

**St. Dominic's School**  
**Draft Summary Self-Evaluation**



**Date of this version:** August 2020

**Principal:** Angela Drayton

**Purpose of this document:**

To provide stakeholders with a high-level summary of

1. the school's context
2. current self-evaluation against the Ofsted framework
3. key sources of evidence of the school's impact
4. links between self-evaluation and the school's development priorities.

	School self-evaluation 2020	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>The quality of education</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>Behaviour and attitudes</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>Personal development</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>	

**Context**

- St Dominic's is a co-educational special school aged between 7-19. All pupils/students' EHCPs note that they have Autism Spectrum Disorder as a primary diagnosis with associated comorbidities such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Speech, Language and Communication difficulties and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.
- **Our mission is:** "To provide the best educational, care and transition pathways for children and young people from ages 7 - 19 years who experience difficulties with learning and communication because of their special or complex educational, health or care needs."
- **Our vision is** "To be an outstanding school that gives every child and young person the best chance to fulfil their potential, achieve ambitious goals and live life to the full."
- **Our values**
  - We accept, celebrate and understand our unique identities.
  - We respect and value each other for who we are and what we can achieve as individuals and as a community.
  - We offer a trans-disciplinary, holistic approach in partnership with families, communities and professionals
  - We understand that everything we do, regardless of role, is to inspire, empower and secure positive outcomes and relationships for all pupils and students
  - We ensure that the values of humanity remain the foundation of our spirituality, social interactions and pastoral care across the curriculum.
  - We provide a needs led curriculum that focusses on the individual's developmental needs and enhances and supports academic subjects.
  - We seek and retain dedicated staff who are committed to the vision and mission of the school.
  - We consider the views of children, young people and their families.
  - We enable children, young people and their families to participate in decision-making.
  - We are confident that our children and young people can take the next step into the world.
- The school has a PAN of 150.
- We currently have 122 on roll, 94 from the host Local Authority – Surrey, 10 from Hampshire and the remainder from 9 other authorities.

- Many pupils have had very disrupted previous education, with the many experiencing fixed term and permanent exclusions. Some have not attended school for significant periods.
- The school was last inspected under section 5 of the Ofsted Framework in November 2017, when it was judged 'Good'.
- Since the last section 5 inspection, there have been a number of changes in the school. On 1 January 2018, the school joined the Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust and therefore closed as a non-maintained school and reopened as an academy.
- Because of particularly complex emotional and behavioural needs, a small proportion of pupils and students have additional, highly bespoke packages of interventions that enable them to have meaningful and relevant access to the curriculum to support engagement, good attainment, behaviour and safety.
- Achievement and attainment are strongly improving, supported by a three-year upward trend.
- Behaviour and Safety is a strong feature, with pupils and students actively engaged and involved in their learning.
- Leadership and Management is strongly good with ambition and a clear vision shared at all levels.
- Care, guidance and support is outstanding and SMSC is promoted throughout the whole school community.
- Relationships between adults and pupils/students are exemplary and built on respect and trust.

#### Any changes to context?

1. Following a period of consultation, the Regional Schools' Commissioner approved the closure of our residential provision at the end of academic year 2019/20.
2. Following a period of consultation, the school received approval from the Regional Schools' Commissioner to increase the PAN to 150.

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>2</b>
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- Safeguarding is effective. Links are proactively made with a range of outside agencies and the number of Serious Incidents and Physical Interventions have dropped dramatically and continue to do so. As a result, pupils/students are safe at the school and feel safe.
- There is a commitment to reviewing the curriculum on a regular basis to ensure that pupil/student needs are met; significant changes have already taken and will be developed in the next academic year.
- The rich curriculum offer has been strengthened by the multi-disciplinary team, at senior and middle leadership level, to ensure that it is broad and balanced and promotes pupils /students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as their personal growth and academic progress.
- Senior leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and what is required to improve its performance.

#### Current priorities for development are:

- Review the staffing structure and numbers in light of vacant posts, recent resignations and budget.
- Review the accommodation plan for our increasing PAN for the next 3 years.
- Produce and implement a whole school training plan to ensure the highest quality, most sensitive/responsive provision is delivered and in order to follow a retention plan.

<b>① The quality of education</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>2</b>
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#### Strengths:

- The curriculum is both ambitious and personalised to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of all pupils and students through the delivery of the National Curriculum in a modified format and targeted delivery of the needs led curriculum foci: learning to learn, myself and others, language and communication, functional independence, reading, writing and mathematics.
- The needs led curriculum is having a positive impact on the progress and engagement of pupils, developing their 'learning to learn' skills, behaviour for learning and engagement, equipping them with skills for future learning and employment.
- Because of this, the curriculum supports pupils to access personalised routes towards identified academic, vocational or independence flightpaths.

- The curriculum is delivered in a primary model until the end of Year 8 and in a secondary model, delivered by subject specialist teachers, from Year 9 onwards. This best supports pupils to manage change and transition while focussing on learning outcomes.
- A consultation with families (March 2019) demonstrates that they strongly consider the curriculum at St. Dominic's meets pupils and students' needs.
- The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of pupils/students as identified in their EHCPs. The enrichment activities, modification of timetable and timetabled needs led sessions through a provision waves model are clear examples of this.
- The school learning and thinking skills are evidence based and derived from Marion Blanks 'Levels of Questioning' and Bloom's Taxonomy. Because of this, effective questioning and a rigorous focus on vocabulary are integral to developing, consolidating and deepening pupils' knowledge understanding and skills.
- Individuals and groups are profiled using radial diagrams that demonstrate the progress pupils/students make in academic and need led outcomes. This is used to adapt and modify provision on a half-termly basis, informing teaching to identify and clarify misconceptions.
- Teacher performance is evaluated and internally moderated through a suite of monitoring activities that form the OHC&AT Trust 'Teacher Evaluation Schedule', (TES). Evidence gathered using this rigorous method demonstrates teaching is consistently good (aggregated at 2a, autumn term monitoring as of 25/11/2019).
- Improved induction processes for teachers particularly have supported the school to manage and develop new staff, identifying training issues in a timely manner.
- Training and development of teachers has focussed on embedding outstanding teaching and learning through concentrated input on 'the big four': feedback, flow, independent learning and challenge. A suite of teacher and pupil facing resources has been developed to embed training.
- Pupils and students are well prepared for the next stage of their education. All students who left in June 2019 have confirmed next placements and gained the relevant qualifications to access their chosen courses.
- Pupils and students make good progress both academically and holistically. In the summer term, progress in learning to learn, myself and others and language and communication demonstrates over 70% of pupils are closing the gap in the summer term capture.
- Progress and attainment remains consistent against national benchmarks Progress 8 and Attainment 8.
- Attainment is strong and improving across core subjects. Overall at the end of Key Stage 4, 40% of GCSE entries were at grade 4+, attainment in Maths has risen by 9% since 2018 in relation to grades attained at 4+ and English at 9%
- Pupil progress is very strong over time and exceeds progress made by pupils nationally at the end of Key Stage 4. At the end of Key Stage 4 the Year 11 cohort have made an average of 1 year 9 months above age related expectation per pupil.
- Steps taken to improve outcomes for KS3 have been successful - Year 9 groups were adjusted in the summer term following some pupils going to new placements. This has had a positive effect on the cohort overall and on their progress as they began Key Stage 4 programmes of study. Because of this, progress at the end of KS3 is broadly in line with progress made in other key stages.
- The growing cohort of disadvantaged pupils/students make progress in line with their non-disadvantaged counterparts, which is significant when compared to national figures.
- Pupils make excellent progress in reading. In 2018/19, pupils made 1 year and 5 months progress in reading comprehension on average, and 1 year 7 months in word reading on average. Strategies that support this progress are whole school focusses through NLC sessions, targeted reading interventions which are being developed through a range of resources including Read, Write, Inc., Read, Write Comprehension programme and where appropriate: Toe by Toe and Stride Ahead programme and Dyslexikit Schofield texts. There is also a daily focus on vocabulary strategies such as 'verb of the week' and explicit teaching of key vocabulary in all lessons.

#### **Areas of focus:**

- The curriculum is coherently planned, developed and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment.
- At the early stages of learning to read, reading materials are matched to learners' phonic knowledge.

#### **Current priorities for development are:**

- Refine evidencing of whole school progress in Mathematics to demonstrate more accurately progress for pupils and students on functional pathways.
- Recruitment and retention of teachers.
- Recruitment and retention of therapy staff in order to strengthen the Wave 1 provision.
- Develop the focus of teacher evaluation in line with the changes to the Ofsted framework.
- Further development of use of early year's assessment for pupils who are working towards NC outcomes.

## ② Behaviour and attitudes

Grade

2

### Strengths:

- Many pupils have experienced significant challenges in their lives before they arrive at St Dominic's. Because of the school's caring ethos and high expectations, relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and mutually respectful. Pupils behave well, inside classrooms and around the school site.
- Staff understand well pupils' learning difficulties and special educational needs, and are not judgemental. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school regularly. For many, this is in direct contrast to their previously high levels of absence/refusal at their previous schools.
- The reward system and underpinning values and expectations of the school community, bringing greater clarity and fairness to approaches used.
- Expectations of behaviour are understood by both pupils/students and staff. Leaders effectively support staff in managing pupil/student behaviour and there has been a decrease of 12% in Serious Incidents recorded at levels 2 and 3 between September and March 15th 2019/20, when compared to the same period from the previous academic year. Physical Interventions however have increased by 27 % overall when making a comparison over the same period. This is in part due to a significant increase of more than 10 % in overall pupil numbers but is mostly due to a small cohort of students with significant and complex needs. This cohort all have Individual Behaviour Support Plans and have physical intervention as part of their agreed, multi-disciplinary team, planned intervention. These five students account for 57% of all the physical intervention within the school over this period and three of the 5 were new starters as of September 2019.
- Recorded incidents of bullying have increased by exactly 10% over the same period when comparing this year to last. Having had an 80% decrease in recorded incidents of bullying the previous year and an increase of over 10 % in our total student numbers this year, the figure remains commensurate overall and as a result, pupils still feel safe at the school.
- Many of our pupils had significant periods out of education before joining the school and many had concerning patterns of attendance. The school's attendance for the week 2-6 March 2020 was 93%, which is broadly in line with the national average and exceeds that of comparative special schools. Pupils arrive punctually to school and to lessons. Individual pupils are tracked through the weekly safeguarding meeting and in liaison with Surrey's Inclusion Officer (formerly EWO). A range of contributing factors including illness and timetable modification affects the attendance rate; currently 20% of pupils have persistent absence of under 80%.
- In the previous academic year, there were no permanent exclusions and 19 fixed term exclusions involving 12 pupils due to an unprecedented high level of challenging behaviour by Year 9 occurring in the autumn term. This academic year, 8 pupils have been excluded for a total of 18 days.
- The school has taken affirmative action to ensure all pupils concerned are accessing the correct provision to meet their needs. In some cases, school leaders have acted to manage moves to other schools, particularly where SDS does not have the provision to meet pupils' extreme SEMH needs. This clear and consistent approach has resulted in visible improvements to the conduct of pupils and students, which is substantiated by the aforementioned statistics.

### Areas of focus:

Learners' attitudes to their education or training are positive. They are committed to their learning, know how to study effectively and do so, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements.

### Current priorities for development are:

- Continue to develop pupils' and students' resilience through focus on learning to learn and myself and others outcomes.
- Recruitment and retention of teachers.
- Recruitment and retention of therapy staff.
- Expand behaviour provision to include mental health wave 3 intervention role and Autism specific behaviour management resourcing role.

- Reduce the number of low-level behaviours that are attributable to new pupils or destabilisation of cohorts as a direct result of the introduction of new pupils through an ongoing process of reflection and refinement of pupil admissions and induction.

### ③ Personal development

Grade

1

#### Strengths:

- The curriculum and whole ethos of the school is to support pupils to meet their wide range of needs and to prepare them to participate as well rounded individuals. The wide range of experiences and support on offer facilitate this goal.
- Effective pastoral care by staff, including a counsellor, ELSAs, nurse and a therapy dog and his trainers, ensures that pupils/students' physical and emotional needs are well met. This support is very beneficial in improving pupils/students' self-esteem and helping them to understand how best to manage any anxiety and, so, learn successfully.
- Pupils and students learn tolerance of and respect for different cultures and faiths, including those whose characteristics are protected in law through PSHCE, Rights Respecting Schools and Equality Champions.
- Through personal, social, sessions and assemblies, pupils learn about the benefits of leading a healthy lifestyle. They also learn how to stay safe when using the internet. They are taught to be alert in spotting unusual behaviour by adults, and the dangers of being drawn into extremism.
- The emphasis on a healthy lifestyle is central to our holistic curriculum and provision.
- The programme for school assemblies and PSHCE lessons deal with key issues such as Fundamental British Values, PREVENT, bullying and various forms of discrimination. Visits from local police officers and the Prevent Lead, to speak to individuals, where appropriate, have been effective, as has the involvement of parents at early stage if we feel that there are issues causing concern.
- The assessment of risk for all activities, including trips and visits helps to keep pupils and students safe within and outside of school in the community.
- Pupils and students receive targeted careers guidance from our Careers Guidance Practitioner and are well supported for the next stage of their education, world of work and life beyond school. The new Gatsby Benchmarks are central to the transition and careers Agenda within the school. A defined careers programme is on offer from KS2 through to KS5.

#### Areas of focus:

- Further develop the 1-1 pastoral support opportunities on offer.

#### Current priorities for development are:

- Develop the curriculum further to support pupils/students to understand the importance of good mental health and wellbeing.
- Develop Rights Respecting Schools to attain Silver and Gold accreditation.

### ③ Leadership and Management

Grade

2

#### Strengths:

- Leaders have the child at the centre of their decision making operationally and strategically, and consistently communicate high aspirations resulting in a culture of 'high accountability and high support' for all stakeholders, have ambition for all pupils and students and are focussed on impact. Safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- Leaders promote an ethos of openness and respect which underpins positive social interactions with internal and external stakeholders. Leaders actively engage with families, promote, and encourage the voice of the child.
- The Curriculum and assessment is enhanced by the 'needs-led' design and there is strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and SMSC in all subject areas. Fundamental British Values are threaded throughout delivery and assessment of the 'myself and others' focus.
- Leaders throughout the school demonstrate a commitment to bring about changes to meet the complex needs of the pupils and students.

- The training programmes for staff teams are carefully targeted to address performance issues within the school as well as meeting the identified needs of the pupils and students. Teachers' CPD is designed to outcomes for the school and individuals through detailed and targeted feedback. This year's focus on delivery of 'the big four' (feedback, flow, challenge and independent learning) is supporting an improved focus on research led practice and pedagogical dialogue.
- The school seeks to engage parents and outside agencies at the earliest opportunity. Parents are regularly invited in for meetings if there are issues/concerns.
- The Safeguarding records demonstrate clearly the proactive approach in involving Early Help, local police, Prevent team, CAMHS and Social Services. We are committed to addressing issues early and quickly. Each parent is contacted at least once a week to update them on their child's progress and wellbeing. Meetings with parents always involve a member of the Education Leadership Team or Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the member of staff is supported appropriately.
- Governance is effective and strong. The Governing Body is responsible for the three Surrey and Sussex (SAS) Hub schools. The Safeguarding governor attends meetings and the Chair meets the Principal and other staff on a regular basis. The Governing Body are at the heart of setting the vision for the school. Governors ensure that all staff are up to date with their statutory training.
- Safeguarding is at the core of all that the school does. Local Authorities visiting last year commented positively on our approach to Safeguarding. Each child on a plan is discussed each week in the Safeguarding Team Meeting, as is any child who has caused a concern during the week. The approach for staff in raising a concern is well understood, established and used on almost a daily basis.
- Pupils and students know what to do if they want to share/raise any concerns and the safeguarding team are readily accessible.
- The school liaises closely, and in a timely manner, with the LADO regarding any allegation involving an adult and as a result, the school has strong relationships with the Local Authority.
- The school continuously maintains a culture of vigilance and staff are frequently reminded about timely reporting.

**Areas of focus:**

Leading and managing the school through significant growth and change will require a relentless focus on all leadership and management at all level and strong strategic and operational development priorities.

**Current priorities for development are:**

- Review the structure and priorities of the Regional Leadership Team (RLT).
- Review the structure and priorities of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- Review the structure and priorities of the Middle Leadership Team.
- Continue to develop contextual safeguarding and the school's 'safeguarding offer'.