

Hereward College

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 130474

Name of lead inspector: Deborah Vaughan-Jenkins HMI

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Type of provider: General Further Education College

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Information about the provider

1. Hereward College is a general further education college located in Coventry. It offers inclusive provision with specialist facilities for students with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college is a charity by exemption, led by a board of governors. Its key priority is to enable learners to achieve academic and vocational qualifications, and to develop the necessary independence skills to support a successful transition to adulthood and, where possible, employment.
2. Students attend the college on a full- and part-time basis and can undertake a range of vocational and academic courses ranging from entry level to advanced level. The greatest number of enrolments are within the subject areas of preparation for life and work, visual, performing arts and media and information and communication technology (ICT). The vast majority of learners study at entry or foundation level. Approximately 60% of students have significant disabilities and/or learning difficulties and approximately 10% have Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and around 14% are of minority ethnic heritage. The majority of students are funded by the local Young People’s Skills Agency (YPLA).
3. Since the last inspection the college has extended its employer responsive provision, including offering training in a range of Train to Gain qualifications for those working within the care sector.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Provision for young learners: 14 to 16 Further education (16 to 18) Foundation learning	8 part-time learners 82 full-time learners 24 part-time learners 84 full-time learners 198 part-time learners
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	121 full-time learners 161 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain	246 learners

Summary report

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

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

Overall effectiveness

- Hereward is a good college with a good capacity to improve further. Students achieve well. Their work is celebrated prominently throughout the college through high-quality displays and individual success stories. Students enjoy their studies and are keen to learn. The college’s outstanding partnership arrangements have ensured students can, and do, access a wide range of opportunities both within the Hereward and the local community to increase their independence and self-confidence. Students develop good leadership and mentoring skills that prepares them very well for a more self-sufficient life after college. A tailored curriculum and strong personalised support is providing a wide choice and opportunities for students to extend their independence further. Good and better teaching exists across the college but not all lessons meet all students needs as effectively as they could. Too many lessons do not plan well enough to ensure students of all abilities, particularly the most able, make the progress of which they are capable. The recording of students’ achievement varies too much.
- Very effective leadership from senior staff and governors has raised standards and improved the quality of students’ experiences significantly since the last inspection. A culture of high aspirations is being promoted successfully. Quality assurance and self-assessment arrangements are good overall and are contributing to a momentum of improvement across the college. In a few areas, however, procedures are less rigorous, such as in the detail of some data analysis, the sharpness of some targets and the monitoring of teaching, learning and appraisal. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory with many positive features. Creative publicity and a raft of events are helping to raise awareness of equality themes and challenging stereotypes effectively, not just amongst students and staff but amongst external partners too. Active promotion of equality and diversity through lessons is not yet widespread.

Main findings

- Outcomes for students are good. Most students achieve well and gain their qualifications successfully. The standard of students' work is good and in some cases very good. The achievement of higher grades varies by subject and is not yet analysed in enough detail by the college.
- Students make good progress overall and some make exceptional progress in relation to their starting points. They develop good social and employability skills through a wide range of diverse work and voluntary settings. Progression to further and higher education and supported employment is high. The college, however, does not capture the steps of students' progress as effectively as it could.
- Students feel very safe and are very supportive of each other. A wide range of opportunities exist for students to make an outstanding contribution to the college and local community. Through well-managed risk taking students are able to be involved in challenging and rewarding activities. As a result, many students effectively learn how to live more independent lifestyles.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching staff work hard to make learning fun. Much good teaching exists across the college but too many lessons do not plan effectively enough to meet the needs of individual students' abilities, particularly the more able students. The recording of individual progress and assessment remains too inconsistent.
- The wide range of assistive technologies is used very well to remove barriers to learning and is increasing students' independence successfully. Teaching accommodation has improved significantly and now provides a positive and well resourced environment in which to learn.
- Students benefit from a revised curriculum that provides good opportunities for progression and develops their knowledge, skills and confidence successfully. The very good range of enrichment opportunities supports the development of leadership and mentoring skills.
- Care, guidance and support are very effective. Students increase their autonomy through a structured, individualised programme of specialist and mentor support. Opportunities are missed to involve students in the evaluation of support arrangements.
- Partnership working is exceptionally strong and wide ranging. It is proving highly beneficial in increasing opportunities to enable students to extend their independence through areas such as sports participation, work experience, progression to higher education and increase their active involvement within the community.
- Managers and governors have a strong commitment to improve provision for students and to resolve areas of concern. They aim to achieve targets and resolve issues promptly. Very effective leadership from senior staff and governors has raised standards and improved the quality of students' experiences significantly since the last inspection.

- Managers have used self-assessment, quality improvement and development plans to drive improvements. In many cases, evidence to support judgements and targets is clear, but in other examples, evidence of impact is unclear and targets are not specific or quantified. The views of stakeholders are not gathered formally to inform self-assessment and quality improvement processes.
- Managers have recently introduced internal lesson observation standardisation and appraisal processes that aim to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Their effectiveness is not maximised because managers do not yet implement them thoroughly.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory with many positive features. Well-planned events have raised staff and student awareness significantly across all aspects of equality. The analysis and reporting of equalities data are much improved but they do not always go into sufficient detail or set precise enough targets in all areas of the college's work. Active promotion through lessons is not yet widespread.

What does Hereward College need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all students make the maximum progress they can within lessons by: ensuring initial assessment information is used more consistently in planning lessons so they effectively meet the needs of all students, particularly the most able; improving the assessment and recording of progress for all students including the sharpness and appropriateness of targets set.
- Increase the rigour of equalities monitoring and planning by: ensuring in-depth analysis, reporting of trends in all areas of the college's work, and reporting in more detail on the promotion of equality and diversity within lessons so that the college can monitor effectively how widespread this is and share more easily the good practice that exists.
- Improve the effectiveness of the self-assessment and quality improvement processes through the use of formal feedback from external stakeholders, the setting clearer targets and the inclusion of evidence of impact on students so that all understand clearly how best to continue to improve.
- Increase the rigour of the internal lesson observation, especially with regard to the moderation of grades. Link the outcome of individual lesson observations more closely with appraisal so that areas for development are monitored more systematically.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- learning to be more independent living away from home
- feeling very safe and secure around the college
- the interesting and fun enrichment
- the good accommodation and facilities especially computers, and fitness suite

- knowing that someone will help if there is a problem and that staff will always help but won't take away your independence
- having opportunities to get involved in the college and community.

What learners would like to see improved:

- more staff in the refectory at lunchtime
- the variety and quality of food that day students feel is too expensive
- more help to find a job and progress after college.

Summary of the views of stakeholders as confirmed by inspectors

What stakeholders like:

- the highly responsive and flexible nature of the college in meeting their needs
- the strong collaboration and supportive approach
- the range and quality of the college's specialist resources and the way these and the expertise of college staff are shared readily
- the often excellent levels of communication
- the fact that the college often goes the extra mile to make things work.

What stakeholders would like to see improved:

- more formal opportunities to give an external view to aid in the college's self assessment processes.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

6. Managers have made significant improvements in many areas since the last inspection. They have raised the quality of accommodation and resources, increased students' involvement, improved the promotion of equality and diversity and safeguarding, increased work experience and the emphasis on enterprise, improved sustainability and sustained high success rates. An area for improvement at the last inspection regarding inconsistencies in the planning and recording of learning, however, remains. The college has improved its overall effectiveness from satisfactory to good. Managers and governors have a clear commitment to sustain improvement and raise expectations.
7. Self-assessment and quality improvement processes involve students and staff and lead to improvements. The development plan relates effectively to the strategic priorities and sets specific targets, but not all outcomes are quantified sufficiently. Much of the self-assessment report contains clear evidence to support judgements, but this is not always the case. Governors, senior managers and staff have the structure, commitment, expertise and resources to implement further plans for improvement.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

8. Overall success rates on accredited programmes are very high. On foundation and intermediate programmes they are consistently high for all ages. For all students on advanced programmes and for those aged 16 to 18 on entry level programmes, the trend in success rates has been more uneven over time with rates at or just below average. College data for 2009/10 indicate improvements at all levels. Success rates for adults on Train to Gain programmes are high and the majority complete within the expected timescales.
9. Students make good progress relative to their starting points and several make exceptional progress. Hereward is very successful in raising the self-esteem and confidence of students. Students gain a deeper understanding of themselves and improve their understanding of what they need to do to maximise their potential. Inspectors' observations confirmed that students develop good employability skills. Many students are very competent and skilled in their use of ICT, including the development of increased independence through the use of mobile technologies. In addition, inspectors observed examples of students developing strong mentoring and leadership qualities. Students develop good levels of independence skills in preparation for leaving Hereward. A number of students have progressed successfully to further and higher education.
10. The college analyses performance by different groups of students regularly and accurately identifies that students of minority ethnic heritage achieve very well. Little significant difference exists between genders, although generally female students aged 16 to 18 achieve better than their male counterparts over time. The college's analysis of different groups does not always go into enough detail

to gain a comprehensive picture of students' achievement or progress. For example, attendance and high grade achievement are not reviewed systematically. The college recognises it does not analyse in enough depth how much progress students with differing support needs are making. As a result, it is not able to distinguish and report easily how significant some of the steps in progress are.

11. Students enjoy college and feel very safe. They develop a good understanding of their health and well-being and have the opportunity to access a varied range of sporting and leisure activities to develop their confidence, fitness and self-esteem. Students make an outstanding contribution to the college and beyond. Many contribute enthusiastically to the wide range of opportunities available including sports, media, volunteering, fund raising and enterprise activities with local schools, community groups and industry.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

12. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and are improving. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic in their approach and this adds positively to students' motivation and enjoyment. Most students demonstrate good attitudes to their studies, are punctual and are keen to learn. The rapport between staff and students is very good. Peer support within many lessons is strong and aids students' development of team working skills and their ability to reflect constructively on the work of others and on their own development. In the better lessons, students' individualism is actively encouraged so that they can take charge of their own learning.
13. The wide range of assistive technologies is, in most cases, used very well to remove the barriers to learning faced by many students and this increases their independence notably. Teaching accommodation has improved significantly and provides a positive and well-resourced environment in which to learn. The use of information learning technologies (ILT) is widespread, although some teachers use it far more creatively and appropriately than others to engage students and to add interest. Good and outstanding teaching exists across the college but too many teachers do not plan effectively enough to meet the needs of the wide range of students' abilities. The comprehensive information on learners gauged through the initial assessment process is used very well by some teachers to plan learning and accelerate progress but is not always considered or used sufficiently by others. As a result, some students, particularly those of higher ability, are not always challenged and stretched sufficiently to make as much progress as they could. This therefore can impact on the equality of students' classroom experience. The recording of individual progress and assessment within lessons also varies too much. Steps in learning and progress are captured very well in some cases but in others it is not recorded effectively in order to provide a clear basis for future lesson planning.
14. The college continues to monitor the quality of teaching and learning frequently. The self-assessment report identifies accurately the increase in the opportunities available to develop students' literacy and numeracy. The

promotion of equality through lessons is improving although it is not yet widespread and opportunities are often missed to highlight, explore and discuss equality and diversity matters.

15. The revised and extended curriculum to meet the needs and interests of students is good and develops students' knowledge, skills and aspirations successfully. Learning pathways provide good opportunities for progression within both vocational and academic studies from entry to advanced level. The transition to independence curriculum builds confidence and develops advocacy skills. A good range of enrichment opportunities, including accredited qualifications, adds both depth and breadth to students' experiences. Activities include fencing, art, music, singing, jewellery making, football, keep fit, dance and drama, independence skills, mentor skills and complementary therapies. Opportunities to undertake work experience, both in college and in the community have developed students' employability skills and increased access to and involvement in community events. The timetabling of both enrichment and transition to independence activities enables full access for both day and residential students. Staff sometimes miss opportunities to involve students in the planning and development of curriculum activities as well as the evaluation and review of their impact.
16. Partnership working is outstanding and is proving highly beneficial in increasing opportunities for students to extend their independence through areas such as sports participation, work experience and their active involvement within the community. Much of this extensive collaboration is also contributing successfully to raising students' future aspirations and increasing their self-confidence. For example, strong links with a local university have extended opportunities for progression significantly, particularly, but not exclusively, within performing arts. Partnerships are also highly productive within the curriculum through the use of external speakers such as city bankers within the business area.
17. Care, support and guidance are good. A multi-disciplinary team carries out good pre-admission and initial assessments. Students' skills, needs and learning strategies are profiled and recorded in a detailed initial assessment and guidance record. The mentor support programme is very effective and students have good access to personal, confidential support and advice. Transition arrangements are good. Students run a very successful leavers' conference where students and teachers from six partner colleges attend. Past students from Hereward who have gone on to university, discuss particular academic courses and university life in general and, as such, provide excellent role models for students aspiring to higher education. The college has developed very effective links with external agencies such as specialist nursing services, mental health services, National Conductive Education Service, local universities, Connexions and social care organisations. The majority of learners are extremely happy with the support they receive. The monitoring of attendance is good but has yet to impact on students' overall attendance which remains satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

18. The principal, senior staff and governors set ambitious aims to improve the quality of students' learning experiences and to raise expectations. They are genuinely committed to empowering students to achieve their goals. Strategic development, self-assessment and quality improvement plans are coherent and lead to improvements in provision. Managers review progress against these plans frequently and rigorously. Most targets and performance indicators are challenging, but a few are too general. The priority and urgency given to continuous improvement have sustained students' success rates at a high level for the last three years. Staff are aware of the college's ethos and aims; communication is effective.
19. Governance is good. Governors complete effective skills audits, self-assessment reports and quality improvement and development plans, but their targets are vague. Governors are knowledgeable about the college and its students through their links with specific areas. They challenge managers vigorously and intervene appropriately to seek improvements. Their skills and experience are highly appropriate and complementary. They meet their legal responsibilities regarding equality and diversity and safeguarding and monitor progress against these action plans closely.
20. Managers have made significant improvements to the promotion of safeguarding and it is good. Students and staff, governors and volunteers are well aware of safeguarding, bullying, harassment and e-safety matters. All managers have received training in safe recruitment. Systems and procedures meet legislative requirements, including checks on sub-contracted staff, volunteers and charity workers. Students led an exemplary project on feeling safe which initiated many improvements to site safety and security. Risk assessment is comprehensive and effective. Although managers check on the safeguarding of students on work experience they are aware that this process lacks rigour.
21. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory overall. This is a rapidly improving area of the college's work with many good features. Targeted training and innovative publicity have led to a greater awareness amongst staff of all aspects of equality. This, in turn, has aided a higher proportion of staff declaring a learning difficulty and/or disability, resulting in an increasingly representative staff profile. A well-publicised calendar of activities covering an array of equality themes including the celebration of different cultures, religions and the promotion of sexual orientation, helps to raise students' awareness of diversity. The active promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum and particularly within lessons, although improving, is not consistent. The analysis and reporting of equalities data are much improved. However, the data are not analysed in sufficient detail and trends are not identified clearly. Data are not always used routinely to set precise targets to enable the college to measure improvements or to identify and celebrate fully what it is doing well.
22. Staff at all levels engage very effectively with students, parents, employers and stakeholders to support improvements in the college and in the region. The

college participates in extensive partnership working and often leads in developments. Partners perceive the college as being very flexible and being genuinely willing to resolve issues, even if it means diverging from its usual systems. Managers use the views of external partners informally, but do not have a systematic process to elicit the opinions of stakeholders to inform the self-assessment process. The college has a very strong alumni system; previous students act as inspirational role models for current students.

23. Managers have used the self-assessment process and the associated action plans to good effect to increase the quality of provision and to sustain good outcomes for students. They have made many improvements since the last inspection. All staff and many students are involved in producing the self-assessment report and quality improvement plan. Although most of the judgements in the self-assessment report are broadly accurate, evidence of the impact of actions is insufficient. Most departmental self-assessment reports and improvement plans are good, but certain targets are too general and are difficult to measure. Managers have introduced a new appraisal system and it is too early to judge its full impact, but no systematic link exists between teachers' appraisals and their lesson observation outcomes. Managers have improved the rigour of the lesson observation process and inspectors agree with most of the outcomes in their shared observations. Senior staff moderate the process through joint observations. A standardisation group considers all the observation reports, but has yet not had sufficient impact on improving the rigour of observations.
24. Managers have improved accommodation significantly since the last inspection and students enjoy the good learning resource, social and sporting facilities. Many teachers and students use information learning and communication technologies effectively to aid learning. Financial management is good. Managers have made cost savings and increased efficiency. They have increased the emphasis on sustainability and energy awareness. Most teachers have or are working towards appropriate teacher education qualifications. The staff development plan for 2010/11 is highly relevant to the needs of staff and the college's aims. Students' success rates are high. Value for money is good.

Information about the inspection

25. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two additional inspectors, assisted by the college's Vice Principal for Students and Curriculum as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
26. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of learners and stakeholders. They also looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed for the provider. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Hereward 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	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners	91	45	46	0
Full-time learners	215	13	91	111
Part-time learners				
Overall effectiveness	2	2	2	2
Capacity to improve	2			
Outcomes for learners	2	2	2	2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2			
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2			
How well do learners progress?	2			
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2			
How safe do learners feel?	1			
<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>	1			
Quality of provision	2			
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?	2			
Leadership and management	2			
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2			
<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?	2			
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2			

*where applicable to the type of provision

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