Great Yarmouth College

Inspection report

Unique reference number:	130765
Name of lead inspector:	Paul Joyce HMI
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Type of provider:	General Further Education College
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Information about the provider

1. Great Yarmouth College is a medium sized general further education college located in an area of high economic and social deprivation on the east coast of Norfolk. The college provides courses in 14 subject areas with no provision in history, philosophy and theology. The majority of learners are on courses in preparation for life and work with significant numbers also enrolled on health and care, engineering, construction, retail and commercial enterprise and visual and performing arts courses. The college has its own work-based learning contract and offers Train-to-Gain and Entry to Employment courses as well as providing education and training for pupils aged 14 to 16 from local schools.

2. The college offers full and part-time learning from pre-entry to advanced level. At the time of inspection, approximately 1,398 learners aged 16 to 18 attended full-time and 165 attended part-time. A further 380 adult learners attended full-time and 934 are on part-time courses. In addition, 125 learners are on Train-to-Gain courses and 245 learners are on work-based learning programmes. Some 244 pupils aged 14 to 16 attend college courses from local schools.

3. The vast majority of the college population is White British although the proportion of learners attending the college from minority groups is above that of the local population. The proportion of pupils leaving school with five or more GCSE passes in the area is below the national average and unemployment rates are above the national average. The college's mission is 'to equip people with the aspiration, skills and competences necessary for employability, enterprise and an increased contribution to a dynamic society.'

4. The college provides training on behalf of the following providers:
    - University College Suffolk
    - East Consortium

5. The following organisation provides training on behalf of the college:
    - SDD Training (Door supervisors and personal licence courses)

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
Provision for young learners: 14 to 16	464 part-time learners
Further education (16 to 18)	1405 full-time learners 271 part-time learners
Foundation learning, including Entry to Employment	560 full-time learners 177 learners
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	461 full-time learners 1549 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	154 learners 137 apprentices

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 4

Capacity to improve	Grade 4

	Grade
Outcomes for learners	4
Quality of provision	4
Leadership and management	4
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	4

Subject Areas	Grade
Construction	4
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	3
Visual and performing arts	3
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	4

Overall effectiveness

6. Great Yarmouth College fails to provide a satisfactory standard of education. Learners on most courses do not achieve their qualifications and success rates are well below national averages. Learners do not progress well enough, nor do they achieve their full potential. Too many learners leave their courses before the planned end date and, of those who stay, too few achieve.

7. Teaching and learning do not meet the learning needs of individual learners; they are not sufficiently motivated to participate fully in their lessons. The college has not developed teachers' use of information communication technology (ILT) enough to provide more varied approaches to teaching and learning. Teaching does not sufficiently improve learners' literacy and numeracy skills. Learners on many courses do not attend their lessons regularly.

8. Progression opportunities, to courses at higher levels, are limited and progression rates are low. Too few learners complete work-experience.

Partnership arrangements are satisfactory and learners make an adequate contribution to the college and local community. Initial assessment, advice and guidance are not effectively used to ensure that learners are placed on the right course. Learners do not always receive the support they need to help them achieve. Tutorial provision fails to provide sufficient pastoral or academic support.

9.   The college's strategic direction is unclear. Poor working relationships between senior managers and serious issues between governors and senior post holders have hindered improvements in the college's performance. The college has been slow to respond to equality and diversity requirements. Performance management and quality assurance arrangements are weak. Self-assessment is ineffective and grades the provision too highly. The college has an inadequate capacity to make the required improvements.

Main findings

- Whilst success rates on very short courses and on the small number of AS-level courses are high, success rates on most long courses are well below national averages. Success rates for the majority of different groups of learners, including those from minority ethnic groups and those with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities are low.

- Success rates on work-based programmes are inadequate overall. On construction and engineering courses, success rates are well below sector averages whilst on hairdressing courses success rates are above average. On apprenticeship and on Train-to-Gain programmes too few learners achieve all the components of their qualification within the timescale set.

- Learners mostly feel safe whilst at college and the majority enjoy college life. However, too many learners leave their course early without achieving, and on most courses, attendance rates are very low. Learners develop satisfactory vocational skills and produce work of a satisfactory standard in a minority of subjects but too many learners make inadequate progress.

- Learners are adequately informed of risks and have the knowledge and understanding to make informed choices about their safety, health and well-being. Learners make a satisfactory contribution to both the college and local community. Literacy and numeracy skills are not sufficiently well developed to improve learners' social and economic well-being.

- Too much teaching fails to meet individual learners' needs. Teaching in a minority of areas is satisfactory but overall it does not motivate or interest learners. In most subject areas, the use of ILT, to enliven teaching, is underdeveloped and the promotion of equality and diversity is insufficient.

- Managers give insufficient priority to improving teaching and learning. Teaching and learning coaches provide valuable support to individual staff but senior managers do not hold curriculum managers to account for the quality of teaching in their areas. Internal lesson observers are over-generous in their grading and pay insufficient attention to judging learners' progress.

- Most courses do not offer progression to higher levels and progression between courses at different levels is low. However, the college has recognised this and extended opportunities in its prospectus for next year. Work-experience opportunities are limited and the use of employers and guest speakers to enhance the curriculum is underdeveloped. Partnership arrangements are satisfactory and continue to develop.

- Initial assessment, advice and guidance are not effective in ensuring learners are on the correct course. Learners' support needs, especially for literacy and numeracy, are not always met, although where support is provided it is satisfactory. Tutorial provision fails to provide sufficient pastoral or academic support.

- A serious breakdown in relationships at senior level has led to a lack of a clear strategic direction. Senior managers do not focus sufficiently on promoting ambition and raising standards. Despite the efforts of governors to improve accountability, data are not sufficiently accurate or accessible and performance management is weak.

- The college places appropriate emphasis on safeguarding and staff receive appropriate and regular training. Comprehensive Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and appropriate risk assessments take place. The college has appropriate links with local agencies including the local children's board. The recording of incidences is appropriate and staff deal with them swiftly.

- Equality and diversity are inadequate. Managers do not sufficiently analyse the performance of different groups, particularly at subject level. The promotion of equality and diversity in the curriculum varies across the college; learners' understanding of key issues is inconsistent. Progress in developing equality impact assessments is slow.

- Self-assessment is ineffective at improving provision. The self-assessment report is insufficiently evaluative or critical. Improvement plans do not relate to weaknesses and are not monitored by managers effectively. Development board meetings are not effective in tackling underperformance. The use of data to monitor or improve performance is inadequate.

What does Great Yarmouth College need to do to improve further?

- Urgently raise success rates and develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills by rapidly improving the quality of provision. Provide effective initial advice and guidance, recruit learners with integrity onto appropriate courses, provide support and improve the quality of teaching.

- Ensure teaching and learning meets individual learner needs by using initial assessment information to inform lesson planning and the targets set for learners to achieve. Use ILT to motivate and involve learners in lessons; ensure the effective promotion of equality and diversity.

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching and learning by refocusing college priorities and by holding curriculum managers to account for the quality of

teaching in their areas. Ensure internal observers focus on the progress made in lessons when judging the quality of teaching.

■ Devise robust initial assessment, advice and guidance procedures that ensure learners are recruited onto the right course at the correct level. Provide support for all learners requiring help and provide effective tutorial support to monitor their progress.

■ Revise the range and content of courses to ensure they effectively meet learners' and employers' needs. Ensure suitable progression routes are available, incorporate work-experience opportunities and use employers, guest speakers and visits to improve the curriculum.

■ Governors should ensure, without delay, that issues within the senior management team are resolved and that capacity building takes place to enable leaders and managers to inspire and raise the expectations of staff and learners and set a clear strategic direction for the college.

■ Introduce effective performance management arrangements, based on accurate, reliable, timely and accessible data, to enable governors, leaders and managers to effectively monitor the performance of the college and use the information for improvement actions.

■ Ensure that the promotion of equality and diversity is more effective throughout the organisation by closer analysis of the performance data for different learner groups, by a more consistent approach within the curriculum and by the completion of equality impact assessments.

■ Ensure that self-assessment and quality assurance procedures are effective in identifying areas for improvement and that resulting action plans have sufficient detail. Monitor improvement plans regularly to ensure they bring about substantial improvements in provision.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors
What learners like:
■ practical elements of vocational courses

■ relaxed and friendly environment

■ good resources in a minority of areas

■ praise for doing well

■ one-to-one support when it is provided

■ work-placement opportunities in areas where they are available.

What learners would like to see improved:
■ management and organisation of courses

■ teachers' feedback

■ effectiveness of teaching and the punctuality of teachers

- clarity of assessments and assignment briefs
- availability of in-class support
- quality of resources in a minority of areas
- slow response to resolving a minority of concerns.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:
- support provided to a minority of apprentices
- standard of vocational training
- approachable and experienced assessors.

What employers would like to see improved:
- frequency of assessor visits
- reporting of learners' progress
- their engagement with the college.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement Grade 4

10. The college's capacity to make and sustain improvements is inadequate. College performance has declined significantly in the three years since the previous inspection. The areas for improvement from that inspection have not been fully resolved, particularly in relation to target setting and equality and diversity. Poor leadership and management and the lack of a clear strategic direction has undermined the confidence of college staff. Managers have not focussed sufficiently on improving outcomes for learners and the quality of learners' experiences, especially the quality of teaching and learning and support.

11. Governors, managers and staff do not have adequate access to reliable data to identify actions needed for improvement. Governors are making interim arrangements to tackle the lack of capacity in senior management but these issues are not resolved. Self-assessment and quality improvement plans are not effective in driving forward improvements. Similarly, departmental board meetings are not effective in improving provision. Financial management and control within the college is weak. The use of users' views to improve provision is satisfactory but managers and staff recognise that more could be done to improve the responsiveness and impact of actions to resolve problems.

Outcomes for learners Grade 4

12. Success rates on very short courses are high, but on most long courses success rates are low, and are exceptionally low for learners aged 16 to 18. In 2009/10, college data show overall long course success rates for learners aged 16 to 18 to be very significantly below corresponding national averages at all levels. Long course success rates for adult learners are below national averages at foundation and intermediate level and are around the national average at advanced level. Data show that the success rates for learners at the college are well below those of providers that operate in areas with similar socio-economic characteristics. Success rates for the majority of learners from different minority ethnic groups, for learners in receipt of support and overall success rates for male and female learners are below national averages and in many cases the gap is widening.

13. Success rates for the vast majority of subject areas are below or substantially below corresponding national averages. On national vocational courses, college data show that success rates declined in 2009/10 and remained below national averages at all levels. On general vocational courses, success rates also declined in 2009/10 at foundation and intermediate level and remained below average, whilst at advanced level success rates increased and were above average. On the small number of GCSE, AS and A-level courses success rates were at or above corresponding national averages. On courses for key skills, success rates were exceptionally low and had declined substantially. The

development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills is not sufficient to improve their economic and social well-being. Success rates for pupils' aged 14 to 16 attending college courses from local schools were satisfactory overall.

14. Overall and timely success rates on work-based learning programmes are well below national averages at headline level. Subject success rates for construction and engineering are very low but success rates are high on hairdressing programmes. On Train-to-Gain courses, overall success rates at the college are similar to national rates but too few learners complete their qualification within the timescale set. Most learners on work-based programmes produce a satisfactory standard of work and develop appropriate skills relative to their course of study.

15. Most learners feel safe at college and enjoy college life. However, too many learners leave their course early without achieving. On most courses, attendance rates are very low. Whilst learners develop satisfactory vocational skills and produce work of an acceptable standard in a minority of subject areas, overall, too many make inadequate progress and fail to achieve to their full potential. Staff adequately inform learners about risks; learners have the knowledge and understanding to make informed choices about their safety, health and well-being. Learners make a satisfactory contribution to both the college and local community; they are involved in some decision-making processes and have some links with local organisations.

The quality of provision   Grade 4

16. Teaching and learning are inadequate. Too much teaching fails to meet the learning needs of individuals; this inhibits their progress and prevents them from achieving their full potential. Lesson planning does not take sufficient account of learners' prior attainment or identified learning needs. In too many lessons, teachers do not support sufficiently the least able learners or provide sufficient challenge for the most able. In most lessons, learners are not adequately motivated. They do not participate enough in learning activities; teachers do not check frequently enough that learning is taking place. The sharing of good practice in teaching and learning is insufficient. The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons is uneven across the college. In most areas teaching is better in practical lessons than in theory classes.

17. Resources to support teaching and learning are good in a minority of areas, especially those for practical teaching. In other areas, deficiencies in resources adversely impact on the experiences of learners. The use of ILT is effective in a few areas although overall its use throughout the college is underdeveloped.

18. Initial assessment is thorough and identifies learners' support needs. However, in-class support is insufficiently resourced and is not always available if learners need help. The language, literacy and numeracy needs of learners are not met adequately, either in lessons or through the review and target setting process.

Assessment practice is satisfactory and is good in those areas where staff give learners detailed helpful guidance on how to improve their work.

19. Arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching and learning are ineffective. The internal observation team is over-generous in grading lessons and fail to take sufficient account of the progress made by learners when judging the quality of teaching. Senior managers have recently introduced a newly revised observation system but it is too early to judge its impact. Curriculum managers are not held sufficiently to account for the quality of teaching and learning in their areas. Managers do not sufficiently prioritise improving the quality of teaching. Teaching and learning coaches provide valuable support to individual teachers and work well as a team.

20. Progression opportunities between one level and the next are not available for courses in many subjects. Managers recognise the need to provide better progression routes and the 2011/12 prospectus offers a wider range of courses. Progression rates within the college are low, with too few learners successfully moving from one level of course to the next. However, progression rates for pupils aged 14 to 16 who attended a college course during Key Stage 4 are high, although the majority do not progress onto courses in the subject area they originally studied. In most subjects, employer engagement is underdeveloped and learners do not benefit from opportunities to complete work experience or receive any talks from employers or guest speakers to enhance the curriculum.

21. The college curriculum does not develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills sufficiently and activities to develop learner's economic and social well-being are not effectively coordinated. The range of enrichment provision is satisfactory overall and includes a good variety of competitive sports with opportunities for learners of all abilities to compete. However, participation rates in activities other than sport are low. Learners enjoy college life and contribute satisfactorily to both the college and the local community.

22. The college has a few effective partnerships that it uses to develop provision to meet learners' needs. In media and performing arts learners use real life venues and projects; in travel and tourism and health and social care, partners provide work-placements. Managers recognise the need to increase and develop partnerships locally. They have started to work with local employers to improve the effectiveness of partnerships across all areas of the college. Partnerships with local schools and with other training providers are satisfactory.

23. Advice and guidance is not effective at ensuring learners are on the right course at the correct level. Whilst co-educators and staff provide satisfactory support, resources are insufficient to provide help for all learners that have an additional learning and/or support need. Success rates for learners identified as requiring additional support and for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

are below those of learners not in receipt of support and declined further during 2009/10 according to the college's own data.

24. Tutors do not use tutorial time effectively to provide pastoral and academic support to help learner's progress and achieve. Managers do not effectively monitor the tutorial programme. Most individual learning plans are not complete; they are not updated frequently enough with detailed targets to be useful in helping learners' progress. Pastoral support services are available but their coordination and monitoring are not effective to ensure all learners can benefit from the support the college offers.

Leadership and management   Grade 4

25. The college lacks a clear strategic direction. A serious breakdown in relationships has led to competing and unresolved priorities at corporate level, poor communication and ineffective operational management. Senior managers do not sufficiently focus on the performance of learners and the quality of their learning experience. The change in management structure has not resolved these concerns. A lack of clarity about the responsibilities and accountabilities attached to new roles has led to slow decision-making, duplication and inefficiencies. Performance management is weak. Targets are set at corporate level but it is not clear how curriculum areas, courses and staff contribute to them. Managers carry out appraisals but focus on professional development rather than performance. Most curriculum management is weak as is the management and coordination of work-based learning.

26. Governors bring an appropriate range of skills to the board and represent the local community well. Governors have prioritised the need to resolve problems at senior management level and have adhered closely to legal advice. However, prioritising the need to resolve these issues has limited their capacity to tackle, more directly, the declining performance of the college. The inability of senior managers to provide detailed and reliable data has frustrated the persistent efforts of governors to improve their monitoring of the college's performance. Governors have agreed a new reporting framework which they are seeking to implement. They are also working to build the capacity of senior managers to provide more effective monitoring of the college's performance. Governors' formal links with curriculum areas gives them insight into some of the challenges facing course teams. Their understanding of the quality of provision is satisfactory.

27. The college prioritises safeguarding appropriately and strongly promotes it to learners through induction. All staff, governors and volunteers complete regular mandatory training in safeguarding. The college has good links with the local children's board. An effective process for the referrals of learners' concerns is in place and any concerns raised are dealt with swiftly and appropriately. CRB checks take place for all staff, governors and volunteers. Suitable arrangements exist for subcontracted staff. The college promotes safe working practices in the

curriculum. Key activities, trips and work placements have appropriate risk assessments. Adequate procedures exist to counter bullying and harassment.

28. The college's arrangements to promote equality and diversity are inadequate. Managers analyse the performance of different groups of learners at corporate level but not at curriculum level. Most learners achieve in line with college averages, although these are well below national rates. However, the gap between success rates for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and for learners in receipt of additional support, has been consistently lower than the college average for the last three years and is widening. Managers have not taken sufficient action to close the gap. Enrichment activities are open to all learners but managers do not routinely monitor the participation of different groups of learners. The impact of focussed training on embedding equality and diversity within teaching and learning has been variable, with weak promotion in a number of curriculum areas. The college has adequate policies and procedures although managers have been very slow to develop and implement procedures on equality impact assessments.

29. The college's engagement with learners and employers is satisfactory. Learners and employers' forums collect their views. A course representative system enables learners to be involved in college affairs. Learners contibute to development board meetings and student union representatives are part of a few cross-college committees. However, actions by the college as a result of learners' feedback are not always prompt enough; managers recognise that more could be done to enable learners to contribute effectively.

30. The self-assessment report is overly optimistic, insufficiently evaluative and self-critical. The process partially involves staff but does not formally involve learners and employers. The cross-college quality improvement plan is too generic. Actions are insufficiently detailed and managers do not closely monitor them to drive forward improvements. Managers and staff at all levels of the organisation do not have good access to simple, accurate data to inform them of the college's performance. The termly departmental board meetings to review the performance of programmes are not effective in challenging poorly performing courses and do not lead to specific action plans to deal with underperformance. The college has weak budget setting processes. Managers do not utilise accommodation well. Average group sizes are low. Value for money is inadequate.

Subject areas

Construction   Grade 4

Context

31. The college offers full and part-time courses at foundation, intermediate and advanced level in trowel occupations, wood occupations, painting and decorating, plumbing and in electrical installation. Most learners are male and are aged 16 to 18, on full-time programmes. At inspection, approximately 560 learners were on college courses including 38 school pupils aged 14 to 16 and 41 apprentices on work-based programmes.

Key findings

■ Outcomes for learners are inadequate. Success rates are low on most courses and the overall success rate for all long courses declined to 11 percentage points below the sector average in 2009/10. Whilst success rates on intermediate brickwork courses and on advanced level, electrical installation courses are high, on most other courses success rates are low.

■ Success rates on work-based learning programmes vary considerably year to year and were low in 2008/09 but have increased in 2009/10 to above average. The number that complete successfully by their target end date has remained low. Work-based learners develop satisfactory practical skills and produce work to industrial standards.

■ The development of learners' practical skills is satisfactory overall. A minority of learners develop good practical skills, especially on brickwork and electrical installation courses but learners on painting and decorating courses, particularly at advanced level, do not develop skills of an appropriate standard.

■ Learners feel safe and have a satisfactory understanding of their health and safety responsibilities. Learners adopt safe working practices and use appropriate personal protective safety equipment. However, facilities for hand washing in most new workshops are insufficient. Floors can become slippery and cause a safety hazard.

■ Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Practical teaching is often good and more effective than classroom based theory teaching. Most theory lessons are satisfactory and teachers use a range of resources to engage learners. However, in a minority of lessons learners are not sufficiently motivated or involved. Teachers dominate these lessons and learners are inactive for long periods.

■ Courses do not effectively meet the needs of learners. Too many learners progress from one full-time course to the next without the opportunity to complete any construction related work experience. Links with employers are underdeveloped and there are too few apprenticeship placements. The development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills is not sufficient to aid their progress in completing evidence portfolios and examinations.

- Partnership arrangements do not effectively improve the curriculum or enhance learning. Employers are not sufficiently involved in the design of the curriculum and links with employers to benefit learners are ineffective. Enrichment activities are limited and the use of site visits and guest speakers is underdeveloped.

- Support for learners is inadequate. Learners do not receive sufficient academic or pastoral support to ensure they progress and achieve. Tutors do not use tutorial time effectively to set targets and monitor progress. A minority of learners that require support, and have sought help, have not provided with assistance.

- Support for learners on work-based programs is inadequate. Whilst learners and employers value the support provided by assessors, the completion of learners' reviews often does not take place promptly enough. Targets set for learners' subsequent reviews are not always specific enough to be useful in aiding progress.

- Leadership and management are inadequate. Data is not accurate and managers do not use it to target improvement actions. Quality assurance arrangements are ineffective. Managers and staff pay insufficient attention to improving outcomes for learners and the learning experience. Engagement with employers is underdeveloped.

- Procedures to ensure the safety of learners are satisfactory. Appropriate employment checks take place on all staff and learners receive all the required safety equipment they need to use. However, in a minority of new workshops, risk assessments are insufficiently detailed and do not identify all potential hazards.

- The promotion of equality and diversity is inadequate. Staff frequently miss opportunities to promote equality and diversity. Planning to ensure the development of learners' knowledge and understanding of this area is underdeveloped. The use of teaching and learning resources often reinforces poor gender stereotyping.

What does Great Yarmouth College need to do to improve further?

- Raise success rates by ensuring learners are on courses appropriate for their level of ability and by providing support to improve their literacy and numeracy skills to achieve against clearly defined targets.

- Ensure teaching motivates learners to participate fully in all lessons by employing a wider range of teaching methods that encourages learners to interact and by sharing best practice across the department.

- Develop more effective partnership arrangements with employers to improve their contribution to the design of the curriculum and provide learners the opportunity to benefit from work experience opportunities and site visits.

- Ensure the implementation of quality assurance arrangements to improve rapidly the quality of provision. Complete risk assessments for all learner activities and frequently review them to ensure they are fit for purpose.

■ Promote equality and diversity more effectively by planning lessons to incorporate relevant subject themes.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy   Grade 3

Context

32. The college offers courses in hairdressing and beauty therapy at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels. At inspection, approximately 152 learners aged 16 to 18, and 106 adult learners, attended full-time courses; a further 48 adult learners attended part-time. The majority of learners are female and are on intermediate level courses. The college also provides work-based learning courses for 43 hairdressing apprentices and courses for local schools.

Key findings

■ Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Success rates on intermediate courses in hairdressing are above national averages whilst on beauty therapy courses they are below national averages. Success rates on most other courses are around national averages. Learners develop good practical skills and work to professional standards demonstrating effective health and safety practices and a confident attitude with clients. Learner attendance rates are low.

■ Overall success rates on work-based learning programmes are high. Apprentices make good progress and most achieve the framework within the timescale set. However, success rates for advanced apprentices are low and learners do not always achieve by their target end date. Most learners on work-based programmes develop good practical skills and work to professional standards.

■ Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners participate well in most practical lessons and effective individual coaching enables most learners to make progress. However, in some lessons, learners are inactive, especially when they act as models or when waiting for clients. A minority of teachers in theory lessons do not meet learners' individual needs and they miss opportunities to reinforce theory during practical sessions.

■ Teachers use ILT well to improve learners' knowledge and understanding. Learners make good use of the college's virtual learning environment to access learning materials and activities.

■ Assessment is satisfactory. Assessment of practical work is regular and verbal feedback is very useful in helping learners to improve their work. However, comments on written work are insufficiently detailed and do not always inform learners what they need to do to improve.

■ The range of courses satisfactorily meets the needs and interests of learners and employers. Learners are able to study from foundation to advanced level and several short courses are available to improve their employability skills. The college provides a good range of work-based learning programmes and provides courses for employers, to increase their qualifications.

- Partnership arrangements are good. Local employers and a local training provider collaborate with the college to provide industry experience for learners. Employers attend meetings at the college to advise on industry training needs. The college has productive links with local schools and provides a broad range of courses for pupils aged 14 to 16.

- Guidance and support are inadequate. In previous years, staff enrolled learners onto inappropriate courses that did not match their ability level. Managers and staff have taken action to ensure learners are now on the right programme according to their aptitude, ability and preference. It is too early to judge the impact of these actions on learners' retention and pass rates.

- Tutorial support is satisfactory overall and enables learners to make progress. Learners receive regular individual tutorials where they record and monitor their progress and discuss personal issues. Targets are set and monitored during tutorials but they mainly relate to the completion of assessments and are not always useful in enabling learners to improve their performance.

- Leadership and management are inadequate. Whilst day-to-day operational management is effective and course leaders adequately manage their courses, data at college level are not easily accessible and are not reliable enough to target improvement actions. College observers are over-generous in their grading of teaching and learning and the college's quality assurance and improvement processes are not implemented.

- Leaders and managers within the subject area, and for work-based programmes, keep detailed records of learners' progress and make effective use of learners' and employers' views to ensure that provision meets their needs. Communication with employers is effective and working relationships are strong.

- Actions to improve the promotion of equality and diversity have had limited impact. Staff have received equality and diversity training but teachers miss opportunities to promote equality and diversity in lessons. Managers do not make use of data to monitor and analyse the engagement and performance of different groups of learners.

What does Great Yarmouth College need to do to improve further?

- Raise attendance and success rates by ensuring teachers and managers have high expectations, set and regularly monitor challenging attendance targets, and take prompt action to rectify attendance issues.

- Ensure learners make good progress by enabling them to take an active role in all practical lessons and by ensuring teaching in theory lessons takes account of the different needs of individual learners. Reinforce learners understanding by ensuring links between theory and practice are more effective and frequent.

- Use tutorial time more effectively to discuss the progress learners are making and to identify areas where they need to improve their performance as well as setting targets for the completion of assessments. Provide detailed feedback to learners that informs them what they need to do to improve.

■   Ensure the implementation of quality improvement arrangements and the use of data enables improvement actions to enhance the quality of provision and raise success rates.

■   Place a greater emphasis on equality and diversity by making use of data to set and monitor targets for the recruitment and success of different groups of learners, and by using lesson observations to evaluate the effectiveness of the promotion of equality and diversity to learners.

Visual and performing arts   Grade 3

Context

33. The college offers courses in visual and performing arts from foundation to advanced level and also provides higher education courses. At the inspection approximately 300 learners were enrolled on courses. The majority of learners were aged 16 to 18, female, and were on advanced level courses studying full-time.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Success rates on advanced level courses have increased and on most are around the corresponding national average. However, success rates on intermediate courses are low and in 2009/10 were six percentage points below the corresponding national average. In-year retention rates on most courses are high but attendance rates are low. Learners are often late to classes.

- The standard of learners' work is often high with many achieving high grades. Learners frequently work collaboratively to produce experimental work for a range of external projects. Learners work to professional standards and produce creative work. Progression to university from advanced level courses is satisfactory.

- Learners feel safe and secure at college. Learners are confident that staff would respond appropriately if they were to report any concerns. Teachers reinforce health and safety well where necessary within classes and learners adopt safe working practices.

- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the more effective lessons, teachers use ILT well to engage learners and use different teaching methods to ensure learners have sufficient challenge. However, in most lessons, although satisfactory overall, teachers miss opportunities to involve learners, to provide challenge for the most able and to use questioning to develop learners' knowledge and understanding.

- Assessment practices are good. Learners receive very detailed written feedback on vocational courses that clearly identifies areas for further improvement. Verbal feedback in lessons clearly highlights how learners can improve and gain higher grades. However, monitoring and the challenging use of targets on individual learning plans are not always effective.

- The range of courses is satisfactory at meeting the needs and interests of learners. At advanced level, learners have a wide range of course options to choose from including; media, dance, theatre, art and design, fashion and textiles and music. However, at foundation and intermediate level, the choice is less and far fewer learners study at these levels. Enrichment opportunities are extensive; they enhance, compliment and reinforce learning.

- Partnership arrangements are good. Learners benefit from the range of external organisations that work with the college and are able to work on real-life projects. Learners have the opportunity to perform live and exhibit their work in a range of local public venues.

- Guidance and support are satisfactory. Learners requiring additional support receive help. Tutorials are effective in providing academic guidance and support and help learners keep up-to-date with their work.

- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff feel supported by their managers. Regular meetings take place. Course teams work well across disciplines and share good practice. However, managers do not have sufficient access to up-to-date data or effective college systems to help them monitor the impact of improvements easily.

- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Learners develop their knowledge and understanding through project work, which challenges the use of stereotypical messages and images in media campaigns and advertisements.

- Self-assessment is over-generous and does not identify a minority of key areas for improvement. Quality improvement plans have insufficient detail to ensure standards consistently improve.

- Specialist accommodation and resources are excellent. Studios are well equipped and enable learners to use the latest resources. Software and equipment is industry standard and learners have good access to computers and other equipment to enable them to complete their work.

What does Great Yarmouth College need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all course success rates and high-grade profiles reflect the same high standards across all areas of the provision by identifying at risk learners early and ensuring interventions have a positive impact.

- Improve the effectiveness of teaching by ensuring all learners are thoroughly engaged in lessons, are challenged, and that teacher's use questioning more effectively to develop learners' knowledge.

- Improve attendance and punctuality by including targets for these areas on personal learning plans and ensure tutors monitor all the targets set closely.

- Ensure managers are better equipped to identify and monitor the impact of actions to increase learners' success rates and raise standards by improving management data and the use of quality improvement arrangements.

Literacy, numeracy and ESOL   Grade 4

Context

34. The college offers literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses from entry level to intermediate level. The majority of learners on these courses are adults and study part-time. In addition, the college provides functional skills courses for full-time learners aged 16 to 18 alongside their main course of study. At inspection there were approximately 2,500 learner enrolments on functional skills courses.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are inadequate. Success rates on key skills qualifications are well below national averages and declined substantially during 2009/10. Success rates on literacy and numeracy qualification are low. Learners' achievements on ESOL courses are satisfactory.

- Learners make inadequate progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills. Courses do not enable learners to effectively develop or apply key and function skills and this limits their progress and adversely affects their economic and social well-being.

- On ESOL courses, learners develop satisfactory language skills and produce work of a satisfactory standard. ESOL lessons include employment and citizenship topics to improve learners' employability skills and develop their understanding of rights and responsibilities.

- Learners feel safe at college. Induction arrangements are satisfactory and enable learners to settle quickly. Learners are confident that the college deals effectively with their concerns.

- Teaching and learning are inadequate. On literacy, numeracy and functional skills courses too much teaching is unsatisfactory. The planning of lessons is not adequate to meet the differing abilities of learners. In most functional skills, lessons teachers fail to motivate or engage learners, as teaching is not related to their main course of study.

- Teaching and learning on ESOL courses is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of resources to make learning activities relevant and memorable. Most ESOL lessons are imaginative and challenge learners effectively. However, attendance rates in most ESOL lessons are low.

- Individual learning plans are insufficiently detailed. Plans focus too much on identifying activities for learners to complete and insufficiently on identifying learners' skill development needs. Teachers do not use initial assessment information effectively to plan individual learning programmes and they do not always record the dates for planned achievement of targets.

■ The range of courses and activities do not meet learners' needs effectively. Managers have not carefully considered the college's functional skills policy. Its application results in learners being placed on functional skills courses that are not appropriate to their ability level or need.

■ Partnership arrangements are inadequate. Links with employers are underdeveloped and the college has insufficient links with community partners and organisations to improve learning.

■ Guidance and support are inadequate. The support the college provides is satisfactory but not all learners requiring support receive help. In most large mixed ability classes, the number of staff available to provide support is insufficient and learners have to wait too long to receive help.

■ Leadership and management are inadequate. The management and coordination of literacy, numeracy and functional skills courses is weak. Management information including enrolment, retention and achievement data is unreliable. Quality assurance arrangements, including those for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, are ineffective and do not lead to improvement.

■ The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory overall. Lessons do enable learners to improve their understanding of issues related to equality and diversity and teachers use lesson topics to promote and reinforce key points.

What does Great Yarmouth College need to do to improve further?

■ Raise success rates by ensuring learners are on courses that are appropriate to their ability level, by ensuring teachers use learning activities based on learners' main course of study that relate to individual circumstances, and provide support to those requiring help.

■ Ensure learners make good progress in developing functional skills by providing additional support staff to help them achieve.

■ Ensure, through initial assessment that targets set on individual learning plans accurately reflect the learning required to successfully develop learners' skills so they can achieve learning goals and qualifications. Frequently monitor learners' progress and update targets.

■ Ensure the effective management and coordination of literacy, numeracy and functional skill courses across the college by allocating specific responsibilities to named individuals and improving the accuracy and use of data to target improvement actions.

■ Improve the links with employers and community organisation so they are able to contribute to the curriculum, teaching, and help learners develop their literacy, numeracy and employability skills.

Information about the inspection

35. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's head of centre for performance improvement, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding body, 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.

36. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of learners and employers. They also looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed for the provider. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="6" align="center">**Record of Main Findings (RMF)**
Great Yarmouth 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</td></tr>
</table>

Grades **using the 4 point scale** 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners Full-time learners Part-time learners	1778 1713	0 244	1398 165	380 934	0 370
Overall effectiveness	4	3	4	4	4
Capacity to improve	4				
Outcomes for learners	4	3	4	4	4
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	4				
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	4				
How well do learners progress?	4				
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	4				
How safe do learners feel?	3				
Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*	3				
How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*	3				
Quality of provision	4	3	4	4	4
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	4				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	4				
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	3				
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	4				
Leadership and management	4	3	4	4	4
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	4				
How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*	3				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	4				
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3				
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	4				
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	4				

*where applicable to the type of provision