

St Edward's School

Melchet Court, Sherfield English, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 6ZR

Inspection dates 10-12 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Sixth form provision	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

This is an outstanding school

- The school is exceptionally well led by a highly dedicated and successful headteacher. As a result of his motivation and inspiration, the whole staff team are strongly focused on enabling students to excel in their learning and improve in their personal development.
- Teachers, therapists and assistants, enable pupils to overcome their behaviour problems and learning difficulties and to make outstanding progress in their learning. This is a result of consistently careful planning and detailed knowledge of individual students' abilities.
- Students achieve excellent examination results and other qualifications across a wide range of academic and work-related subjects. All make impressive progress in their literacy, numeracy and communication skills and gain valuable qualifications in English and mathematics.
- Students behave exceptionally well. They respond positively to the good-humoured atmosphere that the staff create and behave with respect for themselves and others around them. In lessons and activities they are keen and ready to learn.
- Policies and procedures to keep students safe and secure are rigorously monitored and implemented. As a result, students feel safe. This provides excellent opportunities for them to develop self-confidence and self-awareness.
- The recently developed sixth form provision meets the learning and personal development needs of the small group of students it serves very well.
- The proprietor's board of governors works closely with the school leaders to ensure the highest standards of teaching and learning are maintained. They use very effective systems to monitor all aspects of the school's provision, and as a result all the Independent School Standards are met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended, and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with a day's notice. The inspector observed 10 lessons, all of which were jointly observed with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspector looked at students' work and spoke to them about it. He held meetings with the Chair of proprietor's Board of Governors, the headteacher, the senior leaders, staff members and students.
- The inspector looked at documentation including policy statements, schemes of work, teachers' planning, and records of students' progress and of staff training, in order to check compliance with the Independent School Standards.
- Too few responses had been received on Ofsted's Parent View online questionnaire for results to be published. Inspectors considered the outcomes of a recent survey, conducted by the school, of the views of 16 parents and carers.
- The inspector held telephone conversations with a representative of one of the local authorities that place students in the school, and with the course leader of the further education college where students in the sixth form receive some of their education.

Inspection team

John Gush, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Edward's School is an independent residential special school. It provides education and care for boys who experience behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The school occupies a former manor house and adjacent buildings and is set in 180 acres of grounds, approximately four miles from Romsey in Hampshire.
- The school has been open since 1984 and is in the ownership of the Clifton Catholic Diocesan Trust.
- The school caters for up to 77 students aged between nine and 18 years of age. Currently 46 students attend, aged between 11 and 18 years. Nineteen students board at school during the week.
- Students have histories of severely disrupted schooling before coming to the school. All students have a statement of special educational needs. Seven of them are in the care of their local authority.
- Students come from boroughs or counties across the South of England and their local authorities fund their places.
- Some students in the sixth form attend off-site education and training at Sparsholt College.
- The school aims 'to encourage the physical, intellectual, spiritual and personal development of students, by providing them with opportunities to address underlying issues and difficulties'.
- This inspection is of the school's education provision. This was last inspected in January 2012. The most recent social care inspection took place in December 2014. A focused inspection took place in July 2013 in relation to the school's request to extend the age range of students who could be admitted. As a result the age range was extended to its current status of nine to 18 years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management of the sixth form by:
 - extending the range of opportunities offered
 - continuing to develop the systems in use to monitor students' progress and achievements.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher and his senior team provide highly effective leadership. Their very high expectations for continuous improvement in the behaviour of the students are well understood by staff members and students alike. The entire school community responds very well and, as a result, the school provides an excellent learning environment. This enables students to make the most of their capabilities and potential during their time in the school and to achieve excellent academic and work-related qualifications. As a result of this leadership, the school meets all of the Independent School Standards.
- Leaders have very effective systems and processes for making sure they know about all aspects of the school's provision. They listen carefully to the views of parents and carers, local authority representatives and staff members when they plan for improvement. In addition, they take account of students' thoughts and ideas. This takes place through regular informal conversations as well as through the school council, which provides a highly effective means for all students to be sure that their views are heard.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher visit lessons and training sessions regularly to gauge how well these are meeting the needs and interests of all the students. Teachers and other staff make very good use of the advice they give. As a result, teaching is continuously improving and students regularly make extremely good progress.
- School leaders ensure that teachers, therapists and support staff have the training and expertise they need. In addition to recruiting well-qualified staff members, they actively promote high-quality professional development. One example is the excellent range of opportunities that middle leaders have been given to carry out special projects to improve particular aspects of the school's provision. The following examples show the impressive results of some of these projects. New techniques for the detailed assessment of students' achievements enhance teachers' abilities to plan effective learning. A highly effective literacy scheme has been introduced that encourages interest and raises standards in reading throughout the school. Enhanced professional expertise in understanding the causes and the impact of students' anger and frustration has led to continually improving interventions and a calmer learning atmosphere in the school.
- Leaders have designed a highly effective curriculum that meets the needs of the students very well. It covers a very good range of subjects while being flexible enough to be adapted to the varying needs of the students. It enables them continuously to extend their opportunities to prepare for a good range of examinations and work-related qualifications. It also makes excellent contributions to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Throughout the curriculum, fairness and equality are emphasised and opportunities are taken to promote tolerance and identify discrimination. In this way it provides an excellent preparation for students' lives as young adults in modern Britain.
- The school ensures that students receive very useful and impartial advice and guidance about their options for further study when they leave the school. This helps them to think about their career goals and how to achieve them. Excellent cooperation with local colleges means that most students move on to suitable courses when they leave. Others stay on in the school's sixth form and work in a very effective partnership with a local college. The school leaders ensure that these arrangements meet the students' needs, that they are kept safe and that they make all the progress they can.
- Leaders regularly review the school's very good range of procedures to make sure they continue to keep students safe and secure. They also arrange regular and detailed checks to ensure that all required actions are carried out in a timely manner. Their careful assessment of risk ensures that students have the chance to take part safely in highly valuable activities that assist their personal development as well as their learning. These include adventure activities such as motorcycling and snowboarding as well as educational trips, visits to local community facilities, work-experience placements and off-site training.
- The school manages the safe recruitment of staff well. All staff are checked for their suitability to work with children. This includes those in the organisations that provide off-site education and training. All the Independent School Standards in relation to safeguarding students are met.
- Excellent and extensive facilities and equipment are available and maintained well. Information and communication technology is very well used by students and staff in all the school's departments. Facilities for science, design and technology and art allow students to experiment and extend their creativity. The gymnasiums, swimming pool and playing fields provide flexibility and challenge as students use physical education to stay fit and be competitive. Industry standard facilities for construction, painting and decoration and horticulture enable students to prepare well for future work opportunities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors carry out regular unannounced visits to the school. Together with the informative reports

from the headteacher, this enables them to gain a strong understanding of the quality of teaching and students' achievements.

- They make very good use of this knowledge as they monitor the work of the school leaders. Governors provide school leaders with structured and effective support. In this way they ensure that the school complies with the Independent School Standards and that good teaching is suitably rewarded.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. All the Independent School Standards that relate to students' behaviour and safety are met. In classrooms and as they move around the school, students are invariably courteous and friendly to visitors, staff members and to one another. Their attendance is excellent and they are almost always on time for their lessons. One authority representative commented enthusiastically about the 'polite young men' she meets each time she visits the school.
- Students are keen to learn and ready at the start of each lesson. They respond well to instructions and suggestions from teachers and other staff. Good-humoured mutual respect between students and staff creates a very effective learning atmosphere throughout the school.
- Occasionally, students' emotional and learning difficulties lead to unsettled or disturbed behaviour. When this happens staff members provide a speedy and effective response. Students settle quickly and any impact on the learning of others is minimised. All situations are reported and recorded very well. Staff use this information extremely well to find patterns in students' behaviour. This enables them to draw up effective ways of helping students to adjust and regulate their own behaviour.
- Parents and carers comment very positively about the impact the school has had on helping students to improve their behaviour. They agree with the school's records that show a reduction in the number and severity of incidents of inappropriate behaviour during the students' time in school.
- The school's anti-bullying strategy is highly effective. As a result, students know what bullying is, how much harm it can do and what to do to avoid it. They value the support they receive and they become self-aware about their own experience. This helps them learn how to avoid both bullying and being bullied. They know about the dangers of bullying through the internet and on social media and mobile phones. They say that although some bullying does occasionally take place, the school responds quickly and deals with it well.
- An excellent range of very effective activities promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This includes the daily 'thought for the day' where, in an imaginative way, staff members raise sensitive issues that broaden students' understanding very well. The elected members of the school council represent the views of all students. They focus the students' charitable fund raising, including for a school in Kenya. They ensure that students' voice is considered in the development of facilities. For example, they recently lead the planning application process for an extension to the motorbike shed.
- In religious studies and citizenship lessons, they learn with interest about how the law works and about the expectations of modern British society. They gain a strong appreciation of other cultures through theme days, lessons and assemblies. The school very effectively fosters a culture that promotes tolerance and rejects discrimination. Together with the content of the curriculum, these activities prepare students well for life in modern Britain.
- Staff members are very aware of the school's policy that prohibits the promotion of any partisan political views in any activity associated with the school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- Students speak with confidence about keeping themselves safe both in school and in their local communities. They appreciate the work of members of the school staff in promoting their safety. They say that they feel safe in school.
- The purposeful, yet relaxed, learning and working atmosphere that pervades the school is a result of excellent relationships that students build with staff and therapists. This helps students to settle and to make the most of their potential for educational success.
- All staff receive regular and valuable training that ensures they have the knowledge and skills needed to keep the students safe. This includes child protection, first aid, fire safety and the response to unsettled behaviour. The head of care is the designated safeguarding lead person and has received the required advanced level of training. Senior staff and administrators are trained in safe recruitment. All the checks

made by the school to ensure that the whole staff group are suitable to work with children are recorded in a single central register in the required manner.

- Very clearly stated policies and effective procedures are implemented consistently to ensure that students are safe. These include policies about fire safety, first aid and the health and safety of students and staff. Very good arrangements are carried out well to make sure that students can benefit from the chance to take part in a wide range of challenging activities. This includes when they are at off-site placements for training or for educational visits.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The lessons and activities that teachers plan take account of students' individual abilities and help them to learn and to make excellent progress towards their goals including, where appropriate, their examinations. All the Independent School Standards that relate to the quality of teaching are met.
- Regular and careful assessments of students' capabilities enable teachers to gain a very good understanding of what each student knows and can do. This results in individual education plans that identify specific targets as well as ensuring that the requirements of the statements of special educational needs are fully met.
- Very effective processes are used to enable teachers to check the accuracy of their assessments of students' progress. Teachers set realistic but challenging targets and make grade predictions that stretch all students to achieve as well as they can.
- Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge and very effective resources to motivate and inspire students. Abundant, high-quality equipment and resources throughout the school are well used and much appreciated by students and staff.
- Teachers make sure throughout their lessons that students understand the purpose of their activities and what they need to do to improve their learning. As a result, students develop new confidence in their ability to learn and to respond to the challenges teachers set with enthusiasm.
- The school places strong emphasis on the importance of enabling students to develop their reading, writing and communication skills. Teachers work closely with speech and language therapists as well as experts in occupational therapy to ensure that students have the best possible opportunities to extend their skills. Every student reads every day. They take pride in their consistently increasing abilities, and they enjoy the carefully chosen stories. They also work on mathematics every day. Many very valuable opportunities to practise number skills such as calculation and estimation are regularly woven into many other subjects. These build confidence and extend achievement.
- Teaching and care assistants play a vital role in all lessons. Some provide continuous and effective support for individual students and others are very well directed by teachers to help students to focus on their tasks and thus develop their abilities and self-confidence.
- A very well led and resourced therapy department provides carefully planned and sensitively delivered support for students to learn to manage their anger and frustration. Therapists work closely with teachers and together they help students to understand and overcome the barriers that get in the way of their learning and personal development. As a result, students develop self-awareness and confidence, and become ready for further learning and to extend their achievements.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Students start at the school at differing ages. They have often had very difficult experiences of education and negative feelings about school. The teaching, therapy and resources that school leaders provide enable them to achieve extremely well as they move through the school. Those who start late in their school career settle in quickly and catch up well, often achieving more than they thought possible. All the Independent School Standards that relate to students' achievements are met.
- As shown by monthly monitoring, students make excellent progress in their learning and in their personal development. Although the attainment of many students remains below the national average, the great majority make very strong progress from their starting points at the school.
- All students study English and mathematics and work towards suitable examinations and qualifications in these and a number of other subjects. Results of functional skills tests and in GCSE examinations show that many students gain passes in five or six subjects. Some achieve high grades in particular subjects. All students gain valuable qualifications in a wide range of practical and work-related skills. These include construction, painting and decorating and horticulture. These build self-esteem as well as developing useful employability skills.

- There is a good variety of work-experience placements in use and students are successful in developing their work-related skills. One student proudly spoke about the weekend job he was offered as a result of a work-experience placement.
- Effective specialist support ensures that disabled students and those with special educational needs make very good progress. They are increasing their skills in literacy, communication and the use of number, as well as in the skills they need to live well in the community. They achieve very well from their starting points.
- The achievement of the most able students is outstanding, especially in their areas of specific interest. They receive excellent support, helping them to develop their abilities and to broaden their range of interests. Some are very successful and achieve high grades in GCSE.
- School leavers make good use of the skills and knowledge they have gained at the school in their new placements. Almost all of them have moved on successfully to further education and training at local colleges, or taken up apprenticeships with employers in their home area.

The sixth form provision

is outstanding

- The sixth form is a valuable new development at the school. The school has responded very well to requests from local authorities and from students and their parents and carers. It meets the specific requirements of students who need more time to prepare to transfer into a further education college. Each student's work is based on their own individual learning plan, which the school designs in collaboration with them and their parents and carers. Courses are delivered at school or at the off-site training centre. These arrangements meet students' learning and development needs very well.
- Students gain a variety of qualifications and achieve very good results in courses that they take either at school or at the off-site training centre they attend. These include entry-level qualifications in English and mathematics, as well as work-related qualifications in sports and sports coaching, in animal care, and in electrical installation. In addition, students make strong progress in their work with therapists. This helps to develop their social skills and their capacity for independent living.
- The sixth form is very well led and managed and high standards are expected from students and staff members alike. School leaders have well-developed plans to extend and improve the range of opportunities available to students. These include broadening the range of partner organisations and continuing to develop the school's arrangements to monitor the impact of the provision on students' achievement and progress.
- Therapists work closely and effectively with teachers and assistants both in school and in the off-site training centres. This enables students to make the most of their abilities. As a result of this, students make very good progress overall.
- Robust systems and procedures ensure that the sixth form, including the off-site training, provides its students with a safe working and learning environment.

What inspection judgements mean

School and boarding

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-association-independent-school-inspection-handbook.

School details

Unique reference number	116584
Social care unique reference number	SC012014
Inspection number	461519
DfE registration number	850/6032

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.

Type of school	Residential special school for boys with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties
School status	Independent residential special school
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	46
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	3
Number of part time pupils	0
Number of boarders on roll	19
Proprietor	The Catholic Diocese of Clifton
Chair	Michael Tennant
Headteacher	Lawrence Bartel
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2012
Annual fees (day pupils)	£20,844 per term
Annual fees (boarders)	£24,522 per term
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