pupils in Year 3 spoke enthusiastically about how much they enjoyed collecting specimens to take home to put under their microscopes.
- 3.17 The pupils demonstrate strong moral development. They are deeply respectful of each other and the school community. Pupils told inspectors that they regarded members of staff and older pupils as role models whose moral example they respect. Pupils have a clear understanding of the school code of conduct and its values, which are regularly referenced and discussed in form times, PSCHE and assemblies; pupils understand the expectations and therefore modify their own behaviour accordingly. Pupils embrace the school culture of kindness readily, through the embedded school values and Golden Rules, adapting their own behaviour and accepting any consequences. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what it means to be fair and respectful to others. In interviews, all pupils showed that they respected each other despite not always having the same opinions. During break and lunch, pupils of all ages interacted with kindness and respect. Year 6 pupils set an excellent example to younger children in their roles as prefects. At lunch and break, prefects were situated strategically around the school and encouraged younger children to move around the school in a calm manner. They also spoke confidently and respectfully to inspectors when discussing their roles. Pupils in all lessons observed, showed high levels of self-discipline, and behaviour was consistently of the highest order. Pupils are calm and attentive, which results in a productive learning environment both inside and outside of the classroom.
- 3.18 Pupils of all ages demonstrate a high level of social awareness and readily offer practical support and care to one another. Older pupils appreciate the opportunities provided to work with and support younger pupils, and children in the EYFS respond well to the older pupils who read to them. Collaborative work, in the formal and extra-curricular context is highly effective. Pupils described situations where they work together to achieve common goals, for example in the Year 5 *Lego* science and technology project where they worked together to build a motorised snail. Children in the EYFS were observed working together spontaneously building towers from construction straws.

Collaborative skills are excellent and intrinsic to the school's approach to learning. In Year 3, pupils showed excellent teamwork when developing hockey skills in a games session. Having discussed the different styles of warm-up, they decided on groups and agreed on the formats. They undertook the routine they had decided upon with enthusiasm and purpose, giving advice to each other throughout. In a dance lesson in Year 1, pupils were engaged and happy exploring different movements and creating *motifs*; they collaborated well together in groups of five, exploring how to link movements and illustrate different positions. Responding to the questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills.

- 3.19 Pupils naturally respect and care for each other. In interviews, they said that they enjoyed taking responsibility for others, and having leadership roles, such as house captains, anti-bullying ambassadors and in the school parliament, which allow them to contribute positively to the wider life of the school. Children in the EYFS and infants also enjoy various responsibilities such as helping to lay the lunch tables and being helpers of the day. The school parliament is well respected, and pupils commented to inspectors that, as a result of the intervention of the parliament, buddy benches and worry boxes were introduced. The school actively supports a number of local and national charities, most of which are chosen by the pupils. Recently they have collected money and food to donate to a local centre for the homeless, and funds raised from dressing up as a character from *Roald Dahl* stories were donated to *Roald Dahl's Marvellous Children's Charity*.
- 3.20 Pupils demonstrate a keen awareness of diversity and cultural understanding. Opportunities to learn about different religions and cultures develop a broad awareness in pupils of different traditions, and pupils learn to be considerate and to celebrate differences. In interviews, pupils talked positively about how they celebrate each other's cultures in assemblies. Pupils are accepting of one another and enjoy learning about their different cultures and traditions through a well-planned personal, social and health education. The open and friendly ethos promoted by governors and senior leaders supports this and underpins the highly positive relationships. The pupils reported in interviews that everyone feels valued in the school community. Pupils explained how visitors from their local community who followed the Muslim faith had been invited into the school and the pupils enjoyed finding out more about how they worshipped, and particularly enjoyed learning to write their own names in Arabic. A display in the hallway allowed other children to see what they had been learning. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people.
- 3.21 Pupils' understanding of how to stay safe is excellent and well-established. In interviews, they talked about healthy diet and exercise, demonstrating their understanding of the importance of maintaining a balanced lifestyle. Pupils clearly explained the steps they take to stay safe, particularly when online, explaining that lessons and discussions about online safety had deepened their understanding significantly. Pupils recognise that mental health is vital in ensuring well-being, and value the opportunity to use the well-being room to enjoy time-out to reflect and be calm. In a games lesson Year 3 pupils showed that they understood the importance of physical fitness, giving excellent examples of how they could warm up before playing sport, using the term cardiovascular and tapping their hearts by way of explanation. Pupils feel well informed and were adamant that they all feel safe and happy in the school environment.

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4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors and the safeguarding governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Loraine Cavanagh Reporting inspector

Mrs Naomi Fowke Compliance team inspector (Former head HMC school)

Miss Joanna Gay Team inspector (Former deputy head, IAPS and ISA school)

Mr Ian Martin Team inspector (Senior deputy head, ISA school)