

Preston College

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 130740

Name of lead inspector: Vivien Shipley HMI

Last day of inspection: 10 June 2011

Type of provider: General Further Education College

Address: Fulwood Campus
St Vincent's Road
Preston
PR2 8UR

Telephone number: 01772 225000

Information about the provider

1. Preston College is a large tertiary college serving the city of Preston and the surrounding areas of Central Lancashire. The college serves a local population of approximately 250,000 and has an income of around £32 million. The main campus is at Fulwood, to the north of the city. The Park campus, a short walk away, houses visual and performing arts programmes. Part-time courses for adults are provided in three community centres. The college offers provision in 13 subject areas. It has a contract of around £220,000 for Adult Safeguarded Learning. Higher education programmes are delivered in conjunction with the University of Central Lancashire and Edge Hill University.
2. The Preston area contains some of the least and most affluent wards in Lancashire. The area has a lower than average employment rate. In 2010, the proportion of Year 11 students in schools, in the area, achieving five GCSE grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, was above the national average. Over half of all college learners are in receipt of an educational maintenance allowance, which is higher than the case nationally. The college attracts just over a third of its learners from disadvantaged areas.
3. In 2009/10, 18,489 learners were enrolled at the college. The majority of the 2,952 learners aged 16 to 18 were enrolled on full-time courses at advanced level. Most adults follow part-time courses. In addition, there were 483 learners on apprenticeships, over 5,000 on Train to Gain provision, 87 learners aged 14 to 16 and 696 adult informal learners. Around a fifth of learners are from minority ethnic groups, which is higher proportion than that in the local community.
4. A new strategic plan, launched in September 2010, describes five aims that underpin the college's 'Path to Excellence'. A new principal and Chief Executive have been in post since January 2011.
5. The college provides training on behalf of the following providers:
 - CITB (construction)
 - JTL (construction)
 - T2000 (construction, business)
6. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the college:
 - David Thomas (hairdressing)
 - Dotty Lines (hairdressing)
 - ARM Training Services (construction on-site training and assessment)
 - Barrow Training Partnership (construction on-site training and assessment)
 - Skills Construction Centre (construction on-site training and assessment)
 - Failsworth Training Services Ltd (construction on-site training and assessment)

- Fullagar Construction Skills Centre (construction on-site training and assessment)
- GTG Services Ltd (construction on-site training and assessment)
- North West Safety Services Ltd (construction on-site training and assessment)
- Mortimore Enterprises Ltd (construction on-site training and assessment)
- Northern Assessment and Training Ltd (construction on-site training and assessment)
- Kingsmoor Northwest Ltd (construction on-site training and assessment)
- PHD Training and Assessment (construction on-site training and assessment)
- Utility and Construction Training (construction on-site training and assessment)
- D & M Training Ltd (construction on-site training and assessment)
- South Cheshire Services Ltd (construction on-site training and assessment)
- Fusion 21 (construction on-site training and assessment)
- North West Services (construction on-site training and assessment)
- City West Housing Trust (construction on-site training and assessment)
- SB Training (UK) Ltd (construction on-site training and assessment)
- Lancashire Fire and Rescue Services (Prince’s Trust preparation for life and work)
- Bolton Wanderers Football and Athletic Company Ltd (sport)

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
Provision for young learners: 14 to 16 Further education (16 to 18) Foundation learning	87 part-time learners 2,952 full-time learners 821 part-time learners 760 part-time learners
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	945 full-time learners 7,327 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	5054 learners 483 apprentices
Informal adult learning	696 learners

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	3
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	2

Subject Areas	Grade
Health, social care and early years	2
Engineering and manufacturing technology	2
Information and communication technology	3
Sport, travel and tourism	2
Visual and performing arts	2
Business, administration and law	2

Overall effectiveness

7. Preston College is satisfactory and has satisfactory capacity to make and sustain improvements. Learners' achievement of qualifications is satisfactory. However, achievement varies significantly across subjects and some have not improved quickly enough. For learners on apprenticeships the number achieving qualifications has improved rapidly and is satisfactory. Learners on Train to Gain courses are more successful as a high number achieve their qualifications. Adults who follow informal learning courses achieve at high levels.
8. Most learners enjoy college and make satisfactory progress. They are able to choose from a wide range of courses and good advice and guidance helps them to select the right options. The college has been successful in working in partnership with schools and voluntary agencies to extend the range of courses

offered. Good teaching and learning help learners to develop the practical skills needed for employment and to prepare for progression to further study. In some lessons, teachers do not use sufficiently challenging activities to ensure that all learners realise their potential. Poor attendance and punctuality impairs the progress of some learners. Learners speak positively about the help they receive from their teachers and tutors. Very good additional learning support is provided for learners who need extra help. However, not all are set targets that they own and can take responsibility for monitoring. Learners appreciate the opportunities provided for them to express their opinions about the college and the actions that are taken in response. Learners are supported well to make informed choices about their health and well-being. They feel safe at college. Employers speak very positively about the courses provided for their employees.

9. Although the quality of the provision offered by the college has not improved sufficiently in the period since the last inspection, the recently appointed principal is setting a new agenda for change. Managers do not evaluate the quality of the provision with sufficient rigour to inform robust action plans for improvement. Five of the six subject sector areas inspected are judged to offer good provision, the other is satisfactory.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Success rates on long courses have improved over the last three years and are satisfactory; however, rates of improvement vary between subjects, levels and ages of learners. At subject-area level learners' attainment of their learning goals is satisfactory in most areas.
- Learners make satisfactory progress at college. Where value-added data are available, this shows that on some A-level courses and advanced level vocational programmes learners make very good progress. However, on most programmes the college does not have robust arrangements to analyse and evaluate the overall progress of learners.
- On provision for employed learners success rates are good. On Train to Gain courses, success rates have improved significantly and the proportion completing within the allocated time is high. For apprentices, the overall success rate has improved significantly and is now satisfactory.
- Learners enjoy college. Teachers provide them with a range of stimulating activities that engage and support their learning. Whilst learning objectives are clearly set, in a minority of lessons the learning activities do not deliver the intended outcomes. Teachers do not always ensure that the more able learners are challenged to reach their full potential.
- Information and learning technology (ILT) is used very effectively by teachers to support learning and by learners to enhance their assignments. Projects in the innovative use of technology create a 'buzz' among teachers in developing new ways of enhancing lessons and improving the overall experience for learners. Learning is hindered by poor punctuality and low attendance in some lessons.

- Whilst the lesson observation process is comprehensive in monitoring the performance of all teachers, observers do not focus sufficiently on the impact of teaching on learning. The college has not developed a consistent agreement on how to apply challenging criteria for an outstanding lesson. This restricts the college's ability to clearly identify and share excellent teaching, and to drive forward improvements at a faster pace.
- The college provides a broad range of courses which meet the needs of learners, the local community and employers very well. Local intelligence is used very well to plan programmes, particularly for employers. Enrichment activities are wide ranging and support many learners in making a significant contribution to the community and developing their economic and social well-being.
- Partnership working is very effective in extending opportunities for the communities the college serves. Staff work well with local schools to increase the options available for students aged 14 to 18 and to ease transition to college. Courses have been developed successfully that attract adults and young people back into learning. Partnerships with employers are highly effective. The college is firmly based within its community.
- Additional learning support is highly effective. Group tutorials are well organised and additional one-to-one sessions are used effectively to help learners who need extra help. Arrangements for setting targets for learners and for monitoring their progress are inconsistently implemented. The targets for too many learners are imprecise and difficult to monitor.
- A new principal, who took up post in January 2011, has quickly provided a strong and clear strategic direction. She has astutely begun to embed a culture of change and ambition reflective of the evolving challenges for the college.
- Governors have a comprehensive understanding of the challenges for the local economic sub-region and possess a wide range of experience and expertise in education, business and the wider public sector. However, these valuable assets have only recently been tapped fully to the benefit of the college.
- A strong culture of safeguarding and health and safety is embedded across the college. Learners' welfare is promoted through well-planned tutorials and effective links with external agencies. Learners develop the skills needed to adopt safe working practices via workshops and practical activities. Student surveys confirm that they feel safe within the college.
- Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory but have been insufficiently effective in securing the pace of improvement needed, particularly in success rates. Course reviews vary in quality and do not use the analysis and evaluation of management information on learners' outcomes sufficiently well to make accurate judgements and to inform robust action plans for improvement.
- Resources are managed well. The standard of accommodation is satisfactory and improving. Learning facilities across the college are good. Financial management is satisfactory and undergoing some restructuring under the new principal. Given the overall success rates for learners, value for money is satisfactory.

What does Preston College need to do to improve further?

- Analyse and evaluate the impact of current strategies to improve success rates. Revise action plans to include more ambitious targets and associated actions so that the rate of improvement is accelerated, sustained and embedded across all of the provision.
- Set challenging targets for learners' progress and take action to ensure that they all realise their potential. Develop arrangements to provide management information to support the analysis and evaluation of learners' progress based on their prior attainment and their progression between levels of study and to employment.
- Improve the accuracy of lesson observations. Provide support for observers so that they put more focus on the impact of teaching activities on students' learning. Develop more challenging criteria for outstanding lessons and train observers so that they are able to apply these with rigour.
- Develop further the arrangements for setting and monitoring learners' progress against their targets, by identifying and sharing good practice. Ensure that these are implemented consistently so that all learners understand and value the process.
- Improve governors' monitoring and challenge by ensuring that they are provided with sufficient information to hold a sharp and succinct understanding of the college's provision and performance.
- Improve the accuracy and rigour of subject and whole college self-assessment by including a more detailed and realistic course level evaluation of learners' outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning. Improve the use of management information to enable detailed analysis and evaluation of cross-college trends.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the support they receive from teachers and other staff
- being able to learn in an adult environment with a good atmosphere
- making new friends
- the support from mentors on educational and personal issues
- the good relationships between staff and learners
- the feedback they receive and how this helps them to improve
- being able to express their views and the action taken in response
- practical lessons
- the help with assignments
- the range of courses available.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the use of practical activity in theory and classroom-based lessons

- equipment and facilities in catering, science and construction
- some dull classrooms
- the high costs of food and opening hours for cafes
- limited access to computers and printers in the library and drop-in centres.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- that programmes are developed and delivered in response to their needs
- the flexibility of the college in meeting employees' assessment needs
- the open and effective communications
- the very good support from trainers that helps their employees to achieve
- that the provision helps their businesses to grow and employees to develop.

What employers would like to see improved:

- inconsistency in reporting across departments.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

10. The college has a satisfactory capacity to make and sustain improvements. Although improved since the last inspection, success rates remain satisfactory and vary significantly across subjects. Quality assurance systems, including self-assessment, are satisfactory, but have been insufficiently effective in producing accelerated improvement across the provision. Management information and its use and analysis lacks the razor sharp application needed to drive improvement more quickly. Many of these issues were identified at the last inspection and have not improved sufficiently. The recently appointed principal has brought a new vision for change, and a strong and focused programme of ambition and reorganisation. Five of the six subject sector areas inspected are judged to offer good provision. The management of the curriculum has improved. Governors have not received sufficient information to monitor the performance of the college until very recently. The quality of accommodation and resources has improved.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

11. Learners' outcomes and their attainment of qualifications are satisfactory in most subject areas. Although the overall success rate on college-based long courses has improved over the three years to 2009/10 the rate of improvement varies significantly between subject areas, levels and ages of learners. On college-based short courses the rate improved in 2008/09, dipped slightly in 2009/10 and is just below the national average. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those in receipt of additional learning support are more successful than other groups. Students aged 14 to 16 are very successful in achieving college qualifications.
12. On college-based courses for students aged 16 to 18, success rates have improved at all levels and are satisfactory. At advanced level where performance was low at the last inspection, there have been good improvements and the rate is now just above the national average. At foundation and intermediate level, rates have improved steadily. For adults, success rates are also satisfactory but the rates have not improved sufficiently at all levels. Adults make good progress and achieve well on informal learning courses.
13. At qualification level, success rates on vocational courses are satisfactory, but on National Vocational Qualifications they are low at intermediate and advanced level. On A-level courses the success rate has improved over the last three years and is line with the high national average. Although improved at AS level the rate is satisfactory. The proportion of learners achieving GCSE grades A* to C in English is high; in mathematics it is low.
14. For 16- to 18-year-olds retention and pass rates have improved over the last three years and are in line with the national average. For adults, retention

- improved in 09/10 to around the national average. Pass rates for adults have improved steadily and are in line with the national average at foundation and intermediate levels, but at advanced level the rate remains below the national average. During 2010/11 the college has focused successfully on maintaining improvements in retention and the overall rate is slightly above last year's final outcome. Retention on short courses has improved significantly and is now very high.
15. Success rates on Skills for Life courses have improved over the last three years and are satisfactory. Key skills success rates in literacy and numeracy although improved over the last three years remain well below the low national average for these qualifications. The college has successfully introduced functional skills qualifications during 2010/11 and attainment on these qualifications is good.
 16. On provision for employed learners' outcomes are good. On Train to Gain courses, where the numbers of learners are very large, the success rate for those completing within the time allocated has improved significantly and is high. For apprentices, where the number of learners is increasing rapidly, the success rate has improved significantly and is now satisfactory.
 17. Most learners make satisfactory progress at college. On some advanced level vocational programmes such as art and design, media, caring skills and health and social care, learners make very good progress. At AS level, too many learners do not make the progress expected; at A level, they make satisfactory progress. The college does not have sufficiently robust arrangements to evaluate learners' progress. Learners produce good standards of work. In most areas they develop good employability skills. Arrangements to promote learners' economic and social well-being are good.
 18. The college works hard to provide learners with a safe and harmonious learning environment, in which they are treated like adults and in return are expected to behave appropriately. Staff and learners treat each other with respect and tolerance. In practical lessons teachers support learners to develop the skills needed to work safely. Learners informed inspectors that they feel safe at college.
 19. The college successfully promotes healthy lifestyles through the tutorial programme, college-wide enrichment activities and collaboration with other agencies, such as charitable organisations, that provide support for learners with eating disorders. Learners are supported well by teachers and other staff to develop the skills needed to make a significant contribution to the community. Many organise successful fund-raising activities and take up volunteering opportunities. For example, sports students work extensively in local schools providing coaching for children of all ages.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

20. Teaching and learning are good. Staff training and the sharing of good practice have improved the quality of lessons. A team of teacher mentors and teachers identified as innovators have been successful in expanding the range of

activities and interactive resources that teachers use effectively to engage and motivate learners. Most teachers plan their lessons well. They establish clear learning objectives and use a good range of starter activities to help reinforce learning from previous sessions. Most use practical sessions well to reinforce learners' understanding of theoretical concepts. Teachers are mostly current practitioners in their vocational area or they keep up-to-date with the latest industry practice. They use their professional knowledge to make lessons relevant and motivating for learners. In most areas, teachers provide learners with the opportunity to develop employability skills, such as being able to work cooperatively in teams or small groups.

21. Teachers use information on learners' levels of ability to plan appropriate activities and to support those who are struggling with key concepts. However, opportunities to provide extension work for the more able learners are missed in some lessons. Teachers regularly check learners' understanding but in advanced level lessons they do not always use directed and probing questions to promote more in-depth discussions, consolidate learning and develop learners' evaluative skills. In a minority of lessons the activities planned by teachers do not cover all of the learning objectives for the session and as a result learners' progress cannot be measured fully. Poor punctuality and low attendance impairs learning in a significant minority of lessons.
22. Additional support staff work closely with teachers to provide extra help for learners who need it. ILT is used very well to support learning in and outside of lessons. The college's virtual learning environment (VLE) includes a very good range of interactive resources and assignments. The college has invested well in new technologies and has received international recognition for its development and use of I-tunes U applications, recording devices and 3D technology. Learners make innovative use of these technologies to help them to present their assignments in imaginative formats.
23. Teachers arrange workshops and additional catch-up lessons to help learners to complete assignments and prepare for examinations. However, in some workshops learners are not set specific enough short-term targets to enable them to make enough progress. Equality and diversity are promoted well. Health and safety are a high priority and are reinforced in practical lessons.
24. Assessment is good. Thorough internal verification ensures that assignments are carefully written with clear assessment criteria, stimulating and vocationally relevant content, and good opportunities to enhance learners' research skills. Teachers' feedback on learners' work is mostly constructive and helps them to know what they need to do to improve. Teachers successfully encourage the use of peer- and self-assessment to build learners' self-confidence and reflective learning skills. Work-based assessments are regular and highly flexible to the needs of learners and employers.
25. Managers have recently reorganised the arrangements for developing learners' functional skills. Specialist literacy and numeracy teachers work closely with vocational teams to embed the delivery of these skills into learners' main programmes. Additional English and mathematics lessons designed to meet the needs of individual learners help them to prepare for literacy and numeracy

examinations. However, poor spelling and grammar in learners' work are not always corrected by teachers.

26. The college's arrangements for monitoring the quality of lessons are satisfactory. All staff, practical and theory lessons, tutorials and sessions in the workplace are observed. However, the college has not developed sufficiently challenging criteria to help observers make accurate judgements about the quality of lessons, particularly those that are graded outstanding. As a consequence the college has over-graded a significant proportion of lessons. Observers do not focus sufficiently on students' learning, particularly the extent and depth of their understanding and development of higher level skills. The outcomes of observations are used well to identify those teachers who require specific support or training.
27. The college provides a broad range of courses, from foundation to degree level, that is responsive to the needs of learners, employers and the local community. Employers are highly satisfied with the college's flexibility in developing bespoke provision that helps their businesses to grow and develop. They are offered an extensive range of Train to Gain courses and a rapidly increasing apprenticeship programme. Informal learning courses for adults are provided in college and community venues and these provide a good range of options in subjects such as sport, information and communication technology and art and design. Arrangements for learners to progress between levels of programmes are mostly well-planned. However, learners completing AS-level courses have too long a gap before they begin to study at A-level.
28. Learners' employability, personal and social skills are developed through participation in a wide range of enrichment activities. Their attendance at these activities is monitored closely and leads to an award that recognises their level of engagement. Many learners are successful in local and national competitions, which raises their self-confidence.
29. The college has developed strong partnerships that extend opportunities for the communities it serves. Employed learners' training plans and schedules link very well to employers' needs as a result of particularly strong working relationships and highly effective communication with college staff. College-based courses are successful in engaging learners who have had a previously negative experience of education. This is helping to reduce the proportion of learners from the local area not in education, employment or training. In collaboration with local secondary schools courses are offered for 14- to 16-year-olds. Partnerships with primary schools are effective in increasing the aspirations of younger children. The college also works very closely with a social enterprise charitable trust to run a community café and provide courses in a learning centre. Links with other agencies, including the local NHS primary care trust, strengthen the college's work in helping learners to make informed choices about their health and well-being. The college has long standing arrangements with two local faith schools which extend the range of post-16 courses offered, and these are valued highly by the students.
30. Support for learners is very effective. The college has well-organised systems to assess the individual needs of learners and ensure that additional learning

support is put in place for those who need it. Learners are provided with well-planned individual support in lessons, through one-to-one sessions or via workshops. They are also able to access a wide range of services to help them in resolving emotional and other personal issues. Learners speak highly of the support available at 'The Point', a recently developed centre within the college where they can go to meet their mentors and get advice. Learners receiving additional learning support achieve at higher rates than their peers.

31. Learner coach mentors provide well-organised group and individual tutorial support for full-time learners. The group tutorial programme provides learners with useful information on college activities, advice on health and well-being, and guidance on preparing for the future. The arrangements to set students learning targets and to monitor their progress are variable. Some learners are set appropriate targets which are then closely monitored. However, too many learners have targets which are not specific, timely or easily measurable.
32. Prospective students receive good advice on the courses available at open events targeted to meet the needs of 14- to 18-year-olds and adults. This is supplemented by individual guidance for those who need it. This year fewer learners have changed courses or left college early. Although evidence is available at course level on the number of students progressing to further study and employment senior managers do not evaluate whole college data to review the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

33. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A new principal, who took up post in January 2011, has quickly provided a strong and clear strategic direction. She has astutely begun to embed a culture of change and ambition. Restructuring of the senior team has yet to be realised fully and remains a significant challenge if the college is to realise its ambitious goals. Good communications between managers and other staff are supporting the evolving strategic vision. Curriculum management has improved but the impact of quality improvement initiatives is variable. Actions to improve retention and pass rates are beginning to have a positive impact. However, more needs to be done to accelerate and sustain these improvements, as success rates remain satisfactory overall.
34. Governors have a comprehensive understanding of the challenges for the local economic sub-region and possess a wide range of experience and expertise in education, business and the wider public sector. However, these valuable assets have only very recently been tapped fully to benefit the college. Governors traditionally have not had sufficient or appropriate information to acquire an acute picture of the college's performance and so have not been able to challenge senior managers robustly. Under the new principal this has started to change. Governors carry out their statutory duties in respect of safeguarding, health and safety, and equality and diversity. The board membership reflects a good gender and ethnic balance representing the college's profile and those of its communities.

35. Arrangements for safeguarding learners are good. A strong culture of safeguarding and health and safety is embedded across the college. Staff recruitment and vetting procedures are carried out appropriately. Governors and staff, including those with designated safeguarding responsibility, are trained appropriately and understand their roles. Learners' welfare is promoted well through good links with external agencies. For example, strong links with schools have enabled speedy planning and implementation of additional support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. When learners raise concerns about safety, the college takes speedy action to tackle the issues. The implementation of health and safety checks, training and risk assessment are in line with legislation.
36. Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory overall, but have been insufficiently effective in securing improvement. Arrangements for self-assessment are not implemented rigorously. Course self-assessment reports contain insufficient evaluative analysis of learners' outcomes and as a consequence, the college has an over optimistic view of its performance. Overlap between self-assessment and curriculum audit procedures lead to a lack of clarity for some staff on the purpose of some aspects of quality assurance systems. Management information systems are reliable but data are not always used at course and whole college level to interrogate performance and inform improvement planning. Senior managers do not use data sufficiently well to evaluate some cross-college trends, such as the progress learners make and their progression to further study and employment. The college's arrangements to monitor the quality of lessons are satisfactory.
37. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. A comprehensive and up-to-date range of policies and procedures are in place, including a single equalities scheme. The college is an inclusive and harmonious community characterised by an ethos of tolerance and mutual respect. Partnership working to support young people who might otherwise not participate in education and training, or who are at risk of disengagement is strong. Learners feel valued and respected. The analysis of learners' participation and achievement by gender, ethnicity and disability informs self-assessment and action planning at course level. Managers' subsequent actions have reduced differences in learners' performance across different groups. Equality and diversity are promoted and celebrated throughout the everyday work of the college and through special events.
38. Arrangements for learners to express their views are well developed. Their opinions are collected through a variety of mechanisms including surveys and representatives groups. Learners form the majority of members on the college's Student Quality and Standards Committee where they actively engage with managers and governors. Student governors receive a useful induction to the role and also attend the training provided for all governors. They are able to make a full contribution to meetings of the corporation as they feel welcomed and valued by other governors. Learners are engaged in significant developments, improvements and change, including involvement in teaching and management appointments. Learners were involved in the assessment and interviewing panels for the appointment of the new principal. Employers' feedback is not used in the same way to effect change and improve quality.

39. Human and physical resources are managed well. Teachers and other staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. The standard of accommodation is satisfactory and improving. A new visual and performing arts centre and main reception area are on target to be completed in September 2011. This development will bring all full-time learners onto one site. Significant investment in ILT has made a difference for staff and learners. Financial management is satisfactory and undergoing some restructuring under the new principal. Given the overall success rates for learners, value for money is satisfactory.

Subject areas

Health, social care, and early years

Grade 2

Context

40. Full-and part-time courses are offered in health and social care, early years, counselling and dentistry. Progression routes are available from foundation to advanced level and to foundation degree. Currently there are eight learners aged 14 to 16 and 1,254 aged 16 to 18. There are 599 adult learners enrolled on college-based courses. Approximately 500 learners are following Train to Gain programmes and a small number of apprentices are on courses in dentistry.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Success rates on college-based qualifications have declined over three years and in 2009/10 are satisfactory for learners aged 16 to 18; for adults they are low. On advanced level programmes in health and social care and child care, learners make very good progress. This year, learners on foundation programmes are making good progress and success rates are very high. Retention of current learners on intermediate and advanced courses is very high.
- Outcomes for employed learners are good. Success rates on Train to Gain programmes are high and a good proportion of learners complete within the allocated time. For the small number of apprentices, success rates are also high.
- Learners develop good practical skills, particularly in childcare, which help them prepare for employment. They are able to link theory to practical skills and to apply their learning in the work place. For example, learners develop good skills in caring for a baby, such as nappy changing, feeding and bathing and they use these skills effectively on work placement. Learners develop good literacy and communication skills during practical activities.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers make very good links between classroom activities and learners' work placement. Effective use of guest speakers develops further learners' professional knowledge and understanding. Teachers use questioning very well in most lessons to challenge learners and check their progress. In a minority of lessons, learners do not make sufficient progress as the activities teachers plan do not motivate and engage them.
- Assessment is planned flexibly to meet the needs of learners and employers. Learners are provided with clearly written assignments which contain vocationally related tasks. Feedback on their work is supportive and encouraging, but does not always provide them with sufficient guidance on what they should do to improve. Teachers with specialist subject knowledge provide additional sessions that support and challenge learners to improve their assignments.
- Learners at college and those in employment benefit from a wide range of programmes that are delivered flexibly to meet their needs. Additional short courses, such as in safeguarding, drug awareness and parenting skills, enhance

learners' employability skills. Learners benefit from the opportunity to study at a higher level when they complete their courses as part of a 'flying start' programme. A good proportion of learners progress between levels within the college and into employment and higher education.

- Good partnership working with employers, local hospital trusts and social services is very effective in developing the provision. For example, a well-planned cadetship programme prepares learners very well for employment. Learners on all programmes benefit from well-organised and relevant work placements in nurseries, hospitals and care homes. Learners who complete early follow additional placements that increase their chances of employment.
- Tutors provide good pastoral support that is targeted to help those at risk of leaving early or underachieving. The tutorial programme covers a broad range of topics that support learners' personal and social development well. Arrangements for setting and monitoring learners' progress against their targets are not applied consistently.
- Leadership and management are good. Managers raise expectations and standards through effective arrangements for setting targets that are reviewed at staff appraisal. Managers have established a shared commitment to improvement through effective team working. Meetings and other communications focus successfully on improving learners' outcomes. Teachers are responsive to change and benefit from good professional development.
- Arrangements for quality assurance and self-assessment lack rigour. The self-assessment report is not underpinned by sufficiently robust analysis and evaluation of the quality of the provision. Strategies to improve success rates have been effective in improving results this year on foundation courses and retention has improved at other levels. These include issuing a 'notice to improve' for underperforming courses which are then subject to increased monitoring at team meetings.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well through the curriculum. Teachers develop learners' understanding through the use of appropriate learning activities and materials that reinforce positive images of different groups and take account of cultural differences.
- Accommodation and resources are mostly satisfactory. However, the poor management and organisation of the furniture and layout in some classrooms inhibits the use of a wide range of learning activities.

What does Preston College need to do to improve further?

- Monitor and evaluate the impact of strategies used this year to improve success rates. Implement enhanced arrangements, building on this year's progress, to ensure that the declining trends of previous years are reversed and improvements are sustained across all programmes.
- Develop and implement arrangements to identify and share teachers' good practice in the organisation and management of the learning environment to facilitate the consistent use of a wider range of learning activities, including ILT.
- Improve the quality of assessment feedback by providing learners with detailed feedback on what they have done well and the skills they need to develop.

Engineering and manufacturing technology

Grade 2

Context

41. The department offers full- and part-time courses with progression routes from foundation to advanced level and to higher education. Currently 30 students aged 14 to 16 are following foundation level courses. Around 630 learners aged 16 to 18 are enrolled on college-based courses and 283 are on provision for employed learners. Around 194 adult learners are enrolled on college-based courses and 707 are on work-based provision.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Success rates are satisfactory; however, they vary between levels and types of provision. On college-based courses at foundation level the success rate is low; at intermediate level it is satisfactory. At advanced level the success rate is high. For employed learners success rates on Train to Gain courses are high. For apprentices success rates are low and declining. The proportion of learners retained on college courses this year is higher than in previous years.
- Learners develop positive attitudes to work and good practical skills. They complete assessment tasks to the standard required and in areas such as welding develop high level practical skills. In theory lessons they learn to adopt safe working practices which they demonstrate in practical sessions through wearing the clothing and equipment needed to protect themselves from harm. Learners informed inspectors that they feel safe at college.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' effective planning ensures that learners with a wide range of abilities make good progress in developing appropriate skills and standards of written work. Most teachers make effective use of a wide range of learning activities, including ILT, to stimulate, engage and challenge learners. This year specialist literacy and numeracy teachers have improved the development of learners' functional skills.
- A broad range of provision including school links, foundation to advanced level courses and higher education are offered via full-, part-time and evening options. Managers have responded flexibly to the needs of local employers by providing an increased range of training programmes.
- Learners' main programmes are enhanced by a wide range of enrichment activities that make college enjoyable and develop their employability and team-working skills. For example, advanced level learners produced working models for an innovative design and build project developed to solve real problems from the work place. Guest speakers provide additional specialist advice and information on key issues such as safety at work.
- The college has developed strong partnerships with local employers that benefit learners through good opportunities for work placement. Staff work well with employers to develop bespoke provision. As a result of collaboration with tool manufacturers and the motor industry the college receives up-to-date training for teachers and modern equipment for learners. Teachers also benefit from industrial updating secondments with national employers.

- Learners receive good information on the courses that are available and how they will be delivered at well-organised open events and through a comprehensive induction programme. The initial assessment of their levels of literacy and numeracy is carried out quickly with additional support arranged promptly for those who need it. Good support helps learners to progress between levels within the college.
- Specialist tutorial support provided during regular timetabled sessions for full-time learners is effective in helping them with pastoral issues and in monitoring their individual progress. Learners report that they find tutorial sessions helpful and they particularly enjoy the contribution of guest speakers. Apprentices do not always have clear enough targets to monitor their progress and to help them improve.
- Managers have implemented successful actions to improve the quality of the provision. Retention has improved this year through strategies that have been developed and monitored by a group focused on this issue. Teaching and learning have improved through robust observation. Managers communicate well to all staff through regular meetings, but subject specific team meetings are not sufficiently regular to share good practice.
- Self-assessment lacks the rigour needed to drive up standards more rapidly. Judgements in the self-assessment report make insufficient use of data on learners' outcomes. The college's evaluation of the provision identifies the fall in success rates from the previous year but judges inaccurately that outcomes for learners are good when success rates are broadly satisfactory. Low and declining success rates on apprenticeships are not recognised.
- Managers and other staff have developed effective arrangements for gathering and using the views of learners and employers to improve the quality of the provision. They have regular meetings with student representatives which result in actions to improve the experience at college. In addition learner and employer surveys are completed. Employers are highly satisfied with the provision for their employees.
- Accommodation, equipment and learning sources are generally good. Practical workshops are clean, tidy and well-organised with a good range of tools and equipment. Replacement motor vehicles are provided through an arrangement with the local police. Teachers make good use of ILT which is easily accessible in the majority of classrooms. However, learners report that some computers are too slow.

What does Preston College need to do to improve further?

- Monitor and evaluate the impact of strategies to improve success rates. Share good practice to ensure that improvements in retention are maintained and that success rates improve, particularly on foundation level programmes.
- Improve success rates for apprentices by setting them more precise learning targets which result in individual action plans that make it clear what they need to do to succeed. Monitor progress against their targets closely.
- Improve the rigour and accuracy of the judgements made through self-assessment. Enhance arrangements for the validation of the report at subject level to ensure that judgements on learners' outcomes are made using appropriately high comparators and challenging targets.

Information and communication technology

Grade 3

Context

42. Full- and part-time courses are available from foundation to advanced level. Of around 1,000 learners enrolled, 227 are full-time learners attending classes on the main campus or at a faith school in Blackburn and 780 are following part-time courses. Part-time learners are enrolled on provision at the main campus, use the 'Citizen Zone' learning bus, or attend courses at community venues. There are 64 work-based learners.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Success rates on college-based courses have improved over the last three years and are now satisfactory. On provision for employed learners, success rates are below the national average. On first and national diploma qualifications, success rates are satisfactory, but a good proportion of learners who complete successfully achieve high grades. Success rates on AS-level information and communication technology and on some adult part-time courses are low. Retention has improved this year.
- Learners make satisfactory progress at college. Their attendance, punctuality and behaviour are good. They learn to adopt safe working practices and feel safe at college. Learners make a good contribution to the community through organising events to raise funds for charities, such as for the earthquake victims in Haiti, for Cancer Research and the RSPCA.
- Learners produce satisfactory standards of work. However, a significant number do not develop the practical skills required by employers such as understanding the reasons for backing up data, or of the practicalities of protecting data securely. Too many learners do not meet deadlines for handing in their work.
- Teaching and learning are good. Learners enjoy lessons where teachers use interesting and relevant activities to challenge and motivate them. For example, a well-planned 'Dragon's Den' project involved learners in developing and presenting ideas for innovative products. Teachers make good use of the college's VLE to make extra learning materials available for use during and outside lessons. Teachers provide learners with detailed assessment feedback that helps them to improve their grades.
- In lessons where teachers do not use a variety of appropriate activities not all learners make the progress they should. Learners are occasionally left to work independently for too long. Additional tasks are not always targeted at the most able to make sure they are challenged fully. Although there are some very good examples of teachers planning activities that prepare learners for employment, most teachers make insufficient use of projects based on real work situations.
- The college has developed effective partnerships to provide courses that meet learners' needs well. For example, courses are provided that supplement the curriculum offered at a local faith school. The college works with the voluntary sector to provide courses that encourage learners back into education. In collaboration with Preston City Council, the college uses a learning bus to provide courses on the internet and using modern technology for older learners. External speakers make a good contribution to the tutorial programme.

- Tutorial support is satisfactory. Learners who receive additional learning support achieve at a higher level than their peers. Specialist support from tutors is effective in helping learners identified as at risk of underachieving.
- Arrangements for setting learners' targets and monitoring their progress are not implemented well enough. Tutors do not respond promptly when learners miss their targets and do not provide sufficient guidance on the actions that should be taken to improve.
- Advice and guidance for full-time learners about the courses offered is satisfactory. Some part-time learners feel that they do not get sufficient information to help them make the right choices about future courses.
- Leadership and management are good. Managers have implemented successful initiatives to improve retention and the quality of teaching and learning. The quality of the provision has improved steadily over the last three years. Staff understand their roles in securing improvements in learners' outcomes. Teachers and other staff benefit from well-planned professional development and the opportunity to share good practice through peer observations.
- Arrangements for quality assurance and self-assessment are satisfactory. Teachers complete a detailed review of the quality of the courses they deliver and this leads to actions that are effective in promoting improvement. Observation of teaching and learning helps teachers to understand what they need to do to improve. However, most observations are not carried out by subject specialists and this affects their ability to make accurate judgements about learners' progress.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well through the tutorial programme and within lessons. Managers use partnerships particularly well to extend opportunities to learners who would not otherwise participate and to demonstrate their commitment to diversity. Students learn to treat each other with respect and tolerance.

What does Preston College need to do to improve further?

- Improve teachers' planning to ensure that learners are prepared for employment. Ensure that learning activities are relevant and promote learners' understanding of how and why their skills can be applied at work. Ensure that learners adhere to deadlines for completing assignments.
- Improve teachers' skills in planning, delivering and assessing differentiated tasks that support learners who are struggling and provide challenge for the more able.
- Improve the arrangements for setting learners' targets and monitoring their progress. Ensure that these are implemented with rigour so that learners understand the importance of the process and are fully engaged in evaluating their own performance.
- Increase the use of subject specialists in observing teaching and learning in order to improve the judgements made about learners' progress.

Sport, travel and tourism

Grade 2

Context

43. The college offers courses from foundation to advanced level and higher education, including a range of industry specific part-time courses. Currently there are 982 full-time learners following vocational courses, most of whom are aged 16 to 18. Around 903 learners study sport and 79 study travel and tourism. There are more male than female learners. Most full-time learners complete relevant additional qualifications.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. On industry specific sports qualifications success rates are excellent. This year, as a result of changes to the curriculum, all learners have successfully achieved awards in higher sports leadership, exercise studies, sport and leisure, community sports leaders and foundation level football coaching.
- Over the last three years success rates have declined slightly and are satisfactory overall. However, rates vary significantly between courses and ages of learners. In 2009/10 the overall success rate for learners aged 16 to 18 was satisfactory, for adults it was low.
- In 2009/10 success rates on AS- and A-level physical education were very high. At A-level all learners were successful. However, the success rate on the advanced diploma in travel and tourism was low.
- Learners make good, and sometimes excellent, progress at college. A large proportion of AS-level physical education learners achieve high grades. On advanced level vocational programmes in sport and travel and tourism a high proportion achieve a merit or distinction. This year literacy and numeracy success rates are high. Many learners achieve regional and national recognition for their achievements in swimming, badminton, athletics and men's football.
- Learners enjoy their courses. They develop good practical skills and technical knowledge on most courses, particularly on the gym instructor course and advanced level sports development and fitness. Learners adopt safe working practices that prepare them well for employment. They understand how to exercise safely. Learners informed inspectors that they feel safe at college.
- Learners benefit from undertaking high quality work-placements and they make an excellent contribution to the community through participation in an extensive range of coaching and school sports programmes. They organise and manage many events, including Preston Council's Sports Festival and regional tournaments for volleyball and squash. They mentor young sports leaders in local schools. Travel and tourism learners gain very good experience from working in travel agencies and local visitor attractions.
- Teaching and learning are good in sport, and satisfactory in travel and tourism. Sports teachers' effective planning and use of active learning ensures that learners develop very good practical coaching skills. They make effective links between practical lessons and the theory of sports psychology and coaching, which reinforces learning. In a minority of lessons teachers do not use

questioning appropriately to challenge all learners. Poor behaviour disrupts the learning of some students. Assessment feedback helps learners to achieve higher grades.

- The college offers an extremely broad range of courses that provide learners with the qualifications needed for employment and progression to higher education. Learners also benefit from an extensive sports enrichment programme, participating successfully in many competitions and volunteering in community-based activities with children of all ages. However, additional qualifications are limited for travel and tourism learners.
- Learners receive good guidance about courses and this helps them to settle quickly into college. Tutors provide them with good personal and academic support throughout their programmes. Regular reviews ensure that learners understand how they are progressing against their learning targets. Additional support for learners who need extra help with, for example, literacy and numeracy is effective in helping them to make good progress.
- Curriculum management is good. This year effective action has been taken that has improved learners' outcomes significantly. Managers have more rigorously monitored standards on courses that have previously underperformed. Arrangements for identifying learners at risk of underachieving have been strengthened to ensure that they are supported quickly. Retention is much higher than in previous years.
- Self-assessment is insufficiently self-critical. Declining outcomes for 16- to 18-year-olds and the low success rates of adult learners are not recognised in the college's report. Some key strengths, particularly those in relation to learners' outcomes, are overstated. The college does not compare learners' outcomes against sufficiently challenging benchmarks. Inspectors do not agree with the college's evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning.
- Equality and diversity are promoted effectively. Learners understand their rights and responsibilities and treat each other with respect. Teachers review and adapt their learning resources to help to ensure that they meet the needs of learners with varying levels of ability. Specialist support for learners with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities allows them to follow mainstream foundation level programmes.

What does Preston College need to do to improve further?

- Monitor and evaluate the impact of current strategies to improve success rates. Share good practice so that improvements are maintained across all courses and declining trends reversed.
- Improve teaching and learning in travel and tourism by ensuring that teachers are able to use questioning techniques effectively and through better use of paired and group work.
- Enhance arrangements for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning by placing greater focus on learners' progress, standards of work and attitudes to learning.
- Increase the range of opportunities for travel and tourism learners to access additional industry specific qualifications and enrichment activities.

Visual and performing arts

Grade 2

Context

44. Full- and part-time courses are available from foundation to advanced level, and higher education. Of 1,603 enrolments of learners aged 16 to 18 around half are following advanced level programmes. Around 500 adults are enrolled on courses, half of whom are on advanced level courses. Approximately 20 students aged under 16 are enrolled on college courses.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Success rates have increased gradually over three years and are now high. Success rates are above the national average on most courses apart from on the national diploma in music and graded dance examinations, where they are low. Although retention has declined this year it remains high. Attendance at lessons is good.
- Learners produce good standards of work. In some areas such as photography, dance, three-dimensional design and performing arts their work is outstanding. Learners are able to speak articulately about their work using the correct technical language and they demonstrate a good understanding of the professional skills needed. Many students are successful in external competitions which improves their self-confidence.
- Learners make significant improvements to their economic and social well-being. A high proportion of them progress to higher levels of study within the college, to higher education and to employment. High numbers secure employment with prestigious companies, such as working on cruise ships, others are successful in developing their own music and media businesses. Last year all learners on dance programmes progressed to higher education or related employment.
- Learners feel safe at college. They learn to use safe working practices in practical studios, workshops and external professional venues, which prepare them well for employment. Learners complete appropriate risk-assessments of their own work as part of the pre-production planning process for live performances. Dance learners wear appropriate clothing and use the correct warm-up and cool-down exercises to protect themselves from harm.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers effectively plan sessions that contain a variety of activities that are linked to industrial requirements. They support learners to develop the peer review and evaluative skills needed to communicate their ideas and critically evaluate their own work. Regular assessment provides learners with clear guidance on how to improve their work and achieve at a higher level. The recording of adults' personal achievements is inconsistent on informal learning courses.
- Teachers make very effective use of the college's VLE to provide learners with swift and helpful assessment feedback on their assignments. Learners use mini video cameras to record practice and rehearsal sessions. These are posted on the VLE so that they can easily review, evaluate and improve their performances. Teachers of music upload technical notes and extension exercises to help learners extend their learning.

- The range of provision meets the needs of learners exceptionally well. Options available include fashion and textiles, graphics, interior and spatial design, media, dance, drama and fine art. Adults benefit from being able to choose from a range of part-time informal courses such as making curtains and cake decoration. Provision for full-time learners is enhanced by an outstanding range of enrichment activities.
- The college has developed excellent partnerships which enhance opportunities for learners significantly. Working with Sport England learners teach ballet in several local primary schools. Music and drama students put on live performances in a large number of community venues and professional theatres. Music and dance students lead Saturday workshops for children aged three and above. Learners make a very good contribution to the community.
- Care, guidance and support are good. Prospective students attend a festival day where they can participate in a series of taster workshops that help them to choose the right course. Additional learning support is effective in helping learners who need extra help to achieve at the same level as their peers. Learners on intermediate level courses do not receive sufficient guidance to be able to take responsibility for setting and monitoring their progress against learning targets.
- Leadership and management are good. Teachers are well-informed about key developments at weekly meetings. Challenging targets for improvement in success rates are set and monitored closely through appraisal. Teachers feel well-supported by their managers. They are able to develop new initiatives and take advantage of the many opportunities provided for their professional and personal development.
- Accommodation and learning resources are good; in some areas they are outstanding. Learners are able to develop their professional skills through working in specialist studios that are resourced with industry standard equipment and software. The college has developed strong links with music technology and computer manufacturers which ensure that equipment is up-to-date. The department is the only accredited dance school in a tertiary college.
- Teachers are up-to-date practitioners and they use this experience to develop live projects and to provide learners with the experience of working alongside other professionals and technicians. For example, staff from a local radio station use college studios to broadcast live shows and learners working alongside them are provided with real work experience.

What does Preston College need to do to improve further?

- Develop and implement strategies to improve success rates on lower performing courses by sharing good practice across subjects.
- Provide learners on intermediate level courses with better support so that they are involved fully in setting themselves more specific learning targets. Closely monitor their progress so that they make good or better progress.

Business, administration and law

Grade 2

Context

45. The college offers courses from foundation to advanced level in business, retail, accounting, law and management. Around 581 learners aged 16 to 18 are enrolled on full-time courses. Some 405 adult learners are enrolled on part-time accountancy courses. A further 1,000 learners are enrolled on Train to Gain programmes in customer service, team leading and management. There is a small number of business administration apprentices.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory, but success rates vary between courses. Success rates on A-level and advanced level vocational courses are high. At intermediate level the rate is satisfactory. The success rate is low on AS-level law. Most adults follow part-time accountancy courses and the success rates on this provision are low, apart from at foundation level where they are satisfactory. Success rates for apprentices are satisfactory; on Train to Gain they are high.
- Retention and interim pass rates on accountancy courses have improved this year. Pass rates on AS and A-level law January modules are satisfactory but retention has not improved sufficiently. A good proportion of learners progress to further study within the college and then to employment and higher education. Too few learners on law courses progress from AS to A-Level. Learners' attendance at lessons is satisfactory.
- Learners enjoy their studies. Most full-time college-based and employed learners make good progress. However, adults following part-time accountancy courses make only satisfactory progress. A good proportion of learners aged 16 to 18 are awarded high grades, with the exception of those on AS and A-level law who make insufficient progress. Key skills success rates are satisfactory. Work-based learners produce high standards of work.
- Learners' development of skills to promote their economic well-being is good. Full-time learners achieve additional qualifications in team leading, personal finance and financial services which prepare them well for employment. Their social skills develop through participation in fund raising for charity. Teachers promote appropriate standards for learners' behaviour and respect. They reinforce safe working practices. Learners informed inspectors that they feel safe at college.
- Teaching and learning are good. Most lessons are well-organised and result in learners being engaged and participating fully in a variety of activities and classroom discussions. For example, a group of business administration apprentices responded enthusiastically to group tasks and classroom discussions about stock maintenance systems. Teachers and learners make effective use of the VLE to extend learning outside of lessons. In some lessons learners are not provided with sufficient opportunity to engage in discussion or collaborative tasks.

- Learners appreciate the individual assessment feedback they receive. Verbal and written feedback from teachers and workplace assessors is supportive and constructive in helping learners to understand what they need to do to improve. In vocational business workshops learners' short term targets are not sufficiently specific and their progress is not reviewed systematically. Internal verification is robust.
- A good range of provision provides pathways for learners to progress from foundation to degree level within the college. Partnerships with employers are well-established and effective in ensuring that courses help to develop their businesses. Work-based learning assessors are particularly responsive to the needs of employers and employees.
- Support for learners is good. Learners appreciate the help and encouragement they receive from their teachers and personal tutors. Their progress is monitored regularly. Adults on part-time courses have good access to teachers and workplace assessors through email and drop-in tutorial sessions. The success rate for the small number of learners receiving additional learning support is higher than for their peers.
- Leadership and management are good. Managers have implemented effective strategies to improve success rates, which include close monitoring of learners at risk of underperforming. Challenging targets for retention, pass rates and high grades are reviewed systematically. Retention and pass rates on adult accountancy programmes have improved this year.
- Arrangements for quality assurance and self-assessment are satisfactory. The self-assessment report accurately identifies the areas for improvement in the provision. Although the plan arising from self-assessment contains challenging targets it does not clearly identify the actions needed to bring about improvement.
- Equality and diversity are promoted effectively. Variations in the attainment of different groups of learners have been closed. Arrangements to listen to and respond to learners' views through meetings with course representatives are well-organised. Learners feel that their voice is heard and improvements are made.

What does Preston College need to do to improve further?

- Increase the success rates of learners on AS-level courses by ensuring that their attendance improves and they receive sufficient challenge in lessons to inspire them to make progress.
- Review the impact of current initiatives to improve retention and pass rates. Building on this year's progress, implement revised strategies to ensure that success rates improve, particularly on AS-level law and on accountancy programmes.
- Further improve teaching and learning by ensuring that all teachers use a range of appropriate activities that engage and challenge learners fully. Provide sufficient stretch and challenge for learners of all abilities.
- Develop targeted quality improvement actions that are clearly articulated in action plans and owned by all members of staff. Monitor progress robustly at team meetings to ensure that performance improves more rapidly.

Information about the inspection

46. Four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and eight additional inspectors, assisted by the college's Head of Quality, 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 bodies, 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.
47. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, 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.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Preston 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	3,125	2,475	650	0
Part-time learners	12,186	837	5,828	5,425
Overall effectiveness	3	3	3	2
Capacity to improve	3			
Outcomes for learners	3	3	3	2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3			
How well do learners attain their learning goals? How well do learners progress?	3 3			
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2			
How safe do learners feel?	2			
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well-being?*</i>	2			
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2			
Quality of provision	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?	2			
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2			
Leadership and management	3			
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	3			
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	3			
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?	2			
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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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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