

Worthing College

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 130845

Name of lead inspector: Alan Hinchliffe HMI

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Type of provider: General further education college

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Information about the provider

1. Worthing College is a medium-sized college situated near to the coast in West Sussex, serving the town of Worthing and surrounding areas. Although it is currently designated as a general further education (GFE) college, it has all the characteristics of a sixth form college. Within Worthing there is another GFE college, and five 11 to 16 schools from which Worthing College recruits most of its students. Within the wider catchment area there are many schools with sixth forms, including three recently designated as academies. Worthing has a population of around 100,000, and is near to the thriving conurbation of Brighton and Hove. Although the area is relatively prosperous, there are pockets of deprivation typically associated with seaside towns.
2. The college has grown significantly over the last five years; in the current year there are around 1,500 full-time students aged 16 to 18, and around 100 learners aged 19 or over. The vast majority of the college's learners are full-time students aged 16 to 18, and most are taking advanced-level courses. In addition to a wide range of AS-level and A-level courses, in recent years the college has expanded its vocational provision significantly at both advanced and intermediate levels. Provision is enhanced by a thriving sports academy. Around 13% of students are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups.
3. The inspection took account of all of the provision offered by the college. Provision in mathematics and English was inspected in depth. The college was inspected using sixth form college comparators, in recognition of its characteristics rather than its formal designation as a GFE college.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
Provision for young learners: 14 to 16 Further education (16 to 18)	22 part-time learners 1,476 full-time learners 65 part-time learners
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	55 full-time learners 50 part-time learners
Employer provision: Apprenticeships	4 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision		Grade 3
Capacity to improve		Grade 3
		Grade
Outcomes for learners		3
Quality of provision		3
Leadership and management		3
Safeguarding		2
Equality and diversity		3
Subject areas		
Mathematics		2
English		3

Overall effectiveness

- Worthing College has many strengths; but also some significant weaknesses. Much remains to be done before the college can attain its long-standing ambition to be outstanding. Students' achievements, although satisfactory overall, have not improved in recent years. Nor has the quality of teaching and learning; inspectors did not concur with the college's view that the vast majority of lessons are good or outstanding. The main obstacle to the college achieving its ambition is the inconsistency in the quality of provision in many aspects of its work. For example, pockets of excellence exist in the college's partnership working, its provision in the sports academies, and in students' progress on BTEC courses. However, these are mirrored by weaknesses in, for example, science provision and students' performance in AS levels. Even within subject areas such as English, outstanding results on one course are outweighed by weaker results on others. Despite these inconsistencies, the college offers a secure and caring environment in which many students thrive.
- Leaders and managers recognise most of the barriers to further improvement, and have made progress in tackling weaknesses in some key aspects of the college's work. Leaders also recognise that there remain significant degrees of resistance from a minority of staff members that act as a barrier to creating a

college-wide culture focused on achieving excellence. However, efforts to overcome this minority's contentment with mediocrity have had limited success, partly because the need for consistent approaches, policies and procedures has not been sufficiently well explained, and partly because of a degree of lack of compliance. The ability of middle managers to use quality assurance procedures consistently and effectively in order to raise standards is mixed.

Main findings

- The proportion of students who complete their courses successfully has declined slightly over the last three years and is below the sixth form college national average. Students' achievements are high on BTEC and A-level courses; but are low on AS-level courses and declining on GCSE courses. Students' achievements are very good in some areas of provision, but unsatisfactory in others.
- Students make satisfactory progress in comparison to their prior attainment. Students on BTEC courses make excellent progress, and progress is very good on most mathematics courses. However, on many courses, particularly at AS-level, students do not make the progress expected of them.
- The extent to which students enjoy their courses and reach their potential is too inconsistent. For example, the college is rightly proud of the excellence exhibited by much of its work in sports and public services, but leaders recognise that standards are too low in some significant parts of the college's curriculum.
- The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but too variable. Students would make better progress were it not for the significant inconsistencies in the frequency and marking of homework, in the development of note-taking skills and in the setting and monitoring of subject-specific actions to bring about improvements in their work.
- Teachers are well prepared and lessons are usually organised efficiently. Students' learning is steady, and it is supported and consolidated effectively through a number of well-designed approaches. Teachers have good subject knowledge and much of this is conveyed well to students.
- Students are not made to do enough thinking, researching, note-taking or talking in lessons. Consequently, these skills do not develop as well as they should. Much questioning and group work is limited to reinforcing knowledge and checking learning at whole-class level, rather than enabling students to explore and express individual ideas. Too many students remain under-challenged.
- The college has developed its provision well to meet the needs and interests of students. The choice of academic, applied and vocational courses is good, and the focus on employability is strong. Many work-related opportunities help students prepare for employment, and a good programme of extra-curricular activities and events enhances many students' learning.

- Through its outstanding partnership work, the college takes a leading role in local and regional collaborative planning that benefits students, particularly in relation to courses and wider opportunities for 14- to 19-year-olds. Work with local schools and universities raises aspirations and ensures that pupils can progress onto suitable courses, including those who might otherwise drop out of education and training.
- The college provides good information, advice and guidance to potential students and assesses them well to ensure they are placed on the right courses. Students' needs for extra learning support are assessed well, and many benefit from the help provided; although this should be planned and recorded more carefully to help students progress even more.
- Students value the one-to-one support from teachers and tutors, although the quality of this is variable. Tutors monitor students' attendance and progress closely, but students do not always understand what they need to do to improve. The systems for monitoring progress and setting targets are too complex.
- As college leaders recognise, there is too much inconsistency between teachers in the way they work. This relates to dealing with poor attendance, monitoring students' progress, setting and marking homework assignments, setting useful targets for students, and the planning and teaching of courses.
- The involvement of students in decision making is highly effective. The student parliament is vibrant. The college uses creative flair to gauge students' views, and takes appropriate action as a result of consultation, such as extending library opening hours. Students are also involved in evaluating lessons and in staff recruitment.
- Self-assessment is self-critical and evaluative, but overall judgements are too generous. The college's evaluation of lessons overstates the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The plans directly associated with curriculum self-assessment are too superficial. This is, in part, due to the format of the plan. Some managers write useful additional plans to ensure that they can tackle the issues they have identified.

What does Worthing College need to do to improve further?

- In order to improve students' outcomes, ensure that all policies and procedures that are designed to raise standards by improving teaching, target setting and progress monitoring are implemented rigorously by all staff. Develop middle managers' ability to use quality assurance and performance management procedures to ensure greater consistency in the quality of provision.
- Ensure that students have a clearer and more consistent set of expectations about the standards expected by achieving more consistency in the ways in which teachers set and mark homework, organise and encourage note-taking, and set and monitor individual subject-specific actions to improve students' work.
- In lessons, use more penetrating, demanding questioning and more challenging forms of group work to enable students to articulate their own ideas better and

question each other more. Ask more of students in these activities so that they grow in confidence and intellectual scope and come to have higher expectations of what they might achieve.

- Ensure that all students who receive additional learning support have specific learning targets against which their progress is recorded regularly, so that students receive closely tailored support; and improve the liaison between support assistants and teachers so that assistants have the opportunity to plan how they will support the students' progress.
- Simplify the complex systems for monitoring students' progress, so that teachers and tutors communicate effectively and in a timely way, and students, staff and parents have a good understanding of their performance. Ensure that students are set clear and specific learning targets that are monitored frequently through discussion with teachers and tutors.
- Ensure that managers at all levels analyse data and other sources of information, including the results of lesson observations, more rigorously and with more insight in order to develop detailed and focused plans for improvement.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- friendly, supportive teachers who treat them with respect
- learning resources, including the on-line materials and the library
- opportunities to get involved in activities beyond their main courses
- the mathematics and sports academies, and the extra motivation and satisfaction this gives students participating in them
- the variety of activities and approaches that teachers take in many lessons
- the regular use of discussion and group work in lessons
- the blend of theory and practice in lessons.

What learners would like to see improved:

- a few practices and rules that are too much like school, such as having to go home to get it if they forget their identity card
- the chance of being able to gain access to computers whenever they need to
- the amount of feedback they get on their work from some teachers
- the fact that there are only academies in two subject areas
- the fact that in a few subjects how well you are taught depends very much on which teacher you get, and that this inconsistency is too widespread
- the inconsistencies with which some teachers and tutors operate a few college policies, such as punctuality and breaks in two-hour lessons.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

6. The college has made slow progress in its long-standing ambition to be outstanding. The vision for improvement is clear and priorities are appropriate. Some important improvements have been secured, including more effective group tutorials, and more effective monitoring of students' attendance and progress. The college also has meticulous plans for improved accommodation, supported by detailed financial forecasting. The development of partnerships has been particularly strong and the curriculum closely meets the needs of students. However, self-assessment of both the quality of provision and of lessons is over-generous. Success rates on long courses fell in 2010 and remain at a similar level to 2007, while national rates have risen. The college sets itself ambitious targets for improvement, but in several cases these have not been achieved. The college makes full and very effective use of students' views. However, self-assessment is not fully effective and the resulting plans do not always have the rigour, focus and attention to detail that is required to secure improvements.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

7. Students' achievements, and the progress they make, are inconsistent. In 2009/10, just over 80% of students who started long courses were successful. This is slightly below the national average for sixth form colleges, and is also lower than the equivalent figure at the college three years ago. The overall figure disguises significant disparities both between types of course, and between subject areas. On BTEC courses in sport and public services, pass rates are outstanding, and results are good on A-level courses. In mathematics at AS and A level, students achieve very well. By contrast, in science subjects results were disappointing in 2010. Too few students are successful on AS-level courses, and the proportion of students who achieve grades A* to C in mathematics and English GCSE has declined. On full-time intermediate-level vocational courses, students' achievements are satisfactory.
8. Students enter the college with a wide range of prior attainment in GCSE qualifications. Although most students make satisfactory or better progress, a minority do not, particularly on AS-level courses in a significant number of subjects. In these subjects, students do not achieve the grades predicted from their prior attainment. Those on BTEC courses make outstanding progress. Data show that the progress made by students depends more than it should on the subjects they choose to follow. There are no significant patterns of differential achievement between male and female students, or between students from different ethnic backgrounds.
9. The standard of students' work demonstrates the same inconsistency that pervades other aspects of the college's work. On advanced-level courses, while many students develop the rigorous critical and evaluative skills that prepare them well for their next step, too many do not develop good independent

thinking skills or the capacity to engage in intellectual debate. On vocational courses, most students develop attributes and skills that are well suited to their chosen career.

10. Most students enjoy college and attendance at lessons is usually good. Their enjoyment of individual lessons and subjects is more variable. Students report that they feel safe and that pastoral care and support are good; inspection evidence supports their views. The large number of students who participate in the college's extensive sporting activities derive considerable benefit from the opportunity both to keep fit and to make a contribution to college and community life. Aside from sport, there are ample opportunities for other students to become involved in college life, and many take advantage of this. The expansion of both vocational provision and work-related activities has enhanced the future employment prospects of a significant number of students.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

11. The quality of teaching and learning varies considerably. It is satisfactory overall, which is not as good as the college thinks it is. Much of what teachers do in lessons provides a congenial, collaborative environment for learning. Lessons are well organised and a variety of activities is prepared carefully. Students, space and time are usually managed well, sometimes skilfully so. Lessons start and end effectively and learning is recalled and consolidated regularly. Teachers display good subject knowledge and an eagerness to transmit this to students.
12. However, in too many cases teachers retain too much control of the content and direction of lessons. Questioning is frequent, but is rarely persistent or penetrating enough to require students to develop their responses beyond an initial brief answer. Consequently, students are not made to think hard enough, nor to research, explore, or communicate their ideas with sufficient diligence or autonomy. Group work is also prevalent, yet few teachers enable dynamic exchanges between students themselves. This leads to discussions in which students are not inclined or equipped to challenge and question each other. The majority of teachers make insufficient use of their mental agility and take few risks with their teaching. Too many lessons lack any sense of pedagogic adventure, and significant numbers of students remain relatively unchallenged in what they are asked to say or do. Their own expectations of what they might achieve are not extended sufficiently.
13. The college successfully promotes several initiatives to support and reinforce students' learning. Subject support and 'upgrade' sessions, peer mentoring, a highly flexible library and on-line course materials are all effective in helping students develop confidence and skills in independent learning. In lessons, well-designed worksheets and information and learning technologies provide structure and variety that students find both reassuring and interesting. However, several essential practices are pursued inconsistently. In particular, students' independent note-taking is not developed with sufficient rigour in many areas, and both homework and marking are too variable in frequency and

detail. Moreover, the actions that students are told to take to help them improve their work are almost always general points about improving attitude or commitment, with little reference being made to subject-specific knowledge or skills. Despite the college's often imaginative efforts to improve it, poor accommodation continues to hamper learning in a few areas.

14. The college has adapted its curriculum well to meet the changing needs and interests of its students, whose numbers have grown significantly in recent years. Its partners regard the college as very responsive and flexible in meeting the needs of young people progressing from their organisations. The provision includes a good choice of A and AS subjects and also vocational courses at intermediate and advanced levels, which students can blend with academic qualifications. There is a good range of applied science courses and a popular and successful sports academy. Tailored provision for learners who are not yet ready for intermediate level courses, or who need support in English as an additional language, is also provided.
15. The college's focus on employability is strong. The range of work-related additional opportunities has increased and many students benefit from these. All intermediate level and Year 12 students take an accredited Workskills course, and an increasing number take up work-experience opportunities. The programme of worthwhile enrichment activities within many subjects is good. Participation is good, although intermediate level students are less likely to take part in cross-college opportunities than advanced-level students, and some students are prevented from taking part by timetable clashes. Progression from intermediate level to advanced level courses has increased and is satisfactory, although progression from AS-level courses to A level declined in 2009/10. The proportion of students progressing to higher education has increased and is satisfactory.
16. The college is an active and leading partner in a wide range of partnerships that benefit students significantly. Senior staff play a key role in local strategic planning and collaboration in relation to provision for 14- to 19-year-old students. The college reviews its curriculum with local schools and other providers, ensuring that it evolves to meet students' needs, provides good progression routes and avoids duplication. Provision includes pathways for young people at risk of not participating in education, employment or training, including young parents. Links with sporting organisations both locally and more widely have had a strong impact on opportunities for students including the development of sports apprenticeships. Links with local schools enable sports students to undertake coaching qualifications by working with school pupils. Strong links with local universities have also increased opportunities for progression to higher education.
17. Initial information, advice and guidance for learners and their parents and carers have improved and are good. The college works hard with partner schools to raise pupils' aspirations. College staff communicate effectively with schools and other organisations, and have improved systems for assessing students' prior attainment and aptitude in literacy and numeracy to ensure

students are placed on the right programme. College data indicate that retention on many courses has improved when compared with the same period last year. The college provides an effective programme of advice and guidance about progression into further and higher education and employment.

18. The provision of additional learning support is satisfactory. Communication with schools and other organisations is good, and students' needs are assessed effectively, with the aid of an educational psychologist where appropriate. Where support is provided within lessons, planning between teachers and support assistants does not always occur. Support assistants do not routinely maintain records against individual development targets for each learner, although progress is reviewed half-termly. Whilst individuals receiving learning support have benefited, success rates for supported students do not indicate significant impact. Students requiring support in literacy and numeracy may take functional skills courses or GCSE English and mathematics. Success rates on these courses are at or below average. Learning support staff undertake regular, relevant professional development, but most do not hold appropriate professional qualifications.
19. The college has improved the monitoring of students' attendance and progress in completing assignments and attaining target grades significantly. Tutors now have an overview of each student's attendance and progress across all courses, and this has had a strong impact on students' awareness of being monitored. However, the system for setting learning targets and recording progress and action points is too complex. Students value highly the one-to-one support they receive from tutors and individual teachers, but do not consistently receive specific learning targets which show them how to improve. Subject teachers do not all consistently provide updated information, which limits the value of the progress records. Despite close monitoring, large numbers of students are not complying with attendance and study requirements and are subject to the college disciplinary system. Parents and carers are generally kept well informed about students' progress, and most have access to the college's information system so that they can view progress online.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

20. College leaders advocate values which aspire to excellence. People, teaching and diversity are central to the college's drive to raise ambition. Appropriate strategic objectives draw on consultation with governors, staff and students. Plans at all levels align with these goals. Performance management is effective in identifying appropriate staff development needs. However, numerous strategies relating to teaching, assessment and progression have not yet had a significant impact on results. Crucial targets are not always met. Not all staff wholly embrace the college's desire to be outstanding, and a minority do not comply fully with agreed policies and procedures. The quality of teaching, assessment, monitoring and support is too variable. A student's experience of the college depends too much on the teachers they are allocated.

21. Governors provide good direction. They have a sound grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the college. Governors have productive links with teaching and support areas. They work positively with senior managers, but do not shy from offering challenge, for example in seeking explanation for the large proportion of lessons graded as outstanding in self-assessment. Governors monitor closely the college's finances and its progress towards its goals. They are involved closely in preparing the forthcoming building programme.
22. Arrangements for safeguarding learners are good. Policies and procedures are appropriate. Staff and governors are well trained. The designated senior member of staff has received high-level training. Work with external agencies is valuable in supporting young people in need of protection. The college has exceeded national requirements by carrying out employment checks on all governors and staff, irrespective of when they joined the college. Managers respond swiftly and effectively to safety concerns. They ensure the safety of young people on work experience. Students feel safe at the college. Bullying is not tolerated and tutors raise awareness of issues relating to internet safety.
23. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Policies and action plans fulfil the college's duties in relation to gender, race and disability. The equal opportunities policy includes the protected characteristics defined in the single equality act. The college successfully promotes positive attitudes towards equality and diversity. The very few examples of discriminatory behaviour are tackled promptly and appropriately. The equality and diversity group is effective and benefits from student representation. The ethnic profile of staff and governors reflects the local community, rather than the more diverse student population. Parts of the college remain inaccessible to students with mobility difficulties. However, arrangements are made to ensure all students can participate. Curriculum teams do not analyse with sufficient rigour the performance of different groups of students. The college has been slow to start formal impact assessments of its policy and practice. Equality and diversity are insufficiently promoted in all aspects of the curriculum.
24. The involvement of students in decision making is very effective. The student parliament is successful. The college supplements questionnaires with engaging methods to determine students' opinions. These include electronic voting, postcard campaigns and walking the campus to gather views. The college takes action where appropriate, such as extending students' access to the library and learning resources. Students are also involved in lesson observations and staff recruitment.
25. Self-assessment and quality improvement are satisfactory. Procedures for observing lessons are informed by helpful guidance and training. However, the college's view of its teaching is unduly positive. While the college's analysis of lessons is systematic, it lacks both penetration and, in many cases, accurate identification of strengths and weaknesses. Analysis of teaching and learning in self-assessment remains underdeveloped. Furthermore, the exploration of examination results is too cursory. The ability of curriculum managers to identify precise areas for improvement and implement effective plans to remedy

them is inconsistent. The recommended format for plans and self-assessment is too restrictive to allow sufficient exploration of how significant weaknesses will be rectified. Curriculum managers produce more extensive, supplementary plans to fill this deficit.

26. The college provides satisfactory value for money. Results, progress and attendance are satisfactory. Resources and specialist equipment are adequate. Efficient use is made of accommodation. Plans for improvements in facilities, supported by careful financial planning, are appropriate. The college gives due regard to sustainability.

Subject areas

Mathematics

Grade 2

Context

27. Currently 587 students study mathematics. Of these, 124 are taking GCSE mathematics, most as part of a mainly advanced-level programme. At AS level, nearly 41 take further mathematics and 218 mathematics and statistics. At A level, 22 take further mathematics and 108 study mathematics and statistics. Alongside this, a group of 104 students take AS- or A-level statistics, an option for students who do not necessarily reach the grade B at GCSE mathematics required for the main mathematics A level.

Key findings

- Outcomes for students are good. Success rates on A- and AS-level subjects improved in 2010 and are all now at or above the most recent sixth form college national averages. Both retention and pass rates are high. Students are particularly successful in AS- and A-level further mathematics. On both courses the proportion of students achieving a high grade in 2010 was significantly above the national average.
- The proportion of students in 2010 achieving a high grade pass in GCSE mathematics was low, and has declined over the last three years. Of those starting the course in 2009, less than half completed and achieved a grade C or better.
- Students make good progress on advanced-level courses and, on many courses, achieve higher grades than would be expected compared to their prior attainment. This progress is particularly good on the AS- and A-level statistics courses, a subject made available to students with lower qualifications than are normally required for advanced-level mathematics courses.
- Overall, the quality of provision is good. In lessons, teachers show good command of the subjects they teach and explanations of mathematical methods are accurate and easy to follow. However, a limited range of learning strategies is employed and students, whilst attentive, are allowed to be passive recipients of information rather than encouraged to be active seekers of knowledge and understanding. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory rather than good.
- Teachers' questioning techniques are weak in many lessons. Most of the questions require students to recall information or undertake a simple calculation. This approach neither challenges students to think more deeply, nor provides a secure way of assessing understanding.
- Teachers are particularly adept at preparing students for examinations, and this makes a significant contribution to the good results. Teaching plans match the specifications closely and effective use is made of past examination questions and teachers' knowledge of assessment practice.

- Assessment of students' work is good and their progress is monitored carefully. A good system for online recording of homework completion and marks has been introduced recently, but it is not yet used consistently to monitor students' progress in all classes.
- The college has developed excellent partnerships with local partner schools and universities to promote mathematics and provide enriching activities and visits. Starting in September 2010, this has developed into a mathematics academy that is successfully providing a framework for this work, supplemented by the use of academy students as mentors for others in the college and in local schools.
- Guidance and support for students are good. Teachers are very responsive to requests for help, not just in the formal workshops but at other times too. The new online 'traffic light' system and progress reviews ensure that personal tutors are kept well informed of students' progress. In addition, many good resources and learning materials, such as past papers, mark schemes and learning plans, are available online.
- The day-to-day management of the provision is good. However, the college's self-assessment of the quality of provision is over generous and not supported by rigorous and thorough examination of evidence. The performance of different groups of learners is not well understood and the use of lesson observations to raise standards further is insufficiently effective.

What does Worthing College need to do to improve further?

- In lessons, give students greater opportunity, through carefully managed group work, guided discussion and effective questioning, to discover and learn mathematical techniques and concepts for themselves. Identify good classroom practice that can be shared and provide targeted training for individuals or groups of teachers.
- Ensure the consistent implementation of the college's policy on the setting and recording of homework tasks and enable students to make more progress through independent study.
- Improve the quality and relevance of improvement plans through better analysis of students' performance and lesson observation data.

English

Grade 3

Context

28. Currently around 500 students are following courses in English. Around 360 are taking AS- or A-level courses in English language or literature. Over 100 are taking GCSE English. Most students are female.

Key findings

- Students' achievements were unsatisfactory in 2009/10, because results on most courses were below the high sixth form college national average and had declined. On AS-level courses, A-level English literature and GCSE English, too few students achieved high grades and their progress, in comparison with their prior attainment, was not good enough. On all these courses, outcomes in 2009/10 were weaker than they were in 2007/08.
- The notable exception to this is English literature A level. In 2010, all students completed this course successfully and most achieved high grades. Students made very good progress from their starting points. Results are better than they were three years ago.
- Students displayed a satisfactory standard of work during the inspection. Although they have acquired a sound grasp of linguistic and literary concepts, too often in advanced-level lessons the work was insufficiently demanding. Not enough students have developed good independent learning skills.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Students enjoy their courses. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and in many lessons use this to help students to explore ideas and material beyond the set curriculum.
- In a minority of lessons, skilful questioning is used to involve all students and extend their responses. For example, in an A-level literature class, a student who initially felt unable to say anything when asked about the literary style of Sterne was coaxed into an interesting and pertinent comment.
- The management of whole-class and group discussion is not always effective. A minority of students contribute too much, to the detriment of the less confident. Teachers do not always ensure that all students have a say in group and class debates. In most advanced-level lessons, teachers do not adequately prompt or provoke students to assume responsibility for the content or direction of discussion.
- Planning is weak in a minority of lessons, which are characterised by a lack of clear objectives. It is not always clear what students have learned by the end of the lesson and teachers do not always plan tasks that fill the entire duration of the lesson.
- Marking of students' work is detailed, and the use of feedback sheets on some marked work ensures that teachers tell students what they do well and what they need to improve. However, there is inconsistency in the use of comments linked to assessment objectives to help students understand how to reach

higher grades. Students' progress towards reaching their target grades is not monitored sufficiently consistently.

- Teachers use praise and encouragement well in lessons and students appreciate the individual support offered outside lessons by subject teachers. However, there is no systematic provision of guidance from staff to support students in choosing appropriate degree courses in English.
- Arrangements to broaden and deepen students' interest through enrichment activities are poor. Few visits to theatrical productions are organised, and there is an absence of extra-curricular activities such as creative writing groups or book clubs.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Recent changes to curriculum management have introduced greater consistency of practice across the department, and inspection evidence points towards some improvement in this respect. However, it is too soon to judge the impact on students' learning of the changes that are being implemented.
- The use of data at curriculum level is limited and there are disparities between these data and those produced at whole-college level. This hampers a full and accurate identification of areas for improvement across the provision.

What does Worthing College need to do to improve further?

- Reverse the decline in the proportion of students achieving high grades at GCSE by analysing possible causes thoroughly and giving potential remedies the highest priority.
- Use questioning and other forms of assessment in lessons more consistently, and develop strategies to control the contributions of keener students in order to ensure that all students participate in whole-class discussion.
- Ensure that students' progress towards achieving their target grades is monitored consistently and that teachers' comments on marked work are more specifically helpful to students in understanding how they can achieve a higher grade.
- Increase access to, and understanding of, data at curriculum level so that all teachers can identify and discuss where and how student performance can be improved.

Information about the inspection

29. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the college's Assistant Principal (Teaching and Learning), as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding body, the previous inspection report, and data on students and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.
30. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of students. They also looked at questionnaires students had recently completed for the college. They observed lessons, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Worthing College

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners			
Full-time learners	1,550	1,487	58
Part-time learners	85	32	31
Overall effectiveness	3	3	3
Capacity to improve	3		
Outcomes for learners	3	3	3
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3		
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3		
How well do learners progress?	3		
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2		
How safe do learners feel?	2		
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	2		
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2		
Quality of provision	3	3	3
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3		
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2		
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	1		
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3		
Leadership and management	3	3	3
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	3		
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	2		
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2		
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3		
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2		
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3		
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	3		

*where applicable to the type of provision

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