

Totton College

Inspection report

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Name of lead inspector: Gloria Dolan HMI

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Type of provider: Sixth form college

Address: Calmore Road,
Totton,
Hampshire
SO40 3ZX

Telephone number: 02380 874874

Information about the provider

1. Totton College is a large sixth form college located in Totton, near the New Forest and Southampton. The college offers provision at its main site and at other sites in the local area. Most of its funding is from the Young People’s Learning Agency. There are approximately 1,400 full-time students, 900 part-time students and 180 apprentices. Most full-time students are aged 16 to 18. The proportion of students from minority ethnic heritage, whilst small, is double the proportion in the local community. The Social and Economic Performance Indicator, which is based on students’ post codes, places Totton College in the least deprived quartile nationally. The proportion of GCSE grades A* to C including English and mathematics achieved at Key Stage 4 in Hampshire in 2010 was higher than the national average.

2. Courses are offered in almost all subject areas for students aged 16 to 18 and adults on a full-and part-time basis. Part-time courses are also provided for a small number of school pupils aged 14 to 16. The college’s portfolio of courses ranges from entry level to higher education including courses for students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Work-based learning includes apprenticeships and a very small number of learners remaining on Train to Gain programmes.

3. Most students aged 16 to 18 study at advanced level. Most adult students study at entry level, foundation and intermediate levels. Most of the work of the college is at advanced level. The largest subject areas are arts, media and publishing and science and mathematics.

The following organisation provides apprenticeship training on behalf of the college:

- Impact Learning & Data Solutions Ltd trading as the Training & Learning Company

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11
Provision for young learners: 14 to16 Further education (16 to 18) Foundation learning, including Entry to Employment	50 part-time learners 247 part-time learners 1,137 full-time learners 43 part-time learners 105 full-time learners 43 learners
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	122 full-time learners

	1,790 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	267 learners 186 apprentices

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 4
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Capacity to improve	Grade 4
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	Grade
Outcomes for learners	4
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	4
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	3

Subject Areas	
Science and mathematics	4
Sport, leisure, travel and tourism	3
Visual and performing arts and media	3
Preparation for life and work	3

Overall effectiveness

- The overall effectiveness of the college is inadequate. Too few students aged 16 to 18 successfully complete their courses, particularly those studying AS level courses and courses at foundation level. Students studying AS levels do not make sufficient progress. Those studying A-level courses made satisfactory progress in 2010/11, but they made insufficient progress in the previous two years. The proportion of adult students staying on courses and successfully completing their qualifications is satisfactory, but it has declined from a strong position two years ago. The proportion of students progressing from AS- to A-level qualifications is too low. The proportion of work-based learners completing programmes and gaining their qualifications is satisfactory in 2010/11, but previously it was low.
- In better lessons, students are fully involved in well-considered, stimulating activities and learning is good. However, teaching and learning are not sufficiently good across the college to enable students to consistently achieve their potential. The checking of learning in lessons is not always secure. Too many students do not receive effective feedback to prepare them to do well in examinations. Students choose from a wide range of courses and enrichment activities.

Individual student learning programmes are not always well-focused and coherent. Good partnerships with schools, employers, the local authority and other external organisations benefit students by enhancing their learning and experiences. The college provides a caring, respectful and safe environment for students but tutorials do not always promote students' development sufficiently well. Leadership and management are not satisfactory. Quality assurance has not brought about enough improvement to students' success.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are inadequate. Success rates on long courses are low. Most students aged 16 to 18 study at advanced level. The success rate at advanced level has declined over three years and is consistently low. The overall success rate on long qualifications for adults is satisfactory, but has declined from a strong position two years ago.
- The success rate for the high number of AS-level qualifications is consistently low and has declined over three years. Success rates on A level and other qualifications at advanced level are broadly satisfactory. The achievement of high grades at GCSE varies from low in mathematics to high in English and, in 2010/11, in science. Success rates for work-based learning are satisfactory.
- Students make insufficient progress on AS-level qualifications. Progress on A-level qualifications improved this year to satisfactory. Students make excellent progress on BTEC national diploma qualifications at advanced level. Student progression rates from AS- to A-level courses are low. A high proportion of students who apply to higher education are successful in gaining places.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall; however, the quality of teaching and learning varies significantly within and between departments from inadequate to good. In the better lessons, teachers meet the individual needs of students well, provide a wide range of interesting and motivating activities and promote independent learning effectively. However, in too many lessons, students do not receive appropriate challenge and stimulation to achieve high levels of success.
- The assessment of learning is not sufficiently robust. Feedback is not focused consistently on helping students to achieve their full potential. Target setting for individual students is not timely in all areas. Assessment on work-based learning has improved and is now satisfactory.
- The college's lesson observation scheme lacks rigour and consistency and does not provide a robust basis for improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
- The range of courses is satisfactory. Provision is mapped well to learners' preferences. Students' programmes are highly individualised and the combination of subjects and levels sometimes leads to a lack of focus on meaningful academic outcomes. The sports academy enables students to develop their skills well.
- Partnerships are good and they provide many benefits for students. Partnership with a national training provider has improved provision for work-based learners. Students benefit from high quality sports and leisure facilities

through collaboration with the local authority. Students' experiences are enhanced through collaboration with employers and schools.

- Information, advice, guidance and support are satisfactory. Tutors provide satisfactory support for students' personal and academic development. Tutorials are less effective at raising achievement and helping students to set and meet ambitious personal targets. A significant minority of advanced level students spend too long at the same level. Students sometimes make insufficient progress towards attaining a full complement of advanced level courses.
- College staff, governors and the new principal are proud of the college's inclusive culture and its achievements. However, in recent years, the college has failed to meet key performance targets and too many students have failed to achieve as well as they should. Leaders and managers have now focused their attention on improving weak performance, but there has not been sufficient improvement. Work-based learning has improved and is now satisfactory.
- The corporation monitors progress appropriately with regard to its legislative duties but has not provided sufficient challenge to poor performance by students. Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory, as is the promotion of equality and diversity. The college has appropriate mechanisms to seek and analyse the views of students and employers.
- The self-assessment process is insufficiently rigorous to drive improvement. The college's self-assessment report for 2009/10 lacks critical insight and has over generous judgements. Lesson observations have not been used effectively to bring about secure improvements in teaching and learning. Heads of department struggle with their teaching loads and considerable management responsibilities.

What does Totton College need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that consistently good teaching, learning and assessment challenges all students to reach their full potential and achieve improved progress and success rates.
- Raise student aspiration and achievement by applying timely, rigorous and consistent approaches to individual student target setting.
- Ensure that all students are on the most appropriate combination of courses.
- Ensure that the needs of current and future students are best served by reviewing management arrangements.
- Ensure that quality assurance identifies underperformance swiftly and leads to prompt and effective action.
- Raise the level of challenge that governors bring to the college's work by scrutinising relevant documentation more fully and monitoring progress against demanding targets.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors**What learners like:**

- being treated like an adult
- the friendly and safe environment
- the professional experience and expertise of teachers
- the supportive and helpful staff
- the good resources and learning environments
- the opportunities to work in groups for different activities
- the ease of access to the college
- the range of enrichment activities.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the quality of the refectory environment
- the limited social space
- the limited careers advice
- the amount of help with the transition from GCSE to A-level courses
- inconsistencies between teachers in the way they teach
- the cost of materials for some courses
- timetabling so that students do not have to attend college for very short days.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors**What employers like:**

- the assessors planning activities well ahead and how they accommodate the demands of the business
- the ability to choose units that best match employment needs
- the assessors because they are well respected by learners.

What employers would like to see improved:

- information about flexible arrangements available for learners to complete programmes in a shorter time.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 4

6. The college's capacity to improve is inadequate. The effectiveness of provision, capacity to improve, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management were judged to be good at the last inspection. The quality of each of these key areas has deteriorated since then. Success rates on long qualifications have declined over three years and are low. They improved slightly in 2010/11 but remain low. Provision in science and mathematics is inadequate. The college has been slow to identify and rectify significant pockets of underperformance. Much management time has been devoted to reacting to problems rather than planning for improvements. Governors are highly supportive of the college but they have not been sufficiently involved in setting the college ambitious performance targets and monitoring the college's progress in enough detail. Self-assessment is not sufficiently self-critical and actions to improve performance have not been effective enough. Managers are committed to student success but heads of department struggle to balance significant management responsibilities with their own teaching loads.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 4

7. Outcomes for learners are inadequate. Overall success rates on long qualifications are consistently low but they improved slightly in 2010/11. Changes to long qualification success rates in curriculum areas this year show almost the same number of areas improving and declining. Long qualification success rates are high in one area; broadly average compared to the national averages for 2009/10 in four areas and low in eight areas for students aged 16 to 18. Long qualification success rates for adults are broadly average in four areas; below average in one area and low in three areas.
8. Most students aged 16 to 18 study at advanced level. The success rate at advanced level improved slightly this year but it has declined over the last three years overall and is consistently low. The success rate for 16 to 18 year-old students at foundation level is low. It is generally satisfactory at intermediate level but it was low in 2009/10.
9. The overall success rate on long qualifications for adults is satisfactory but has declined from a strong position two years ago. The success rate declined at foundation level over three years from high to satisfactory. Success rates declined at intermediate level over three years and have been low in the last two years. The success rate for adults at advanced level is low in 2010/11. Success rates on short courses for adults are satisfactory but they are low for students aged 16 to 18. Success rates on very short courses are high.
10. The success rate for the considerable number of AS-level qualifications is consistently low even though it improved slightly this year. Success rates on A

levels and other qualifications at advanced level are broadly satisfactory. The achievement of high grades at GCSE is low in mathematics, high in English and high in science in 2010/11. Success rates for work-based learning are satisfactory.

11. The majority of advanced-level provision is made up of AS- and A-level courses. Overall, students make significantly less progress than expected on AS-level qualifications based on their prior attainment at GCSE. Students' overall progress on A-level qualifications improved this year to satisfactory from being significantly below average in the previous two years. Students make excellent progress on BTEC national diploma qualifications at advanced level.
12. Overall, there are no significant differences in the long qualification success rates of male and female students or those of minority ethnic heritage and the average for the college. Male adult students consistently have lower success rates than female students at advanced level and higher success rates than female students at foundation level, but the difference is reducing. Students taking long qualifications who receive additional learning support have higher success rates than the average for the college.
13. The progression rate for students from AS- to A-level courses is low. Only two thirds of 16-year-old students who started two or more AS levels in 2009 went on to study at least two A-levels the following year. The proportion of AS-level students who successfully complete at least two A-level qualifications is low. Just over half the students who started AS-level courses in 2009 gained two or more A-levels in 2011. Just over a third of 16-year-old students who studied three or more AS-level courses in 2009 gained three or more A-level qualifications in 2011. Almost a quarter of the students who studied at advanced level in 2009/10 are in their third year of studying advanced level courses.
14. A high proportion of students who apply to enter higher education gain a place but the proportion gaining a place at a Russell Group university has reduced significantly over three years.
15. Students enjoy college but too many fail to successfully complete their qualifications. They develop relevant knowledge and skills which contribute to their economic and social well-being. Students feel safe at college and generally work safely in practical lessons.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

16. The quality of teaching and learning varies significantly within and between departments from unsatisfactory to good. In better lessons, teachers plan well to meet the individual needs of students, provide a wide range of activities that engage and motivate students, promote independent learning, and ensure that there is regular and effective monitoring of learning. Weaker lessons are not appropriately demanding for students, teachers do not plan effectively to stimulate high levels of student aspiration and attainment. Learning is not

monitored securely, and questioning techniques are often insufficiently effective. The college has put in place strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning, but it is too early to evaluate their full impact.

17. The college's lesson observation scheme lacks rigour and consistency. The quality of judgements about teaching and learning, and action plans for improvement, are inconsistent. Informal arrangements for improvement are in place, but overall the approach is not systematic and lacks coherence and focus. Lessons have been graded too highly in most areas. Lesson observation judgments have not been correlated with students' success rates. This has restricted their usefulness in improving learning and student success. The college recognises some of the shortcomings of the scheme and appropriate, well-considered changes are being introduced.
18. Target setting for individual students is not used consistently to raise aspiration and optimise attainment. The introduction of the electronic mark book has begun to enable more incisive early intervention to manage student underperformance. However, in some areas, such as science and mathematics and provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, target setting is not used sufficiently rigorously and consistently to challenge students, or to enable most lessons to meet individual student needs.
19. Learning resources are good and most teachers use them effectively to enhance learning. Information learning technology, in particular, is used well to stimulate students' enjoyment and learning. The virtual learning environment is useful and well used by teachers and students. Some curriculum areas, such as mathematics and performing arts and media, are moving rapidly beyond text-based material into more interactive and multi-media resources.
20. Most teachers provide timely, detailed and constructive feedback to students on their work. However, not all students are given clear and helpful guidance on how to improve the standard of their work. Arrangements for internal verification are thorough and well organised and fully compliant with awarding body requirements.
21. The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons is satisfactory. Equality and diversity are included in schemes of work and lesson plans but only in a minority of lessons.
22. The range of provision is satisfactory at meeting the needs and interests of the majority of students. The college provides a broad academic and vocational curriculum, mainly at advanced level. Courses are also provided at entry, foundation and intermediate levels. Work-based learning is available through apprenticeships and Train to Gain programmes in different subject areas. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities reflects appropriately the inclusive nature of the college.
23. Students choose from a wide range of subjects to form learning plans which meet their individual preferences. The large amount of choice available results in highly individualised programmes that provide students with broad experiences. The

range of courses undertaken by students sometimes results in a lack of focus on meaningful academic routes. The progression rate of students from AS- to A-level is unsatisfactory. Students sometimes combine an AS course with, for example, vocational provision at foundation and intermediate level, rather than ensuring they study sufficient subjects at advanced level to maximise their future options.

24. Enrichment activities are plentiful, relevant and valued by students. Students on a variety of courses are involved with useful and stimulating educational visits at home and abroad. The sports academy successfully develops students' sporting ability. Students compete at local and sometimes national levels. Overall student participation in sporting activities is satisfactory. Sporting activities help students to develop not only their knowledge of sports but also their personal skills.
25. Partnerships are good. The college has strong external partnerships that benefit students by enhancing students' learning and experience at college and in the local community. An increasing number of students are involved in work-experience related to their future employment goals. Sports students regularly work with school pupils. Employers act as guest speakers. Partnership arrangements with the local recreation centre have provided high quality leisure and sports facilities for all students to use. The good relationship between the college and local schools has led to vocational courses for school pupils being established. Strong collaboration with a national work-based learning provider has helped to accelerate success rates for learners.
26. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Initial advice and guidance helps students choose from a wide variety of courses but some students choose less coherent programmes which are not well-focused. Tutors provide satisfactory support for students' personal and academic development and students value the care they receive. Progress reviews are detailed and target setting for students focuses on the completion of work but they do not lead to the achievement of ambitious learning goals. Group tutorials do not always contribute sufficiently well to the personal and academic development of students. Support provided for students with literacy, numeracy or language needs is good and helps students to be successful. Additional learning support is effective. Support from assessors for work-based learners is good.

Leadership and management

Grade 4

27. Leadership and management are inadequate. The college strives to be an inclusive institution providing a range of academic and vocational courses for its local community. It prides itself on a well-established caring and supportive ethos that is valued very highly by students, staff, the new principal and governors.
28. However, over the last two years, too many students have failed to achieve as well as they should. Leaders and managers did not anticipate that the college would fail to meet key performance targets in 2010 and 2011. They have been slow to identify and tackle significant pockets of underperformance, with much of their time and energy devoted to reacting to problems rather than proactively

planning for improvement. Over the last year, managers have focused on improving the weakest provision, most notably in science and on AS-level courses, but insufficient progress has been made in improving success rates. Improvements have been made to work-based learning.

29. The slow pace of improvement is exacerbated by the management structure. Heads of department, who play a pivotal role in raising standards, are highly committed to do the best for their students. However, they struggle to balance considerable management responsibilities with their own teaching load.
30. Governance is weak. While governors are highly supportive of the college and proud of its ethos, they have been disinclined to challenge poor performance or strategic direction. Their interrogation of student success data has been weak and so they have failed to grasp the extent to which performance has deteriorated over the last two years. Governors have not been sufficiently involved in setting the college ambitious performance targets and they do not monitor its progress in sufficient depth. The corporation monitors the college's progress appropriately with regard to its legislative duties in safeguarding, health and safety and equality of opportunity.
31. College staff are highly committed to keeping students safe and caring for their welfare and personal development. Policies and procedures for safeguarding young students and vulnerable adults are appropriate. Staff and governors have relevant safeguarding training and the college undertakes Criminal Record Bureau checks on all staff and volunteers. Arrangements for the management of health and safety are satisfactory.
32. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Students and staff feel comfortable and respected. The college has appropriate policies and action plans in place to meet its statutory duties in relation to race, gender and disability. The college also promotes equality with regard to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals. There are no patterns of consistent underperformance, relative to the average success rate for the college, by any group of students, when analysed by age, gender, ethnicity or disability.
33. Many teachers incorporate themes of social and cultural diversity well into their lessons and resources, for example in art, media and performing arts. Not all teachers, though, are sufficiently knowledgeable about how cultural diversity is relevant to their subject area.
34. The college has appropriate mechanisms to seek and analyse the views of students and employers. An annual survey of students' views serves to confirm governors' and managers' judgement that, in the main, students are highly positive about the college. Each department has its own approach to listening to subject-specific suggestions and some aspects of college life, such as students' social areas, have improved as a result of feedback.
35. The self-assessment process is helpful in that it draws on an appropriate range of quantitative and qualitative evidence and encourages debate and reflection, but it is not sufficiently rigorous to drive improvement. The college's self-assessment

report for 2009/10 lacks critical insight and is over generous in terms of evaluative judgements. Leaders and managers fail to explore in depth the reasons for changes in the quality of performance from year to year and this impedes their ability to improve provision. Lesson observations have not been used effectively to bring about secure improvements in teaching and learning.

36. Value for money is inadequate. The college is financially sound and resources for learning are at least satisfactory and many are good. However, outcomes for students are inadequate.

Subject areas

Science and mathematics

Grade 4

Context

37. The college provides AS- and A-levels in mathematics, further mathematics, biology, chemistry and physics. GCSE courses are available in mathematics and science and use of mathematics at foundation level. BTEC applied science and access to higher education in life sciences courses are offered at advanced level. Currently, some 792 students are enrolled in mathematics and science and most students are aged 16 to 18.

Key Findings

- Outcomes for learners are inadequate. Success rates are low in GCSE mathematics grades A* to C and in most courses at advanced level in biology and chemistry. Success rates at foundation level are satisfactory. The success rate for GCSE science grades A* to C was high in 2010/11 but low in previous years.
- Success rates in AS- and A-level physics have declined to below average. Success rates on AS mathematics were very low but improved to satisfactory in 2010/11. Success rates are high on A-level mathematics.
- Learners' make insufficient progress at AS level. Students' progress, based on their prior attainment at GCSE, improved in 2010/11 in most A-level subjects but it declined in mathematics to below average. Student progression rates from AS- to A-level are low. Average attendance rates have been low for the last two years.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons, teachers use a variety of effective checks on learning such as directed questioning which enable students to make links to previous learning. In these lessons, teachers assess learning regularly. Teachers provide feedback to individual students which enable them to improve their work and complete tasks successfully.
- In weaker lessons, learning objectives are unclear and not shared effectively with students. Lessons are insufficiently demanding and fail to stretch students so that they achieve more highly. Learning is not checked frequently enough. Directions to students to ensure good health and safety practices in practical lessons are sometimes confused. Students feel safe at college.
- Information learning technology is used well by teachers and students both in lessons and on the college intranet. A broad range of good quality resources on the college intranet encourage independent learning in mathematics. Multimedia is used effectively to make learning more visual with clear worked examples of calculations. Students speak positively about the impact these materials have on their learning.

- Assessment is insufficiently robust. Feedback to learners on their marked assignments is weak and not always sufficiently detailed. It does not usually inform students of the level they are working at or how to improve their work in order to meet and exceed examining board standards.
- The breadth and range of courses is generally satisfactory but there are too few vocational courses at different levels in science to meet the needs of all students.
- Academic support is satisfactory. Teachers focus appropriately on helping students to develop independent learning and study skills. Extra sessions, staffed by subject specialists, support students who have been identified as at risk of failing due to their entry qualifications or gaps in their previous learning.
- Target setting for most students is weak. Insufficient use is made of setting aspirational target grades to challenge and motivate students to improve their performance. Poor use is made of data to set and support improvements in student performance. Systems to monitor students' progress are now being used more rigorously.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. The self-assessment report is insufficiently rigorous. Self-assessment has not led to sufficient improvements in outcomes for students. Internal lesson observations are graded too generously. Action planning for improvement fails to identify the most crucial areas to be implemented. Progress made against the action plan is not monitored frequently or thoroughly enough.
- Equality and diversity are satisfactory. The understanding of diversity is promoted well in a minority of lessons. Students are treated fairly in lessons.
- Teachers receive insufficient support to improve their professional practice. Continuous professional development does not place sufficient emphasis on teaching, learning and assessment to support the development of expert practitioners.

What does Totton College need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that students' underperformance is identified swiftly and implement interventions promptly, including appropriately demanding activities in lessons.
- Ensure that teachers' expertise is supported and developed through training focussed on teaching, learning and assessment.
- Raise the standard of students' work by ensuring that teachers assess students' work frequently and provide timely, well-focused feedback that enables each student to improve. Focus assessment practices on enabling students' to meet or exceed awarding body standards.
- Increase the breadth of science provision by introducing appropriate vocational qualifications.

- Ensure that data are used effectively to identify areas for improvement and for evaluating whether actions are leading to significant and timely improvements in students' outcomes.

Sport, leisure, travel and tourism

Grade 3

Context

38. The college provides courses from foundation to advanced level including vocational diplomas and AS- and A-levels in both sport and travel and tourism. There are 177 students, most of whom study full-time and are aged 16 to 18. The majority of students study sports courses and a smaller number study travel and tourism. Most students study at advanced level. At advanced level almost twice as many students take BTEC national qualifications than A levels. Full-time programmes are enhanced by enrichment courses such as coaching and the certificate for resort representatives.

Key Findings

- Outcomes for students are satisfactory. Success rates are high on the BTEC national diploma in sport and they are satisfactory on travel and tourism qualifications. Success rates on AS- and A-level physical education are consistently low. Success rates are high on most enhancement courses such as the certificates for airline cabin crew and fitness instructing and the award in sports leadership.
- Students enjoy their courses and make satisfactory progress but they make insufficient progress on AS- and A-level physical education. Pass rates on the BTEC extended diploma in sport are high with many students achieving distinctions. Most students achieve high grades on A-level travel and tourism. Progression rates from the BTEC first diploma to the national diploma and to higher education are low.
- Sports academy students develop high levels of performance in their specialist sport. Sports students develop good practical and coaching skills. Many students play for regional and national sports clubs at an elite level in areas such as basketball, football and rugby. Students demonstrate satisfactory standards of vocational skills in travel and tourism.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most lessons are planned well and use a variety of activities to interest and motivate students. Clear links are made between lesson objectives, learning activities and assessment. Links between theory and practical activities in sports lessons are strong. Teachers' questioning techniques usually support students well in discussions and reinforce key learning points.
- In weaker lessons, students are not fully involved in their learning. The pace of activities is not always well-matched to students' needs and learning is not

always checked sufficiently. Students studying A-level qualifications are not always provided with sufficiently challenging activities or with opportunities to develop skills for independent learning, critical thinking and reflection.

- The range of courses is comprehensive and includes academic, vocational and enrichment subjects. An extensive selection of enrichment activities is available in the sports academy including gymnasium, swimming and a range of sports. Students' individual learning programmes do not always include sufficient study at advanced level to ensure they have the opportunity to progress to higher education.
- Partnerships are good, particularly in the sports academy, where sports students benefit from links with important national organisations and clubs at both regional and national levels. Partnerships with schools are also good. Travel and tourism students benefit from industrial links which enhance their courses through guest speakers and educational visits.
- Guidance and support provided by teachers are good. Teachers have detailed knowledge of students' courses, experience and interests. Teachers refer to this information and use it well in lessons to encourage and improve students' learning. Progress reviews are satisfactory. Tutorials are not used effectively for enrichment or for providing education on health and well-being.
- Initial advice is not sufficiently well-focused on ensuring that all advanced level students take programmes which will optimise their progression opportunities.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff communicate effectively when discussing students' progress and planning teaching. However, too much planning for improvement takes place on an informal basis and lacks strategic direction and monitoring. Self-assessment and the use of data are satisfactory but the development plan does not have sufficiently robust targets to drive improvement.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Schemes of work include examples of equality and diversity issues in sport and travel and tourism and lesson plans highlight opportunities to promote equality and diversity. In a few lessons the opportunity to challenge stereotypes and reinforce students' understanding is missed.

What does Totton College need to do to improve further?

- Provide greater challenge and opportunities for students' autonomy through better development of independent learning, critical thinking and reflection.

- Ensure that students' learning and involvement in lessons is enhanced through matching the pace to individual students' abilities and checking learning thoroughly.
- Review critically initial advice and guidance so that all students are on the programmes that best support their eventual success and progression to higher education or employment.
- Ensure that all teachers are involved in reviewing provision and evaluating its quality. Set demanding targets for improvement and monitor closely the progress made towards meeting those targets.

Visual and performing arts and media

Grade 3

Context

39. Currently, some 563 enrolments are in media and performing arts and 387 in visual arts. Twenty-two students study on the foundation diploma in art and design, 180 study BTEC national diplomas at advanced level in art, music, media and dance and 79 students study at intermediate level. There are 383 enrolments on AS- and A-levels including photography, film, media, product design, drama and performance. Students are able to study a range of enhancement courses and enrichment activities. The majority of students are aged 16 to 18 and two thirds are female.

Key findings

- Learners' outcomes are satisfactory. Success rates for many courses are around the national averages. Success rates are high in BTEC first diploma in media, BTEC national diploma in music and in some courses with a low number of students. Success rates are low in AS- and A-level media, AS film studies, national award in music and GCSE photography.
- The percentage of high grades is low on many courses. Generally, students make at least the progress expected of them given their prior attainment and some make better progress than expected.
- On long courses, too many students fail to complete their courses. Retention rates are particularly low in GCSE and AS photography and AS film studies. Average attendance for the area has been low over the last two years.
- The standard of students' practical work is high. Observational drawing is competent and students often develop thematic project work with confidence. Product design students understand and analyse form and function appropriately. Performance skills are well developed and peer evaluation is beginning to foster independent learning. However, written work and theory notebooks are often minimal and lack personal enquiry.
- Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons include a range of relevant activities to develop practical skills. Theory supports practice in music, dance and drama. Group discussions in media and film encourage learning effectively. Information learning technology is used appropriately for research.
- Weaker lessons include insufficient attention being given to the identified needs of learners and scant monitoring of their understanding. Students are not appropriately involved in these lessons. Students sometimes remain unchallenged and passive.
- Teachers provide students with encouraging individual support and give helpful guidance on techniques and the generation of ideas. Effective learning support is provided in lessons for mixed ability groups. However, at times there is insufficient support for those who are struggling with theoretical concepts related to their practical work.

- Resources are good. Art studios have specialist facilities for two and three dimensional work. Music and media have appropriate rehearsal, recording and theory rooms. Performing arts students enjoy a professional standard performance space but learning in the dance studio can be disturbed by noise from the adjoining sports hall. Some media classrooms have insufficient ventilation and are too cramped for effective group work.
- Performing arts students contribute well to the cultural life of the college and the local community. Performances take place in the college, at the community arts centre and other professional venues. Music students, and other students from across the college, take part successfully in many national competitions.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Changes to the curriculum have led to some improvement in success rates. Course reviews, action plans and the analysis of results analyses are thorough but they have been too slow in tackling the recognised underperformance of some courses. New processes are now enabling earlier intervention to improve student underperformance. Attendance is now being monitored carefully.
- Grades for the college observations of teaching and learning are over generous and outcomes have not been used effectively to improve learning. Good teaching and learning practice is shared informally amongst staff teams but has yet ensure so that all lessons are good or better throughout the curriculum.
- The promotion of equality and diversity are good. Themes are identified in schemes of work and projects make reference to cultural and social influences. An introductory project on diversity has produced thoughtful images and students have chosen to study filmmakers from the Middle East. Art work and sketchbooks exhibit a vibrancy of colour and strong cultural and environmental influences.

What does Totton College need to do to improve further?

- Identify and share good practice in teaching and learning effectively in order to improve success rates and the proportion of students achieving high grades.
- Ensure that all students are appropriately motivated to attend college regularly and to reach their full potential by involving them effectively in all lessons, encouraging independent learning and, in particular, by using group critiques with student led discussions and peer evaluations.
- Ensure staff have a clear understanding of the techniques leading to successful learning by focussing teaching and learning observations more closely on learning.

Preparation for life and work

Grade 3

Context

40. The college offers courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at pre-entry and entry level. Some 89 students are on full-time courses; 57 are aged 16 to 18 and 32 are adults. The majority of students are male. Students follow courses in personal and social development and take vocational options including horticulture, creative media, travel and tourism, animal care and, health and social care.

Key findings

- Success rates on students' main qualifications are high and have been so for the last three years; however success rates on functional skills in numeracy and literacy are low. Students enjoy their lessons and improve their confidence and self-esteem.
- Students make satisfactory progress. A minority of students progress to college courses at higher levels and a few progress to employment. The majority of students progress to other courses within the department. Individual targets for students are not established at the start of their course and students do not always receive sufficient challenge and specific support to meet their individual needs.
- Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. Students feel safe and work cooperatively together. Most students receive appropriate support to observe good standards of hygiene and safe working practices. However, a few students on vocational placements do not receive sufficient encouragement to wear appropriate protective clothing during practical activities.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers and support staff work well together and generally place the welfare and interests of all students at the heart of everything they do. They use praise effectively and students respond well. Staff take great care to provide students with a good range of choices. They help students well to consider their options and make decisions.
- Assessment is generally satisfactory. Staff gather very useful information about new students before the start of their courses. However, this information is not used effectively or in good time and there are long delays in planning individual student targets and learning programmes.
- Students benefit from a broad range of vocational opportunities and many enrichment activities which encourage them to participate actively in college life. Activities, such as art, gardening and sport help students to improve their communication skills effectively and are the source of much fun and enjoyment. Students take part in a satisfactory range of useful community activities.
- A good range of courses are provided which meet the needs and interests of students. Courses are available at a separate unit specifically developed to

meet the needs of students who are unable to attend the main campus. The college has a strong reputation with external organisations for meeting the care needs of students particularly well.

- Partnership working is satisfactory. The college enjoys strong links with local schools, the local authority and health service providers. Arrangements to support students' transition to college involve useful communication with parents and carers. However, visits to the college by staff from partnership organisations are not always scheduled appropriately and sometimes disrupt lessons.
- Advice and guidance are satisfactory. The majority of students receive appropriate advice to enable them to progress after their courses. However, a minority of students do not receive adequate advice to help them to progress into activities which would further help their development
- The personal care needs of students are usually met particularly well and staff work effectively together to provide students with personal support and encouragement. However, individual needs are not always correctly identified by staff in lessons, and this restricts progress.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff development is generally effective and staff are supportive of the college's new leadership arrangements. Staff generally promote equality of opportunity well, but are not always sufficiently aware of students' cultural differences and needs.
- Self-assessment and quality assurance are not sufficiently effective in bringing about improvements. Staff are not all aware of the areas and priorities for improvement. The self-assessment report did not identify all of the areas for improvement identified at inspection.

What does Totton College need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that qualifications in English and mathematics are fully appropriate to the needs of students in order to improve achievement.
- Ensure students make greater progress in lessons by identifying their needs and setting individual targets at the start of the course.
- Provide more effective and thorough advice, information and guidance in order to improve students' progression.
- Ensure that well-focused training and development raises staff awareness of the cultural needs and differences of students.

Information about the inspection

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

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Totton 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	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners	1400	0	1300	100	0
Full-time learners	900	20	20	700	180
Part-time learners					
Overall effectiveness	4		4	3	3
Capacity to improve	4				
Outcomes for learners	4		4	3	3
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	4				
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	4				
How well do learners progress?	4				
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	4				
How safe do learners feel?	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>	3				
Quality of provision	3		3	3	3
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	3				
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?	3				
Leadership and management	4				
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	4				
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	4				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3				
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3				
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	4				
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	4				

*where applicable to the type of provision

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Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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