

Bournville College of Further Education

Inspection report

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Type of provider: General Further Education College

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Information about the college

1. Bournville College is a large college in southwest Birmingham. The college's main site is at Northfield. Two smaller centres, approximately three miles away, include a construction centre and the Hollymoor Centre, used for general teaching. The college has a business unit at the Innovation Centre at Longbridge. The college uses various other community and commercial venues to offer courses. In July 2011, the college is due to move to a substantial new building occupying 4.2 acres on the site of the former MG Rover plant at Longbridge, as part of a major city regeneration project. The new campus will bring together the three campuses onto one site.
2. College-based courses cover all subject areas except engineering, although numbers are small in a few subjects. Courses are mostly vocational but the college offers GCE A and AS level provision in 18 subjects. Employment-based courses are available in a wide range of subjects, which include engineering. About a quarter of the college's income is from sources other than government funding. These are mainly through offering provision to improve employment opportunities through the European Social Fund and the Department for Work and Pensions. This provision was not inspected.
3. Most learners are from Birmingham. In Birmingham, the percentage of pupils gaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics is below the regional and national average. The local unemployment rate has risen and is high. The college recruits most of its learners from areas of high social and economic deprivation. College learners from a minority ethnic heritage are more than three times the percentage in the local community.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
<p>Young learner provision: 14-16 Further education (16-18) Foundation Learning, including Entry to Employment (E2E)</p>	<p>168 learners 1508 full-time learners 298 part-time learners 102 full-time learners 87 part-time learners 111 learners</p>
<p>Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)</p>	<p>851 full-time learners; 3507 part-time learners</p>
<p>Employer provision: Train to Gain ESF Train to Gain Apprenticeships</p>	<p>1670 learners 554 learners 248 apprentices</p>
<p>Informal adult learning PCDL Family Learning</p>	<p>419 learners 135 learners</p>

Summary report

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

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

Subject Areas	Grade
Construction, planning and the built environment	2
Hospitality and catering	2
Visual arts and media	3
Business, administration and law	2

Overall effectiveness

4. Overall effectiveness is satisfactory. The college provides an enjoyable and safe learning environment. Learners' results, although improving steadily, remain just below the average for similar colleges. Results are better for younger learners and those employment-based than for adults. Staff prepare learners well for employment. Teaching, care and support along with the college's broad curriculum are good. Teachers make learning interesting. They are particularly successful at helping vulnerable learners or those from challenging backgrounds to participate in education. A minority of learners, particularly those more capable do not always receive sufficient challenge to realise their full potential. Learners receive high levels of personal care. Advice and guidance at enrolment and effective intervention when learners are at risk of underperformance, have improved.
5. Good leadership focuses on the college's inclusive mission and high level of responsiveness to employers and the local community's needs. Partnership work is outstanding. Managers have made a considerable impact by

implementing initiatives to help many learners, in particular those affected by the economic downturn, to return to education and increase their employability skills. Managers' use of self-assessment and quality assurance is satisfactory. Managers are working well to improve learners' results with firm evidence of success, particularly in the current year. However, a few important aspects of the college's work, such as attendance, staying on rates and the quality of provision in a few subjects, are only just starting to improve quickly enough. The college has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

6. The college's effective commitment to equality ensures learners from a diverse range of backgrounds work well together. Promotion of equality and diversity in the curriculum is satisfactory. Managers do not always sufficiently analyse data about different groups to identify gaps in achievement. Safeguarding arrangements are robust.

Main findings

- Learners' long course success rates are just below the average for similar colleges. Rates are average for younger learners but below average for adults. Retention rates are below average. Learners gain good vocational and employability skills. They progress well between levels of study but a minority do not always make sufficient progress in their learning compared to their prior attainment.
- Employment-based learners have above average success rates. Although the large majority of apprentices complete their qualifications on time, not enough Train to Gain learners complete quickly enough. Managers' effective actions are resolving this and current learners are making much better progress.
- Most groups of learners achieve equally well. Several groups of vulnerable learners, such as asylum seekers, achieve particularly well. However, success rates for learners receiving additional learning support have declined slightly from a stronger position. Success rates for key skills qualifications are below average. Attendance is satisfactory but it has shown little improvement over time until the current year.
- Learners feel safe; their level of attendance is improving and they work well together. They show satisfactory awareness of health and well-being topics. Their participation in sport has increased. Learners adopt safe practices well in lessons and make a good response to safety initiatives such as mandatory wearing of identity badges.
- The large majority of lessons are good or better. Teachers plan lessons carefully to ensure that learners participate fully and develop the ability to learn independently. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not question learners thoroughly enough to either check, extend or challenge their knowledge and understanding sufficiently.
- Assessment is satisfactory but good in the workplace. Assignments are nearly always well chosen but sometimes teachers do not provide sufficient detail in their marking to help learners understand how to improve their work. Learners

understand their long-term goals but shorter-term targets are often insufficiently precise and less helpful.

- The college has a wide range of provision with clear progression routes. The curriculum is highly responsive to the needs of learners who hope to gain employment. The opportunities to gain work experience on a minority of vocational courses are insufficient. The evaluation of the effectiveness of enrichment is not sufficient.
- Partnership work is outstanding. Productive partnerships enable the college to be highly responsive to the needs of its community and employers. Partnerships are particularly effective in promoting social and educational inclusion by reaching out to vulnerable groups.
- Comprehensive advice and guidance, followed by effective induction, help ensure that learners are on the right course. Arrangements for learners who require additional learning support are good. Learners value the one-to-one support they receive from tutors but the quality of group tutorials varies too much.
- All staff share managers' clear and ambitious vision. Effective strategic planning has enabled the college to meet the needs of its diverse community. A recent management restructure is improving several important aspects of the college's work although it is too early to evaluate the full impact on success rates. Engagement with stakeholders is productive.
- A culture of mutual respect exists across the college. Achievement gaps for most minority ethnic groups have closed. Managers do not analyse equality data in enough detail. Promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum is satisfactory. Arrangements for safeguarding are good. Monitoring of actions to safeguard learners is rigorous.
- The self-assessment report is broadly accurate. The effectiveness of recent improvement actions is bringing about more marked increases in retention, attendance and the quality of provision. Quality improvement plans do not all have clear success criteria or sufficiently ambitious targets to enable rigorous monitoring. Evaluation of value-added measures is insufficient.

What does Bournville College of Further Education need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that managers at all levels review retention and attendance rates frequently and take prompt action when learners are at risk of underperforming or withdrawing.
- Embed the strengthened arrangements to ensure that learners on employment-based Train to Gain courses complete their qualifications within the time allocated. Ensure managers at all levels monitor these learners' progress against set timescales rigorously.

- Improve the quality of questioning in lessons so that teachers know how much learning is taking place and stretch and challenge learners' knowledge and understanding.
- Improve the precision of learners' targets so that they understand how to achieve both their long term goals and the shorter and more specific next steps they need to take in order to reach them.
- Evaluate the effectiveness and the impact of the enrichment programme to help ensure that it meets the needs of learners and that participation is increased and extended to include all learners.
- Increase the opportunities for learners to gain relevant work experience by sharing good practice with the parts of the college where this is working well and drawing on the strong employer links.
- Take steps to ensure that the quality of tutorials is consistently good or better through using internal observations to check the process and by more careful monitoring of a comprehensive tutorial scheme of work by curriculum managers.
- Apply greater detail to the analysis of equalities information to identify and report on emerging gaps in the performance of different groups of learners. Increase the promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum by developing teachers' strategies to maximise all opportunities and by sharing the best practice that exists within the college.
- Increase the effectiveness of quality improvement actions by ensuring that success criteria and targets are measurable, specific and sufficiently ambitious. Evaluate more rigorously the impact of all actions to improve provision. Use value-added measures more effectively in self-assessment reports.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- welcoming and secure college environment
- helpful teachers who respect you
- working with people of different ages and from different backgrounds
- a variety of things to do in lessons
- plenty of courses to progress to on completion
- flexible course hours.

What learners would like to see improved:

- cost and quality of food in the refectory
- more sports and recreational facilities
- more car parking space.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- college staff who listen and respond to concerns
- highly skilled assessors
- additional support available when needed
- better skilled and more confident employees.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

7. The college has maintained a strong commitment to its inclusive culture while achieving a steady increase in success rates overall and, more recently, a better rate of increase for learners aged 16 to 18 and in employment-based provision. However, success rates for adult learners, which were high at the previous inspection have since declined and are now just below average. The college meets most of its performance targets but several of these targets have not been ambitious enough to enable it to close the gap between its success rates and those for similar colleges.
8. A management restructure in 2009 has underpinned a more consistent focus on improvement planning and the quality of provision has improved in several subjects, such as construction. Standards in other subjects, and the important aspects of attendance and retention, show very recent improvement. Quality assurance arrangements are firmly established and mostly work well. However, too much variation still exists in a few areas, including the effectiveness of individual learning plans, an area for improvement at the last inspection. Self-assessment is mostly accurate and self-critical, although a few strengths are overstated or are not well supported by evidence.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

9. Learners' ability, motivation and aspiration on entry to the college vary considerably and are often lower than is typical. A significant number come from disadvantaged backgrounds or they have faced setbacks in their educational or employment history. The college is particularly successful at helping these learners to develop confidence and engage with education. Learners develop good standards of vocational and employability skills. Learners' progression rates between levels of study are high. A high percentage moves on into employment or further study. However, learners' progress compared to their prior attainment, particularly on advanced level courses, has often been too slow and they have not fulfilled their potential. Most current learners are making better progress. Attendance has been, at best, satisfactory for several years but in the current academic year, the improvement is considerable.
10. Learners' success rates on long courses have increased steadily and they are just below the average for similar colleges. Younger learners' success rates have increased more rapidly because of rising retention rates. Success rates for this group are average overall and above average at advanced level. Success rates for adults are below average, particularly at advanced level, mainly because pass rates have declined. College data indicate that retention rates for

all learners have increased considerably in the current year. Up to this point, the rate of increase has been slower than that nationally.

11. Gaps between the achievement of several different minority ethnic groups and the college's overall rate have been closed successfully. However, a few other gaps are widening including the gap between younger male and female learners' success rates. Learners in receipt of additional learning support achieved at least as well as and often better than their peers between 2007/08 and 2008/08 but in 2009/10, their success rates were just below those of their peers. Various vulnerable groups, including asylum seekers, achieve above average success rates.
12. Employment-based apprentices' success rates are just above average. In several subjects, including engineering and manufacturing technologies, rates are high. A large majority complete their qualifications within the time allocated. While success rates are high on Train to Gain courses, not enough learners have completed their qualifications in the time allowed. However, in the current year learners are making good progress in meeting the timescales for completion set for them.
13. Subject success rates vary and the trend in improvement is uneven. About half of subjects show an increasing trend, most marked in construction and information and communication technology but the remainder show some decline. This is most marked in health and social care; leisure, travel and tourism; and visual arts and media. Success rates for key and functional skills qualifications have declined and are below average. Success rates on GCE A and AS level courses are mostly low, mainly because of low retention. Short course success rates have increased to be average.
14. Learners appreciate the security of the college's environment and feel safe. They demonstrate good safety awareness in lessons and around the college. They respond well to safety initiatives, including the strict reinforcement of wearing identity badges. The promotion of learners' health and well-being knowledge takes place through a range of activities, including tutorials, sexual health promotions and healthy living weeks but reinforcement is insufficient in the college's canteen. Learners participate well in sport. They contribute well to college and community life; for example, through volunteering within the community or taking on roles as student ambassadors.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

15. Inspectors judged the quality of teaching and learning to be good. The great majority of lessons are good or better. Learners say, and inspectors agree that the quality of lessons has improved.
16. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subjects they teach and really care about how well learners do. They plan their lessons carefully and encourage learners

to think for themselves and take control of their own learning. Materials to support learning are good and teachers use them well to ensure that lesson content is matched closely to lesson objectives. The college's virtual learning environment provides learners with valuable additional resources in many subjects. The use of information and learning technology is well developed in a minority of subjects. Appropriate staff training develops the skills of teachers in subjects where it is not. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not target their questions sufficiently and are not clear about how much progress learners are making. Teachers do not use questions and other strategies consistently to challenge and extend learners' knowledge, particularly more able learners.

17. Assessment is satisfactory overall but good in the workplace. On most courses, staff plan assessment schemes carefully. Teachers set imaginative and interesting assignments and mark them accurately. Learners mostly receive helpful comments on how to improve their work, although in a minority of cases teachers' comments do not provide sufficient detail. Individual learning plans vary in quality but generally contain appropriate long term targets for learners. However, many plans are not precise about what learners need to do in the short term towards achieving them.
18. The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners and local employers is good. It offers a wide range of courses and clear progression routes that enable learners to study at an appropriate level and subsequently to take further qualifications. The curriculum is highly responsive to the needs of learners who hope to acquire the skills needed to gain employment. Employers from a wide area value the college's responsiveness highly. They appreciate the college's willingness to provide bespoke training which meets their specific needs.
19. Managers gather employers' views in order to plan and improve provision very effectively, although employers are not formally involved in the self-assessment process. A good range of enrichment activities is available, much of which is sport-related. Vocational enrichment is well developed in some subjects, although the opportunity to gain work experience on a minority of vocational courses is insufficient. Although the college keeps records of participation in each activity, the overall analysis of learners' uptake of enrichment activity is insufficient. This limits the evaluation of its effectiveness.
20. Partnership work is outstanding. The college's collaborative work with the local community, specialist agencies, schools, the local authority and employers is highly successful. Through a wide range of productive partnerships, provision is arranged to meet most learners' needs. In particular, the college works closely with partners to ensure that learners can acquire appropriate employment skills in new areas of work following significant changes to the traditional structure of local industry.
21. A strong emphasis is placed upon partnerships which promote social and educational inclusion thus ensuring that provision is available for a number of

vulnerable groups. A partnership with the National Trust has enabled unemployed 16 to 24 year olds to gain a range of useful outdoor skills while working alongside conservationists caring for green sites in their neighbourhoods. The forthcoming move to a new site is enabling the college to implement its environmental sustainability policy much more vigorously.

22. Care, guidance and support are good. The provision of timely information, advice and guidance is comprehensive and well organised. In particular, entry interview requirements have been increased appropriately on a few courses. The college is now much more successful in ensuring that learners are on the right course. A high number of schools' liaison events and taster days are held each year. Induction works well and clarifies learners' entitlements and their expectations of college life.
23. Learners receive effective guidance when applying for university places or jobs. The college offers a wide range of support for learners including good arrangements for the provision of counselling. Arrangements for learners with additional learning needs are good. Very effective arrangements are in place for learners in need of specialist support. Tutorials vary in quality. Managers do not evaluate the quality of tutorials specifically as part of the internal lesson observation scheme. The 'Every Child Matters' themes are incorporated into most tutorial schemes of work, along with an interesting variety of topics including raising awareness of sustainable development. Most learners on vocational courses value the support they receive from tutors, particularly in one-to-one meetings. Improved in-year retention and attendance data suggest that support arrangements are having a greater impact in the current year.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

24. The principal and governors ensure that the college has a clear and ambitious vision for its future which is well understood and supported by staff. Morale is high. Meeting the needs of the college's diverse community is at the heart of its work. Its strategic plans provide a unambiguous framework for action. The college responds very well to local and regional priorities. In particular, it is playing a significant part in the major regeneration of Longbridge. Managers, well supported by governors, are managing the development of the new Longbridge campus skilfully, alongside overseeing the day to day running of the college. A recent management restructure provides clearer lines of accountability enabling managers to take direct action to improve several important aspects including learners' attendance and retention. Early signs indicate that actions are proving successful, although it is too early to evaluate the impact on success rates.
25. Governors support the college well and provide a suitable level of challenge to managers' decisions. They have a broad range of experience and use this to good effect in supporting work on the new building project. Governors monitor

the college's progress carefully, particularly in relation to financial health. They acknowledge that the level of attendance at committee meetings is low.

26. Arrangements for safeguarding are good. Staff training is thorough and has raised awareness of safeguarding issues successfully, including e-safety. Incidents of bullying and harassment are few and dealt with effectively. Managers have made recent improvements to the monitoring and reporting of health and safety, including centralising risk assessment records to aid quality assurance and promote consistency. The promotion of safe working practices in lessons is robust. Safeguarding records are comprehensive.
27. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. The college has maintained its strong commitment to inclusion, for example by developing successful courses for the unemployed, harder to reach learners and vulnerable groups. Achievement gaps between most groups of learners of different minority ethnic heritage and the college's overall rate have been closed. The evaluation of equalities information relating to college staff is good and is monitored regularly through the equalities committee. However, the analysis of learners' performance lacks detail and does not provide managers with sufficient information to identify all patterns of underperformance. Cultural diversity is celebrated well throughout the college. High levels of mutual respect exist amongst learners, but the promotion of equality and diversity within the curriculum is satisfactory. The profiles of staff and learners are similar in terms of ethnicity and gender.
28. Engagement with employers is strong and has helped the college to bring about improvements in course management and design. The college takes learners' views seriously. It uses a wide range of activities through which their voice can be heard. Student council forums are well attended and enable learners to voice their opinions directly to senior managers and receive immediate feedback. The college recognises that learners' involvement in decision making at a strategic level is not developed fully.
29. The self-assessment report is mostly accurate although it overstates several strengths such as outcomes for employment-based provision. It does not identify every area for improvement clearly enough. Quality assurance arrangements are mostly well established. Well-considered lesson observation procedures provide a broadly accurate reflection of the quality of teaching and learning, although inspectors observed fewer outstanding lessons than predicted by the college. These observations provide a comprehensive picture of the strengths and areas for improvement in individual lessons but the subsequent evaluation has insufficient detail and so play a more prominent role in the college's assessment of the quality of teaching and learning in programme areas. The use of measures of added value in self-assessment is insufficient.
30. Quality improvement actions, particularly through more rigorous course reviews and increased intervention to raise the quality of provision, have gained

considerable momentum in the current year. Actions are having a positive impact in several subjects where the quality of provision had not made sufficient improvement previously. Managers review quality improvement plans frequently although not all targets or success criteria are easily measurable or evaluated thoroughly enough to determine their full impact.

31. The college has good systems to train new staff, provide relevant staff development for all teachers and measure their performance through appraisal. Advanced practitioners provide good support to individuals and programme areas to develop their expertise.
32. The well-maintained accommodation at the Northfield site is fit for purpose. Managers deploy resources well. Efforts to encourage sustainability at the college's existing sites are satisfactory but managers plans more comprehensive actions for the operation of its new building. Learners' success rates and attendance are broadly average. Financial management is good, the college has diversified its income successfully and reduced its staffing budget successfully. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

Subject areas

Construction, planning and the built environment

Grade 2

Context

33. Some 249 learners follow construction courses at foundation to advanced level. Just over a third of learners study plumbing, just under a third are on multi-skill courses and the remainder are on brickwork or painting and decorating courses. Some 13 school pupils are on the multi-skill course and five follow NVQ courses at intermediate or advanced level. About a quarter of learners are adults. Around a half study full time. Nearly a fifth are of minority ethnic heritage.

Key findings

- Success rates are high on most courses. However, success rates on foundation level courses in basic construction skills and in bricklaying were below average in 2009/10, largely because of below average retention. Managers' focus on increasing current learners' retention rates is proving successful.
- Most learners develop useful employment skills and produce a high standard of practical work. Attention to health and safety is good on all courses. Learners feel safe and adopt safe working practices. Attendance has been high but has dipped a little in the current year.
- Teaching and learning are good. Learners benefit from excellent individual coaching in practical lessons that helps them to improve the quality of their work. Learners generally meet the clear and challenging learning targets set by their teachers. Assessments are fair, accurate and reliable. The feedback teachers provide is generally of good quality and helps learners to improve.
- The best theory lessons present a challenge to the learners at all levels. Classroom activities help learners develop independent learning skills. In these lessons, the resources produced by the teachers are particularly good, which learners use well. Technicians provide very good support in practical lessons.
- Learners receive highly effective academic and personal support. Initial and diagnostic assessments are effective in identifying learners' literacy and numeracy needs and specialist support is in place early on a course.
- The college provides a good curriculum for learners with additional learning needs. Discrete courses are available for groups of learners or, if appropriate, learners join mainstream courses. Support staff work productively in partnership with teachers and provide learners with a good learning experience together with the opportunity to develop useful skills.
- Arrangements for work experience are not fully effective. Learners make their own arrangements to find additional work experience as the college does not yet have the capacity to provide this service. Managers are currently improving this situation as they are aware that work placements are likely to become a mandatory aspect of courses.

- External partnerships are underdeveloped. Construction provision is a relatively new area in the college. Managers have been rightly concerned with establishing internal systems and assuring the quality of the provision. They are now turning their attention to developing partnerships and are making good progress. The range of provision is satisfactory and developing.
- Leadership and management are good. Communications work well and contribute to establishing a new and highly motivated team. Management of staff performance is good. Appraisals are annual. Managers set staff demanding targets and give constructive support to help achieve them.
- Managers set a realistic agenda and implement specific and measurable actions for improvement and development of the provision. These actions, including the strategy for improving retention rates on the two underperforming courses, are largely successful.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Teachers reinforce equality and diversity adequately when opportunities arise but are insufficiently creative to ensure that promotion is fully effective. Staff make too little use of targets to increase the promotion of equality and diversity. However, traditionally under-represented groups are a target for recruitment and different groups of learners achieve equally well.
- Self-assessment is mostly accurate and helpful. The process is inclusive and based on effective course reviews. The report identifies most of the strengths and areas for improvement identified by inspectors but it does not always attribute an appropriate weighting to each of the judgements.

What does Bournville College of Further Education need to do to improve further?

- Continue to ensure that all learners stay on their courses, particularly at foundation level, by managers' frequent monitoring of staying on rates and by ensuring that the follow up on learners' absences is prompt and with thorough appropriate actions.
- Develop the expertise of managers to enable them to build effective partnerships with industry and the community. Ensure that arrangements to find work placements are in place well in advance of any mandatory requirements.
- Support teachers to make the most of opportunities in lessons to develop equality and diversity themes. Make better use of targets, including for recruitment from under-represented groups, to increase the level of promotion.

Hospitality and catering

Grade 2

Context

34. Some 209 learners follow courses in hospitality and catering from foundation to advanced level. The large majority are adults and on employment-based Train to Gain courses. A very few learners are apprentices. Almost all employment-based learners are women. Of learners on college-based courses, about half study full time and about a third are women. Around a tenth of learners are of minority ethnic heritage. A further 21 school pupils follow part-time courses.

Key findings

- Success rates are high on intermediate and advanced courses. However, success rates on the NVQ level 1 in hospitality were below average in 2008/09 and 2009/10. The staying on rate on this course has increased partway though the current academic year. Success rates on Train to Gain courses are high and the large majority of learners complete their courses in the time allocated.
- Learners have well-developed vocational and personal skills which support their employment potential strongly. In college-based lessons and in the workplace learners demonstrate high levels of knowledge and skills, which underpin their written and practical work. Learners produce food to a high standard.
- Most lessons are good and well planned. Teachers' flexible approach means that learning activities are varied and adapted to meet individual learner's needs. In practical lessons, learners work independently to cook food to a high standard, supported well by their teachers. Assessment works effectively on most college-based courses although assessment planning on the new diploma course is insufficient.
- Assessors plan most workplace assessment well, although in a few instances they take too little account of prior experience and the outcome of previous assessments. Assessment targets are often too general. As a result, more able learners often coast rather than making faster progress. Planning for work-based learners' assessment at college lacks sufficient structure.
- The satisfactory range of courses includes college-based progression routes from foundation to advanced level in cookery but there are no similar progression opportunities beyond foundation level in hospitality and food and drink service. Employment-based provision is mainly for the school meals service with plans in hand to extend the range. Curriculum-related enrichment activities are satisfactory.
- Links with employers through the employment-based provision are strong. The college is very responsive to meeting employers' requests. Employers consider they receive good support from college staff to develop apprenticeship programmes. Communication with employers on learners' progress is effective. Links between college-based provision and employers are less well developed.

- Teachers support learners well, providing individual support and guidance as needed. In particular, teachers are skilled at supporting vulnerable learners who often have low levels of prior attainment and lack confidence. Teachers' good support has contributed strongly to the currently improved retention rates. Group tutorials are of a satisfactory quality. Not all of the important topics in the college's generic scheme of work are included in a minority of tutorial schemes of work.
- Managers focus successfully on promoting high standards and developing learners' good employability skills. However, the setting and monitoring of performance targets is underdeveloped. Managers' use of supporting data is limited. Self-assessment does not focus sharply on identifying areas for improvement, for example, by evaluating success rate trends.
- The arrangements to safeguard learners are good. Training is thorough. Staff complete rigorous health and safety checks for all employers' premises prior to the enrolling of work-based learners. Learners have a good awareness of safeguarding issues. Teachers reinforce safe and hygienic practices throughout lessons most effectively.
- The promotion and reinforcement of equality and diversity is insufficient. Learners' awareness and understanding of equality and diversity is often superficial. Teachers miss too many opportunities to promote and reinforce equality and diversity themes, for example during employment-based learners' reviews.

What does Bournville College of Further Education need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the focus on monitoring learners' progress on foundation level courses and take prompt action to intervene with learners at risk of withdrawing or underperforming.
- Further develop assessment planning, including providing learners with a clear assessment schedule, for the new diploma course. Make sure that all assessment plans take account of prior learning and are personalised to individuals to support good or better progress in completing their qualifications.
- Develop managers' understanding of the use of performance targets to ensure continuous improvement in the effectiveness of provision. Develop managers' use of data to evaluate trends in success rates.
- Support teachers and assessors in developing and implementing strategies to promote and reinforce equality and diversity themes across the curriculum.

Visual arts and media

Grade 3

Context

35. The college offers vocational and academic courses from foundation to advanced level in media and in art and design. The majority of the 237 learners are aged 16 to 18 and study full time at advanced level. Just over half of the learners study on media courses. Just over a tenth of learners are from minority ethnic groups.

Key findings

- Success rates on most courses between 2007/08 and 2009/10 were low. Too many learners who started their courses did not complete them. However, the number of current learners staying on their course has improved markedly. For learners who complete their courses, pass rates are very high.
- Learners on national diploma courses have mostly not made the progress expected of them taking into account their starting points. On completion of their courses, learners in this group have generally underperformed by up to a grade. Current learners are making much better progress.
- Learners develop their specialist skills well, particularly on intermediate level courses. Learners on media courses produce work that shows a clear understanding of production techniques used in the industry to shape audiences' perceptions and attitudes. Learners in art and design use a wide range of skills and techniques confidently to express their own ideas.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Learners contribute well in lessons that are interactive, interesting and encourage their participation. Teachers engage learners effectively by planning lessons very well and producing high quality resources to illustrate concepts and test understanding. Teachers use a wide range of innovative assessment methods that allow learners to demonstrate what they have learned confidently.
- Learning is less effective in a minority of lessons where challenging short-term targets are not set. Teachers do not always use information about learners to personalise learning. As a result, a few learners do not make as much progress as they are capable of. Learners that are more able do not always have sufficiently demanding extension tasks to complete.
- The curriculum meets the needs of learners well. A good range of vocational and academic course at intermediate and advanced levels with good progression routes is available. Learners appreciate the well-integrated and relevant programme of curriculum enrichment activities, including visits to art galleries that expand their horizons and raise their aspirations.
- External partnerships in art and design are underdeveloped; few work experience opportunities are available to learners as a result. Teachers compensate, in part, by designing real life industry-relevant briefs. Learners in media, however, are benefiting from many productive relationships with

partners. Many have taken up valuable opportunities to learn about industry practice and to work in professional settings.

- Support for learners is good. Prompt assessment of learners' needs ensures they receive relevant and effective learning support quickly. Learning support assistants effectively assist learners with a wide range of complex needs. Teachers communicate well with learning support assistants. Managers have improved the advice and guidance available during recruitment and enrolment to ensure that learners choose courses that are most appropriate to their needs.
- Managers have a clear strategy for quality improvement, which they share effectively with staff. All staff supported the strategy. Increases in retention rates and improved assessment grades indicate that the actions managers introduced in 2008/9 and further refined and strengthened in 2009/10 are now having a positive impact on the quality of the provision.
- Teachers are very effective in the promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum. Learners have a highly developed understanding of equality and diversity issues. For instance, art and design learners' work on belief and identity gives them a comprehensive insight into different cultures and religions. Learners celebrate individual differences and are tolerant and respectful.
- Self-assessment is an inclusive and a largely thorough process. Managers identify the main strengths and areas for improvement accurately and devise appropriate and focused action plans. However, they do not analyse measures of value-added adequately resulting in an important omission from the self-assessment report.

What does Bournville College of Further Education need to do to improve further?

- Embed the strategies put in place to increase retention. Ensure that managers at all levels monitor the impact of these strategies frequently and take prompt action where there is a risk of learners underperforming or withdrawing.
- Help teachers to devise challenging short-term targets and use these effectively in lessons to increase the rate of learners' learning and progress, particularly for those on national diploma courses.
- Develop partnerships that will give art and design learners a wider access to professional activities and experiences. Share the best practice of media industry partners across art and design subjects.
- Develop managers' understanding of measures of value-added and include an evaluation of these measures in self-assessment.

Business, administration and law

Grade 2

Context

36. The college offers full-time and part-time courses in business and administration from foundation to advanced level. GCE A and AS level courses cover business studies and law. Apprenticeships and Train to Gain courses are available. Of 827 learners, just over two-thirds are on college-based courses, the majority of whom are aged 16 to 18. The very large majority of employed learners are adults. About three-quarters of learners are women. Around a third of learners are of minority ethnic heritage.

Key findings

- Success rates on the large majority of courses are above or well above average. Learners are particularly successful on foundation level courses. However, success rates for GCE AS and A level courses in business are well below average, although current learners are making better progress. Learners' work is mostly of a high standard.
- Success rates for business and administration apprentices have increased substantially and they are high. Most learners complete their qualifications in the time allocated. Success rates on Train to Gain courses are high but not enough learners complete their courses in the time allowed. Managers are focusing on improving this aspect as a priority.
- Learners enjoy learning, achieve the learning goals set in lessons and make good progress. A few learners that are more capable have insufficient challenge to achieve the highest possible grade. Most learners and apprentices progress well onto further courses within the college. Learners gain in confidence and mix well with both teachers and peers. Attendance is improving and satisfactory.
- Learners and apprentices gain good employability skills. Apprentices have responsible positions and a minority achieve promotion whilst completing their qualification. Learners are well motivated and improve their team building and communication skills effectively. Learners take on extra responsibilities including as course representatives and members of the student council.
- Learners and apprentices feel safe. Teachers reinforce safety points at regular tutorials or assessment visits. Classrooms provide a secure and safe learning environment and learners show respect for each other. Learners use safe working practices consistently. Classroom displays reinforce health and safety procedures strongly. Teachers provide regular and informed health and well-being advice.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers make good use of resources, including information and learning technology. They engage and involve learners through a variety of strategies that match learners' preferred learning

styles. Teachers provide individual coaching and give constructive feedback. In less effective lessons, work for more capable learners is undemanding.

- Assessment is systematic and rigorous on employment-based courses. Assessors challenge learners effectively during assessment and are self-critical. Assessors are knowledgeable and flexible in responding to shift patterns and employers' priorities.
- Managers have suitably revised the curriculum and it is relevant to learners' future employment and progression to higher education. Teachers prepare learners thoroughly for work placements in the public and private sector. Apprentices are highly valued by their employers. They are given a wide range of responsibilities including supervising other staff and dealing with customers and clients.
- Partnerships with employers, including Birmingham City Council, and within the community are highly productive. A 'Career Academy' matches learners with business mentors who provide paid internships of much benefit to learners. Employers value the support from college staff in recruitment, selection and monitoring of apprentices. A college-devised management workshop programme has been particularly successful.
- Teachers support learners well. They keep a close check on their welfare and have a good understanding of learners' personal circumstances, which may affect attendance or learning. Advice and guidance provided at the start of courses has improved substantially, particularly through rigorous application of realistic entry requirements. However, written improvement targets do not often have a completion date and a minority of staff do not review them frequently enough.
- Curriculum management has improved and it is good. Actions for improvement are having an impact, particularly in the current year. Managers set staff realistic and challenging performance targets. Restructuring of the management of employer responsive provision has helped to increase success rates and meet the needs of employers. However, managers do not make the best use of opportunities to share best practice between staff teams.
- Arrangements to safeguard learners are effective. Teachers promote safeguarding to learners during their induction and appropriate literature is on display in classrooms. Regular updating of risk assessments takes place. Learners and apprentices have a basic understanding of equality and diversity. Teachers reinforce mutual respect and positive behavioural attitudes well. Resources are satisfactory.

What does Bournville College of Further Education need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the strong focus on improving the timely completion of courses by Train to Gain learners. Ensure that managers monitor the progress of learners closely and take prompt action where there is a risk of learners falling behind schedule.

- Ensure managers at all levels monitor the progress of learners on GCE A and AS level courses in business studies. Continue to implement regular formative assessments for these learners. Make sure that written targets for all learners include appropriate timescales and managers and staff review them frequently.
- Support teachers to make sure those more capable learners extend their knowledge and skill levels by setting more demanding extension tasks in lessons.

Information about the inspection

37. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and seven additional inspectors, assisted by the college's vice principal 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 inspections, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
38. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of learners and employers. They also looked at the questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed for the provider. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from courses across the subject areas the college offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Bournville 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				
Full-time learners	2193	1198	995	0
Part-time learners	2200	577	1623	1250
Overall effectiveness	3	3	3	3
Capacity to improve	3			
Outcomes for learners	3	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>	3			
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2			
Quality of provision	2	2	2	2
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2			
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?	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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