

King George V College

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 130492

Name of lead inspector: Bev Barlow HMI

Last day of inspection: 22 March 2012

Type of provider: Sixth form college

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Information about the provider

1. King George V is a sixth form college, established in 1978, located close to the centre of Southport in the Borough of Sefton. Within the local area there are two general further education colleges, Sefton Sixth Form Centre and three local schools with sixth forms. Approximately 80% of students are recruited from Sefton. The proportion of school leavers achieving five GCSE grades A* to C including English and mathematics is above the national average. The very low proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds reflects the local population. The area is relatively prosperous with a few pockets of deprivation. Unemployment rates are around the national average and many local people travel to Liverpool to work.

2. The college has about 1,500 students currently enrolled. The vast majority of the college's students are full time, aged 16 to 18 and taking advanced-level courses. The college offers a very wide range of AS- and A-level courses, the International Baccalaureate and a range of vocational courses at advanced and intermediate levels. The average level of students' attainment when starting at the college is above the national average.

3. The inspection took account of all of the provision offered by the college. Courses in English and modern foreign languages, humanities, social science, and business and law were inspected in depth.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11
Provision for young learners: Further education (16 to18)	1,536 full-time learners 6 part-time learners
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	25 full-time learners

Summary report

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

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

Subject Areas	Grade
Humanities	2
Social Sciences	2
English and modern foreign languages	2
Business	2

Overall effectiveness

4. This is a good and improving college with many recent initiatives to drive forward the quality of lessons and increase the consistency of students' achievements. Success rates are very high on many courses, particularly vocational courses and most A-level subjects. Most students make good or better progress in their time at college and progress successfully to higher education, further training or employment. In a significant minority of subjects students do not do as well as that predicted from their prior attainment and too few achieve high grades on AS courses. Students enjoy and gain valuable skills through the extensive range of subject enrichment and extra-curricular activities. They have a mature attitude to learning and their behaviour is exemplary. Students are prepared very well to make informed choices about their health and well-being and be responsible citizens. However, too many students do not value the group sessions with their progress coach. Teaching and learning are mostly good with some outstanding practice. Internal lesson observations, staff development opportunities and the increased sharing of good practice is eliminating the proportion of satisfactory teaching. Most lessons

provide a good range of learning activities that engage, challenge and motivate students and they participate enthusiastically. However, some teachers do not always extend students' understanding sufficiently well. Consequently, students are passive and the pace of learning is slow.

5. Students feel very safe and receive outstanding support from their subject teachers. Initial guidance is very effective and in-year retention rates have increased. A new management structure has clarified roles and responsibilities and performance management is more robust. There are no differences in the performance of different groups of students but the college is not yet promoting equality and diversity to a high standard and some policies require updating. The self-assessment process is accurate in its grading but it does not identify the main strengths and areas for improvement clearly. The quality of the curriculum reports is not consistently good. The actions in the quality improvement plans are not always sufficiently detailed to drive forward improvements at a rapid or consistent pace.

Main findings

- Students achieve very well, particularly those on A-level and vocational courses. Retention declined slightly in 2010/11 but pass rates are very high and the overall success rate was above the national average. Within this high figure there is too much variability between subjects' success rates.
- Most students make at least good progress and those on vocational courses make exceptional progress. In several AS- and A-level subjects too many students do not achieve their expected grade and the improvements over time are too uneven. Students with identified support needs achieve higher results than their peers. The high grade pass rate in GCSE English is high but too few students achieve a grade C or above in GCSE mathematics and science.
- Students enjoy college and demonstrate mature and responsible attitudes to their studies and the exciting range of additional opportunities available to them. They contribute well to the college and local community and this prepares them very well for life after college.
- Teaching and learning are good. The best lessons contain a good range of imaginative and relevant activities that engages students and they make good progress. In weaker lessons planning is less effective, students are not inspired to contribute fully and the teacher does not fully develop their understanding. Assessment is good.
- Resources are good including the availability and use of online interactive materials to support learning. Increasingly, teachers share good practice and staff development is good. The internal lesson observation system needs to be more consistent in its focus on learning to drive forward improvements.
- The range of AS- and A-level courses is extensive and there is an increasing range of vocational programmes to meet students' needs and aspirations.

Students can choose almost any combination of subjects and have opportunities to retake core GCSE subjects to improve their grade.

- Many students benefit greatly from a very good range of sporting, health-related and community-based opportunities. The range of charitable events and the funds raised are very impressive. The college is working to promote more consistent involvement of students in college decision making.
- Partnerships provide significant benefits to students and enhance the college's local reputation. Effective school links help potential students to prepare well for a smooth transition to college. Good links with higher education institutions raise students' aspirations on what to do after college. The college's work with employers is growing but requires further development.
- Students' progress is enhanced significantly by the extra help given by teachers and by well-planned additional learning support. Students have good personal support from progress coaches but do not benefit sufficiently from the group sessions. Comprehensive advice and guidance help students to make informed choices about their futures.
- Strong leadership has been instrumental in setting a clear strategic direction which is sharply focused on improving the college to become outstanding. A new management structure has led to increased accountability and more robust performance management. Curriculum management is good. Good governance ensures that the college is held to account well.
- Students feel safe in the college. Their very high standards of behaviour support their adoption of safe practices in practical sessions and around the college. Safeguarding has a very high priority and is embedded across all areas effectively, with a particular focus on supporting the most vulnerable students.
- Equality and diversity are not promoted consistently well. Students are respectful and courteous. There are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups of students. The overall policy framework which guides equality and diversity is not updated in a timely manner.
- Quality improvement arrangements are effective; success rates are at least good and improving, as is the quality of lessons. Underperforming subjects are closely monitored and actions have led to rapid improvements. Inspectors agreed with most grades in the self-assessment report but the content is not sufficiently incisive or evaluative. Curriculum self-assessment reports are not consistently good.

What does King George V College need to do to improve further?

- Improve the depth and rate of learning across all subjects so that all students consistently achieve at or above their potential. Develop the effectiveness of teachers' questioning techniques and lesson activities to improve students' verbal and written responses to enhance their application and analytical skills.
- Provide greater support to progress coaches in facilitating group sessions and ensure that students' absences from these and other lessons are investigated and acted upon more promptly to improve attendance. Strengthen the

communication of student information from subject teachers to progress coaches.

- Ensure that the policy framework which governs the college's actions in relation to the promotion of equality and diversity is coherent, up to date, continuously reviewed and appropriately impact-assessed in a timely manner.
- Revise the self-assessment process so that:
 - the college can readily identify strengths and areas for improvement at both curriculum and whole-college level
 - data and students' opinions are used more effectively to provide consistent evidence to support judgements
 - the internal lesson observation system focuses more on students' learning
 - there are more coherent links to quality improvement plans
 - action plans are more consistently monitored to ensure that any underperformance at student and subject level is improved quickly and consistently to the very high standards established in several subjects.

Summary of the views of students as confirmed by inspectors

What students like:

- the very supportive and approachable staff who help them succeed
- the friendly atmosphere where everyone is respected and treated equally
- the encouragement they get from staff to achieve well
- the advice and guidance about the opportunities available to them after college
- the availability of additional support
- the access to high quality resources in the learning centre and on the college's intranet site
- the wide range of courses and being able to study different subjects
- the broad range of enrichment opportunities and being able to get involved in lots of activities
- how teachers value their opinions and make changes as a result of feedback from them.

What students would like to see improved:

- the group sessions that are delivered by progress coaches
- the reliability of laptop computers
- the toilets and dated areas of the college's buildings
- the amount of social space
- work experience opportunities.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

6. Following the last inspection the college experienced a plateau in success rates, particularly at advanced level which accounts for the vast majority of its students. In 2011 the overall success rate had improved to above the high national average. The strengths from the previous inspection have been maintained or enhanced. Managers have made good progress in addressing most areas identified as requiring improvement. As recognised by the new leadership team, there is still work to do to move the college to reach its goal to become outstanding since there is too much unevenness in the rate of improvement across subjects.
7. The new Principal and senior staff set high aspirations and have clearly communicated an energised focus on raising students' achievements and the quality of lessons. These have been embraced by well motivated staff but they are not always translated fully into clear whole-college targets. The new structure has improved accountability. The grades in the self-assessment report are broadly accurate but the evidence is not sufficiently precise and there is too much variability in the quality of subject reports. Managers identify underperforming courses swiftly and take effective action to raise standards.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

8. Students achieve well and most make very good progress. Despite a small decline in retention the college's success rate has increased steadily over the last three years as pass rates have improved and are very high. Success rates on advanced-level courses, the vast majority of the college's provision, are very high. In-year retention rates have improved. Almost all A-level students achieve their qualification and 54% achieve a high grade. AS-level success rates are high but too few achieve a high grade.
9. Success rates on advanced- and intermediate-level vocational courses are very high and most students achieve a high grade. Internal progression is very good. The proportion of students who complete a repeat GCSE course and achieve a grade C or above is satisfactory in mathematics and science and good in English. Success rates on functional skills courses are high.
10. The progress of most advanced-level students is good or better. However, there is variability in the progress made across different subjects, and in a minority of subjects students' progress is weak. Students on vocational courses make excellent progress. Progression from AS- to A-level courses is good.
11. The small proportion of students of minority ethnic heritage achieves as well as other students. Overall there are no significant differences in the performance of male and female students but there is some variability in a few subjects

which managers are reducing effectively. The achievement of students who have a declared disability and/or learning difficulty and those who receive additional learning support is outstanding.

12. Students' written work is good and vocational students produce high quality assignments. Students develop good study skills including note taking, revision strategies and examination techniques. Attendance is satisfactory.
13. Students are prepared very well for their future lives and demonstrate effective teamwork, independent research skills and a mature attitude. Most students progress to higher education including to a variety of prestigious universities.
14. Students enjoy college and feel safe in a calm and productive learning environment. Students respect each other and contribute well to college life. They organise and participate in a broad range of community events and fundraising activities which have raised considerable sums of money. Strong links with Southport Rotary provide many volunteering opportunities that help develop students' leadership skills.
15. Effective partnerships, for example links with Samaritans, promote the health and well-being of students. A daily bulletin informs students of the many opportunities available outside of lessons. They participate well in sports activities, and readily use the fitness suite and counselling service. Healthy food options are available in response to students' requests.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

16. Teaching and learning are good with examples of excellent practice. The best lessons are planned very well, students know what is expected and they make good or better progress. Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to develop imaginative activities to engage students. Students work enthusiastically and experiment with a range of ideas to explain and illustrate concepts before reaching a conclusion. Students' knowledge and level of understanding are checked very effectively by teachers. Group and practical work promote good participation and help students to develop independent learning skills.
17. In weaker lessons the teaching is too focused on the whole group and does not take into account students' different ability levels. On too many occasions the teacher is too eager to tell students the answer to questions and does not provide sufficient opportunities to develop students' responses. This slows down the pace of learning and there are not enough opportunities to challenge and allow more-able students to articulate their depth of understanding.
18. Resources to support learning are good. The college's virtual learning environment (VLE) is now being used more widely to extend learning but it is an area for development in several subjects.

19. Assessment practices are good. Teachers regularly set work and their feedback gives students clear guidance on how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. In several subjects peer- and self-assessment are used well to develop students' evaluation and analytical skills, and deepen their subject knowledge. On vocational courses, students use assessments very well to monitor their progress carefully.
20. Improving the quality of lessons is a key priority and is supported by a well-thought-out strategy. A cross-college group, staff development opportunities and the increased sharing of good practice have energised teachers to be more creative. The internal lesson observation is not used fully to help staff to develop their skills since insufficient attention is given to students' learning.
21. The college offers a comprehensive range of AS- and A-level courses and a wide range of vocational programmes. The course offer is carefully managed and is very flexible so that students can study academic and vocational qualifications, and any combination of subjects. Students benefit from a broad range of additional certificated courses including the certificate in financial studies, citizenship, additional foreign languages and general studies. However, achievements on these additional courses are no better than satisfactory.
22. An exciting range of subject enrichment activities includes residential trips, visits, voluntary work and visiting speakers that enhance students' experiences. The student council arranges social events and monthly meetings with senior staff to influence college decision making. Students participate extensively in the extra-curricular activities, including a college magazine and radio, music concerts and an annual theatrical production. The wide variety of clubs develops students' broader specialist interests and enhances their motivation.
23. Work experience is managed well for vocational students but it is not readily available for most A-level students. The Career Academy enables a small group of students to develop high level workplace skills with the support from a local business mentor and a paid internship. An increasing number of students complete an extended project qualification successfully, often to a very high standard.
24. A range of effective partnerships provides significant benefits for students. The college is a key participant in local consortia. Good subject links enable school pupils to experience new subjects before making more informed choices. Strong links with higher education institutions support students' progression. Students made a valuable contribution to the Sefton and West Lancashire Women's Business Network awards. The college needs to widen its links with employers.
25. Students receive very good advice and guidance for their transition from school and for when they progress from college. Thoughtfully planned pre-enrolment activities ensure that prospective students are aware of the demands of courses and settle comfortably into college. The careers team arranges several events, including an annual careers convention, that help students to make informed choices about progression to higher education and employment.

26. Students' learning is promoted very well by the extra support they receive from teachers both informally and in support sessions. For example, mathematics students have an extensive range of drop-in, workshop and revision sessions. A well-conceived strategy provides stretch and challenge for the more able students. Students' progress is communicated regularly to parents. Some students are unclear about how to access bursary funds.
27. Students receiving additional learning support achieve very well; they grow in confidence and have good rates of progression. Students' additional needs are identified quickly and provided promptly. They achieve greater independence. Support for students with specific needs is excellent. Subject teachers are well informed about students' needs but they are not always executed in the delivery of lessons.
28. In September 2011, the college introduced a new pastoral system and appointed progress coaches to deliver group and one-to-one sessions. Progress coaches are well informed about the needs and aspirations of their students. They provide good support on personal issues and have good links with external agencies. Progress coaches have received training to fulfil their role but the quality of group sessions, and students' attendance at them, are inconsistent and sometimes poor. The college has not done enough to monitor this initiative or to provide sufficient support for progress coaches in facilitating group sessions. Progress coaches receive detailed information from subject tutors for one-to-one reviews but they do not always have a full picture of ongoing concerns.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

29. Strong leadership provided by the Principal has been instrumental in taking forward initiatives to improve standards. The strategic objectives backed by a comprehensive set of action plans provides a sharply focused agenda for improvement. The new structure clarifies management roles and responsibilities but the process is not yet complete. Performance management is robust. Staff at all levels have clear targets. Curriculum management is good. A new management information system enables managers to monitor key performance indicators more effectively. Staff development is good and they are positive about recent changes.
30. Governance is good. Governors are experienced with an appropriate range of skills. Student governors are supported well to contribute to and enrich governors' meetings. Governors hold the college to account well and are aware of the impact of actions to improve weaker subjects. Governors' self-assessment is not sufficiently rigorous to identify areas where governance could improve.
31. The promotion of safeguarding is good. Policies and procedures are thorough and there is a comprehensive single central record. Students say that there is always someone to talk to if they have an issue and are confident that they would be dealt with swiftly. All staff complete relevant safeguarding training which is monitored closely and updated regularly. Directors have completed higher-level training to support the designated senior officer. The college has

extensive and well-developed links with relevant external agencies. Support for the most vulnerable students is particularly effective. Risk management procedures are robust and safe working practices are promoted.

32. Good actions are taken to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues. A well-planned diversity week promotes respect very well. Students treat each other, staff and visitors with exemplary courtesy. Managers use data well to monitor the performance of different groups and overall there are no significant differences. While the college meets its statutory requirements, insufficient attention has been given to ensure that the equality and diversity policy framework is reviewed in a timely manner and that appropriate impact assessments are in place. Staff discuss equality and diversity at team meetings and they receive regular updates on key developments. The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons is mostly satisfactory with pockets of good practice.
33. Arrangements for consulting students, and acting upon their views, are satisfactory. The college encourages students to be involved in many aspects of college life, including the staff selection process. A student council arranges social events and meets monthly with the Principal to raise concerns. Many students feel that there are good opportunities to voice their opinions and they are confident of receiving a response. However, not all subjects have effective student representatives and some students feel that they are not heard sufficiently clearly. A strategy to improve students' participation in college decision making has been developed this year but it has not yet been implemented fully.
34. Quality improvement arrangements are good. Quality assurance processes are well established and now monitor progress against targets more closely. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. The grades in the self-assessment report are broadly accurate but it does not clearly articulate the college's overall strengths and areas for improvement. The evidence to support the impact of actions is not sufficiently detailed. Managers monitor underperforming subjects carefully and actions are mostly effective. Data are accurate but are not yet used to their full potential to raise standards. Curriculum self-assessment reports vary in quality. The detailed action plans are more effective, reviewed regularly and enable course teams to improve the quality of provision. In some cases it is difficult to link the action plan to the self-assessment report.
35. Value for money is good. Financial management and control are good. Effective actions have been taken to respond to cuts in income. Success rates are high and students make good progress. The college has an appropriate accommodation strategy following the loss of funding for a major capital programme. Students are active in developing the college's sustainability agenda.

Humanities

Grade 2

Context

36. Around 720 students study AS- and A-level archaeology, ancient history, classical civilisation, geography, geology, government and politics, history, philosophy and religious studies. At foundation and GCSE level, 21 students are enrolled on ancient Greek and 54 study Latin as enrichment courses.

Key findings

- Success rates on most courses are at or above the high national averages. The proportion of students achieving high grades is very high on most A-level courses and on AS history. In 2011, the numbers achieving high grades in A-level politics and AS ancient history declined and are well-below national averages. The college no longer offers AS critical thinking in which achievement was weak in 2011.
- Most students make good progress and achieve grades at or above those predicted by their GCSE results. Students on A-level archaeology, geography, geology and philosophy and those studying AS classical civilisation and geology make very good progress. However, too many students on A-level ancient history, classical civilisation and on A- and AS-level religious studies attained grades lower than their target grades. Attendance is satisfactory. Progression to higher education and employment is very good.
- The standard of students' work is mostly good. Students demonstrate good skills when using documentary and statistical sources to construct coherent and balanced answers to challenging questions and problems. Students apply complex concepts and theories confidently and participate enthusiastically in class discussions. The dialogue is frequently stimulating and creative which enhances students' understanding and knowledge.
- Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are planned well with a stimulating range of student-centred learning activities, including the use of information and learning technology (ILT), that engage and motivate students. Carefully constructed tasks develop students' independent research and analytical skills. In the best lessons teachers employ sophisticated and effective questions, appropriately targeted to individuals to challenge more-able students while encouraging those who are less confident to contribute.
- In a minority of lessons teachers are overly prescriptive and fail to develop students' independent learning skills. Assessment is not used well enough to check the progress of all students in the class. Teachers accept partial or weak answers from students and these are not then developed. In these lessons students are passive and the pace of learning is slow. Students receive effective written and verbal feedback with clear and supportive guidance that enables them to improve.

- The provision includes a very wide choice of complementary subjects. Enrichment courses in foundation level and GCSE Latin and ancient Greek extend students' interests. An extensive range of interesting and relevant extra-curricular activities includes archaeological digs, voluntary work in museums, working with politicians and project work in the community. These provide very good opportunities for many students to develop their practical and professional skills. Subjects offer a varied programme of field trips, visits, conferences, and guest speakers that enhance students' learning and enjoyment.
- Students value the very high levels of support they receive from their teachers in and outside lessons. Initial guidance is good and has contributed to improved and high retention rates. Students requiring additional support are given highly effective guidance that enables them to become more independent and they progress very well.
- Safeguarding is promoted effectively. Students feel safe. They receive, for instance, advice and guidance on adopting safe practices when accessing websites to undertake research or when working on projects outside college.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well. Subjects cover a variety of topics on tackling prejudice and promoting tolerance. Discrimination and equality are debated sensitively. The history department's Holocaust Awareness Group promotes tolerance and understanding across the college and the local community.
- Curriculum management is good. Teams work well together to provide a high quality experience for students. Self-assessment is broadly accurate but in too many reports there is insufficient rigour in the use of data and students' opinions are not always used effectively. Action plans are focused correctly but they are not always precise enough or targeted to be completed within an agreed timescale. There are many signs that recent initiatives are having a positive impact on the quality of lessons and improving students' achievements.

What does King George V College need to do to improve further?

- Share good practice in delivering lessons so that all teachers take a less central role, that they individualise their questioning and plan activities to ensure that all students develop their full potential.
- Improve the consistency of self-assessment reports so that they are based on an evaluative use of data and students' opinions to drive forward standards to the very best.

Social Sciences

Grade 2

Context

37. The college provides AS- and A-level courses in psychology, sociology, law and citizenship for 772 students; around half study psychology. A further 60 students study the BTEC extended national diploma in health and social care; 11 of these are NHS cadets. All students are aged 16 to 18 and three quarters are female.

Key findings

- Success rates in 2010/11 were at or above the national averages in all subjects except citizenship which is offered as an additional qualification to all students. Success rates on A-level sociology and psychology, AS-level law and BTEC health and social care are very high. Students' progress in A-level psychology is outstanding but it is weak in citizenship.
- Students make good progress in their lessons. They know their target grades and have a clear understanding of what they need to do to achieve them. Students are attentive and participate enthusiastically in their lessons and in the variety of trips that complements their studies.
- Students develop relevant knowledge and skills. They are clear about what they need to do to realise their ambitions either in higher education or employment. BTEC students develop good practical skills through a wide variety of work experience placements. Many gain paid part-time employment from their course placements.
- Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned with resources and activities which consistently enthuse and motivate students. The best lessons are very creative; students are inspired and apply new knowledge confidently. Teachers and students work particularly well together to stimulate wider interest in the subjects and develop a good understanding of more complex topics. For example, sociology students devised short dramas, games, animations and artefacts to consolidate their learning on education and social class.
- Teachers and students use information and learning technology (ILT) effectively and there is a wide range of interactive resources to support learning. Technology is used extensively outside lessons to provide resources and materials. Material on the VLE is particularly good in sociology.
- Assessment is good. Students carry out peer- and self-assessment activities regularly and develop their reflective practice skills. They are clear about their strengths and weaknesses and this helps them to improve the standard of their work. Students are regularly assessed in lessons using appropriate teacher questioning and exercises. Homework and assignments are set regularly and marked promptly, with clear and constructive teacher feedback.

- Many lessons are characterised by lively discussions where students are sensitive and respect each other's view. Students' awareness of diversity in society is not emphasised sufficiently and is limited. For example, students researching aspects of sexual attraction did not question the assumption by the researchers that sexual attraction is always to members of the opposite sex. Similarly, sociology students demonstrated a good understanding of social class differences in language without recognising ethnic diversity.
- The range of courses is wide with a mix of academic and vocational options. Teachers support students well in progressing to higher education or gaining employment. They sensitively encourage students going into employment to continue with higher level qualifications through part-time studies or work-based programmes. For example, the college has recently developed the NHS cadet scheme in partnership with the local NHS trust.
- Academic and personal support are outstanding. Teachers know their students very well. Students' additional learning support needs are quickly identified and support put in place without delay. Specific support for students in lessons is exceptional including posting material in advance on the VLE or through email, using coloured paper and supplying laptops.
- Leadership and management are good. Teachers welcome the clarity of the new structure and the increased emphasis by senior managers on professional development to improve the quality of lessons.
- Procedures to monitor actions to improve the quality of provision are effective. Teachers share good practice regularly, but much of this is informal. The self-assessment reports are long and very detailed. They are not sufficiently evaluative to articulate the key strengths of subject areas clearly, nor do they detail precisely what needs to improve to become outstanding.

What does King George V College need to do to improve further?

- Improve the commitment of students studying AS citizenship and ensure that they attend lessons regularly to improve success rates.
- Promote equality and diversity in lessons by emphasising the diversity of contemporary Britain and encouraging students to explore the impact of this diversity as they apply their knowledge to current issues.
- Improve the rigour and quality of the self-assessment reports so that they provide a more succinct evaluation of the strengths and areas for improvement in each department to drive forward improvements at a faster and more consistent pace.

English and modern foreign languages

Grade 2

Context

38. Currently 609 students are enrolled on English and modern foreign languages courses. Courses are offered in AS- and A-level English language, English language and literature, English literature, French, German and Spanish, along with GCSE English. Five students study the International Baccalaureate.

Key findings

- Success rates are consistently high on most courses except AS English literature and German. The proportion of students achieving high grades in AS- and A-level subjects fluctuates significantly from high to low. Most students make at least good progress. However, in 2010/11 value added was poor in AS and A-level English literature, French and Spanish. In GCSE English, the proportion of students achieving A* to C grades is good. Attendance is good on advanced-level courses but satisfactory in GCSE English.
- Most lessons are planned well with a strong focus on student-centred activities. Teachers are enthusiastic and use their expertise effectively to present a wide variety of stimulating tasks that engage students and provide challenge for different abilities. Discussions about health-related issues enable students to make more informed choices. Effective and sensitive questioning elicits high level responses from students.
- Lessons in modern foreign language are taught in the native language to promote students' fluency. English students are given considerable flexibility in coursework topics so that individuals develop their own interests and become independent learners. Students are challenged to investigate the different ways language can be used to represent different aspects of everyday life.
- Assessment is good. Teachers' detailed and constructive marking gives clear and specific guidance to students on how to improve their work. However, this has not yet led to consistently good progress. Peer- and self-assessment are used well to consolidate learning. For example, in Spanish quick-fire peer questioning maintains students' concentration effectively and assesses their vocabulary learning quickly.
- A wide variety of courses enables students to specialise or combine subjects to meet their needs and interests. All students who have not achieved a grade C in GCSE English at school are expected to retake the qualification and this widens their future choices successfully. English courses for the very small number of students for whom English is an additional language improve their performance in their other subjects.
- Enrichment is very good. A literature reading group, a language analysis group, a creative writing group and a variety of theatre trips all contribute to developing students' skills. English students produce and edit the college's online magazine and they gain a valuable insight into journalism. Many language students develop in confidence and fluency on the foreign exchange

programme and have a renewed motivation to succeed. English language students contribute to the British Library's nationwide language research project.

- Resources are good. Teaching rooms are spacious and attractive displays enhance the learning environment. High-quality teaching resources promote learning. English students email drafts of their work for teacher guidance. Language students use computers to work at their own pace to improve their listening and language skills. However, the use of ILT to support learning is not fully developed.
- Guidance and support for learners are outstanding. Pre-enrolment activities ensure that students are enrolled on the most appropriate course. Students are expected to complete summer reading to help them understand the demands of advanced-level work. Teachers give good individual guidance on higher education choices.
- Students benefit from frequent and detailed one-to-one reviews. They are encouraged to be ambitious. Flexible workshops and revision sessions enable students to redraft work or resit exams to improve their grades. Students value the extra support offered by teachers outside lessons and during holidays. Awards for excellence motivate students. Language teachers adapt lessons and support sessions in response to students' feedback. Individual foreign language conversation lessons build students' confidence and fluency.
- Promotion of equality and diversity is good. Texts and topics are chosen carefully to enable students to consider relevant issues such as racial stereotyping. English GCSE students celebrate cultural diversity through their study of short stories from other cultures. Modern language students consider gender representation in film, and English language students challenge gender stereotyping.
- Curriculum management is satisfactory. Staff work together well and there is much informal sharing of good practice. Course delivery is reviewed regularly to enhance students' experience and improve achievement. However, the self-assessment reports are not sufficiently rigorous in the formal analysis of data. The improvement plans are not specific enough to enable interim monitoring to maximise student achievement effectively. It is too soon to judge the impact of new initiatives.

What does King George V College need to do to improve further?

- Develop learning resources and extension activities to stretch the more able students so that the proportion of students who achieve high grades is more consistent between subjects.
- Share good practice to develop a consistent approach in the use of ILT and student-centred activities so that all lessons are delivered to a very high standard that challenges students to achieve their full potential.
- Ensure that self-assessment processes are sufficiently rigorous so that actions to promote improvement are specific and that these are monitored and evaluated effectively.

Business

Grade 2

Context

39. Around 300 students take AS and A levels in business studies, economics and accounting. A further 80 students study an advanced BTEC diploma and nine are enrolled on the intermediate diploma. Approximately 230 students study a certificate in financial studies as an additional enrichment qualification.

Key findings

- Success rates are high but just below the national average on A-level business studies, economics and the certificate in financial studies. The proportion of high grades on AS- and A-level business studies is very high but is low on A-level accounts. Almost all students achieve high grades on BTEC vocational courses. Attendance is poor on the certificate in financial studies and satisfactory on other courses.
- Staff have high expectations of their students. Students make very good progress against their starting points on AS courses and satisfactory progress on A levels. Progress in lessons is good and students produce work of a high standard. They demonstrate effective analytical skills and readily apply theoretical concepts. For example, students confidently researched and discussed cost-benefit analysis based on a case study of a local planned road development.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Teachers enforce the wearing of identification badges rigorously. Internet safety is covered well during induction but is not reinforced sufficiently in course delivery.
- Teaching and learning are good. Most lessons are structured well and teachers use a wide range of activities to engage students in collaborative work. In a business studies lesson students were able to apply theories of motivation to methods of production with confidence. Most teachers use probing questions to check learning and to help students to develop a deeper understanding.
- In weaker lessons teachers do not use initial assessment well enough to plan activities to meet the needs of all students and some do not participate in group activities. Technology, such as the use of the interactive whiteboard for game-based learning, is used well in a few lessons but in others it is less effective when used solely to present information.
- Students on both academic and vocational courses are supported well to progress to higher education. A careers day provides an outstanding experience for students to prepare for employment. A few students benefit from paid internships with local businesses which develop their employability skills. However, work experience for A-level students is underdeveloped.
- The range of courses is good. Subject-specific advice and guidance ensure that students are enrolled on the right course. An extensive range of opportunities enhances students' understanding of the business sector such as trips to

businesses in London and New York. The certificate in financial studies, completed by students from across college, enables them to develop their knowledge of money management and the financial sector successfully.

- Academic and additional learning support are very effective. Students' additional learning needs are identified early and support is prompt. Students develop their independent learning skills through carefully constructed research assignments. Teachers provide extensive additional subject-specific support in workshops and one-to-one sessions which enable students to achieve, and in many cases, to exceed their target grades.
- Curriculum management is good. Communications are effective and good practice is shared at team meetings and cross-college events. Teachers review students' progress against their target grades regularly. Students' views and feedback from schools are used to identify and implement improvements. However, students are not always clear about how to get involved or sufficiently aware of the actions taken as a result of their feedback.
- Equality and diversity are embedded in the curriculum; they are promoted well using relevant case studies. The performance of different groups of students is analysed and successful action taken to narrow the achievement gaps between males and females.
- Self-assessment is accurate and informed by performance data. However, the report is too descriptive and lacks precise focus. Areas for improvement are not always included in the action plan and the targets are not specific enough to enable the staff to monitor the impact of actions closely. Actions for improvement are having an impact on outcomes for students.

What does King George V College need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers use initial assessment more consistently to plan and deliver lessons so that all students participate in activities to develop their depth of understanding.
- Develop more interactive learning resources and extend the use of the VLE to enhance and support learning in and out of lessons.
- Ensure the subject self-assessment report clearly identifies areas for improvement and that targets are specific and monitored regularly in order to improve success rates on A-level business studies and economics and on the certificate in financial studies.

Information about the inspection

40. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the college's Vice-Principal acting as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the Young People's Learning Agency, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on students and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
41. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, and looked at questionnaires students had recently completed for the college. They observed lessons, assessments and student progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

<p>Record of Main Findings (RMF)</p> <p>name of provider/college</p> <p>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</p>
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Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-18 Learner responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners		
Full-time learners	1,475	1,475
Part-time learners	22	22
Overall effectiveness	2	2
Capacity to improve	2	
Outcomes for learners	2	2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2	
How well do learners progress?	2	
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2	
How safe do learners feel?	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	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?	1	
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	2	2
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2	
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?</i>	2	
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2	
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3	
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3	
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	2	
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2	

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