

# Derby College

## Inspection report

---

**Unique reference number:** 133585

**Name of lead inspector:** Deborah Vaughan-Jenkins HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 30 March 2012

**Type of provider:** General Further Education College

**Address:** The Roundhouse  
Roundhouse Road  
Pride Park  
Derby  
D24 8JE

**Telephone number:** 0300 1237890

## Information about the provider

1. Derby College is a large general further education college (GFE). In March 2002, Broomfield College, Derby Tertiary College, Wilmorton and Mackworth College merged to form Derby College and in February 2010, South-East Derbyshire College merged with Derby College. The college has four main campuses located in and around Derby including, the Joseph Wright Centre, the Roundhouse, Ilkeston and Broomfield Hall. The college relocated from Prince Charles Avenue to the Roundhouse building in September 2009. Sport and motor vehicle provision moved to the Johnson building in June 2010 and construction provision was relocated to the Ilkeston campus in October 2010. The college also offers provision at community venues and employers' premises.
2. The college's core business is vocational education with the majority of its further education provision funded by the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA). The college offers provision in all 15 subject areas and the majority of learner enrolments are on advanced level. The largest number of enrolments across the college is in preparation for life and work, retail and commercial enterprises, health, public services and care, and business administration and law. The college also provides a range of programmes for learners aged 14 to 16.
3. Around 75% of the college's learners are from Derby and Derbyshire. Most of the remainder are from neighbouring local authorities in the East and West Midlands. In 2010/11, the proportion of school leavers with five or more GCSEs including English and mathematics at grades A\* to C in Derby was 55%, which is in line with the national average. Around 25% of learners are from a minority ethnic background, which represents a higher proportion than that of the local population.
4. The college's mission is to "release potential and achieve outstanding success."
5. The college provides training on behalf of the following providers:
  - ROLLS-ROYCE PLC
  - Construction Skills (CITB)
  - Royal School for the Deaf
  - Retail Motor Industry Training Limited
6. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the college:
  - ROLLS-ROYCE PLC
  - White Rose School of Beauty
  - Real Time Training
  - Creating Careers Ltd

- Training Strategies
- NCC Skills Ltd
- TR Training

<b>Type of provision</b>	<b>Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11</b>
<b>Provision for young learners:</b> 14 to 16  Further education (16 to 18)  Foundation learning, including  Entry to Employment	829 learners  4,125 full-time learners 757 part-time learners  823 full-time learners  30 part-time learners
<b>Provision for adult learners:</b> Further education (19+)	895 full-time learners 5,196 part-time learners
<b>Employer provision:</b> Train to Gain Apprenticeships	9,042 learners 1,625 apprentices

## Summary report

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of provision</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>
---	----------------

<b>Capacity to improve</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>
----------------------------	----------------

	<b>Grade</b>
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	3

<b>Subject Areas</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Construction	3
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	2
Sport, leisure and recreation	3
Creative and performing arts	3
Literacy and numeracy	2

## Overall effectiveness

7. Derby College is a satisfactory and improving college with good and improving employer responsive provision. Leadership and management are good and have enabled several significant changes to take place within this very large college over the last two academic years. Firstly, the college relocated on of its sites, in its entirety, to a new city centre location. This move was completed smoothly and has brought tremendous benefits for learners, including the creation of high quality and impressive learning environments that ensure learners at all campuses feel very safe and enjoy their studies. Secondly, the principal and senior managers ensured a successful merger with a local college which had several inadequate aspects. Following the merger, managers oversaw the successful reinspection of these inadequate areas and have been swift to strengthen quality systems further. As a result, most aspects of provision are now improving, although some much more rapidly than others.

8. In 2010/11, the majority of learners successfully achieved their primary qualifications although trends in performance are uneven for college-based provision with some groups, such as A-level learners, not making as much progress as they should. College data suggest more marked improvements for current learners and this judgement is supported by the high standards of learners' practical work observed by inspectors. Learners develop good levels of confidence and proficiency in team working; those studying vocational subjects demonstrate good specialist skills to support their future career choices. The college's very well-established and highly effective strategic partnership working across Derby has enabled it to shape an extensive and flexible curriculum and grow its work-based training significantly to meet employer needs. While the majority of lessons are good, a significant minority do not yet provide sufficient challenge or extension activity to enable all learners to maximise their progress.

## Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. In 2010/11, success rates were slightly below the national average. A contributory factor was low retention rates following the merger with South-East Derbyshire College. Current college data show that a higher number of learners are likely to complete their programmes for 2011/12, particularly learners aged 16 to 18 on AS level courses and adult learners on intermediate level programmes.
- Learners make progress in line with expectations, although they make better progress on vocationally-related courses than on academic programmes. The proportion of learners gaining the highest grades on advanced vocational qualifications is improving rapidly. However, this is not replicated for academic subjects where few learners achieve high grades.
- Outcomes for learners following employer responsive programmes are improving strongly with an increasing number of learners completing their qualification within the allocated time. The development of learners' employability skills is particularly good and supports learners' future economic well-being. The standard of learners' practical work across subjects is in many cases is high.
- The college considers the performance of different groups of learners although its analysis and reporting of performance through self-assessment is not comprehensive. Not all trends in performance, for example for ethnicity or learning difficulty and/or disability, are identified in enough detail to inform specific action.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are most effective when teachers plan their work to take into account the skills which learners already have; this helps learners to feel involved fully in their learning and to make good progress. In a significant minority lessons teachers do not provide a sufficient variety of learning activities to meet learners' individual needs and progress is, therefore, much slower.
- Teachers do not provide sufficient support for developing learners' literacy and numeracy outside of functional skills lessons. Guidelines to help teachers

understand the extent to which they should correct spelling and grammar are unclear, and as a result, standards between subjects vary widely and learners are not always clear what is expected of them.

- Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Learners' work is marked fairly and the majority of teachers who are based in the college provide sufficient information on completed assignments to help learners improve. Sometimes learners in the workplace make slower progress than they should because assessment is not always comprehensive or focused enough to meet their needs.
- The college's good range of programmes meets the needs of learners and employers well. Programmes are aligned closely to local and regional employment and to opportunities for further study. Provision for unemployed adults results in good job outcomes. Enrichment within the curriculum is wide-ranging and sessions are well attended.
- The college's good partnership work improves learners' opportunities and maintains the college's strong commitment to local economic development. The college is represented well on strategic groups within the city and across Derbyshire. It works closely with schools and voluntary organisations to meet the needs of the community. Links with employers are used effectively to inform and enrich the curriculum.
- Strong leadership and good management have secured improvement in the college's reputation, accommodation and resources, and success rates in employment-based provision through a period of change. Initiatives to increase success rates for college-based learners have been less effective until the current year, when retention rates are much improved.
- Most quality assurance arrangements are now strong but they are not always fully and consistently implemented. A considerable number of much-needed actions for improvement have taken place and are proving effective with a marked improvement in learners' retention in the current year. Teaching is improving but is not yet consistently good.
- Governance is well established. Governors mostly support the college effectively but their scrutiny of learners' performance is not always detailed enough to enable them to get a comprehensive view of the performance of all groups of learners over time.
- Safeguarding arrangements are robust with considerable expertise in key staff. Health and safety is promoted very thoroughly. Equality is central to the colleges' work but several aspects are not yet well developed such as promotion through workplace progress reviews and the analysis of the performance of different groups.

### **What does Derby College need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that managers monitor rigorously current learners' progress towards completing assessments and course work, and take prompt action to ensure that learners are on track to complete and pass their courses successfully.

- Raise the profile of underperforming groups within the college's monitoring procedures by analysing their performance more sharply and taking action to narrow any gaps in achievement.
- Reinforce actions for improvement in GCE A and AS level provision by having higher expectations of learners' progress in lessons, particularly the most able, and scrutinising more thoroughly the progress they make in relation to their target grades.
- Help all learners to make good progress in lessons by using information about their prior attainment consistently to inform planning, matching learning activities accurately to learners' interests and abilities and by providing clear guidelines for staff to assist them in supporting learners' literacy and numeracy development more effectively.
- Provide apprentices with a comprehensive review of their progress by better checking and recording of the effectiveness of support arrangements, more thorough checking of their knowledge of equality and diversity, and by setting clearer short-term targets to promote speedier progression for all learners.
- Increase governors' scrutiny of learners' success rates by ensuring they receive and consider detailed summaries of success rates for all learners including for long courses and compared to national averages.
- Develop managers' skills in the analysis and interpretation of data including strengthening the approach used for identifying and analysing achievement gaps, ensuring full analysis of progression and destination data and strengthening managers' understanding of value-added data.
- Embed quality assurance arrangements and support managers at all levels to use the outcomes of quality assurance to prioritise reducing further the unevenness between subjects and to take the development of the quality of teaching and learning forward at a faster pace.

### **Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors**

#### **What learners like:**

- the safe and welcoming college environment
- the helpful teachers
- the good quality accommodation and resources
- the way that courses are matched to industry requirements
- the range of additional qualifications and enrichment activities
- good teaching in practical lessons.

#### **What learners would like to see improved:**

- the availability and reliability of computers
- the price and quality of food in the refectory
- the guidance on progression to further training and employment

- the quality of teaching in some lessons.

### **Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors**

#### **What employers like:**

- the strong partnership between the college and employers helping to ensure that the training needs of staff are met
- the ability to raise concerns and know they will be addressed
- the professional, helpful and very approachable assessors
- programmes that meet their needs well
- the positive and flexible response to requests for support
- the quality of advice and guidance for learners
- the flexible and responsive provision.

#### **What employers would like to see improved:**

- the occasional delay in completing programmes and receiving certificates
- more detailed feedback about learners' progress and quality of their work in a few areas.



## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

**Grade 2**

9. Through a period of considerable change including overseeing a move and a merger, the college's reputation, scope and position have strengthened considerably. Actions for improvement identified from previous inspections have largely been successfully completed. High quality accommodation is in place across most provision. Financial management is robust and ensures that further planned improvements can take place. Staff morale is high. The college's record of sustained improvement in learners' outcomes in employment-based provision is consistently positive but is uneven in college-based provision. Managers demonstrate the capability and commitment to bring about improvements rapidly and effectively as shown by the marked improvement, particularly in retention, in the current year.
10. The revised management structure is working very well. Increased accountability for ensuring learners' success is strongly evident at all levels of management and across staff teams. Areas for improvement are identified through accurate self assessment and actions taken are largely effective. The revisions to quality assurance arrangements are comprehensive and rigorous, in particular relating to the frequent and robust monitoring of learners' overall performance. However, the extent of the impact on reducing the variability in quality across the college's provision varies. Although there have been notable improvements to teaching and learning, provision has not yet improved enough to be consistently good in all areas.

### Outcomes for learners

**Grade 3**

11. In the year following the merger with South-East Derbyshire College, success rates improved, but remained below those of similar colleges because the retention rate was low; this was particularly the case for learners aged 16 to 18 and adults on intermediate level programmes. The college's data for current learners indicates that retention has improved, particularly for learners on AS/A-level courses, enabling the college to predict with some confidence that success rates will improve in 2011/12. However, improvements in performance have been more marked in some areas than others.
12. Outcomes for apprentices have improved considerably from a low baseline and are now at or just above the national average; an increasing number of learners complete their qualification within the agreed time. The proportion of learners who successfully complete their Train to Gain programmes in a timely manner is just above the national average and has been consistently very high in around half of all subject areas.
13. Most learners make progress in line with expectations. In some subject areas, such as hairdressing and beauty therapy and in functional skills, learners make

good or better progress. In other areas including AS/A-level programmes, the progress learners make in comparison with their starting points is far less marked. The proportion of learners gaining the highest grades on advanced vocational qualifications is increasing rapidly and is now above the national average. However, high grade achievement in other subjects has declined and was low in 2010/11.

14. The college's self-assessment report highlights the performance of different learner groups but the detail and depth of this reporting is insufficient. The college correctly identified that females on many courses generally achieve slightly better than their male counterparts but it did not highlight clearly enough the widening gap in success rates for certain groups of adult learners including those of Asian Pakistani, Asian Indian, and Black Caribbean heritage. Success rates for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are uneven; they were high for those with moderate learning difficulties but below the college average for hearing impaired learners. Learners in receipt of additional learning support achieved better than their peers in 2010/11.
15. Learners develop good work-related skills and many produce high standards of practical work, particularly within vocational and work-based programmes. This is enhanced by the range of high quality commercial settings which often reinforce learners' understanding and appreciation of industry expectations. Many learners benefit from the wide range of opportunities available to engage in college events and community activities which help build their self-confidence. For example, at the time of the inspection, inspectors observed public services learners taking additional classes to prepare them for roles as stewards at the forthcoming Olympic Games.
16. Learners feel very safe around the college's campuses and they demonstrate a good understanding of safe working practices. The college provides a wide array of initiatives and activities to help develop and support learners' mental and physical health, many of which are often supported by the proactive student union.

## **The quality of provision**

## **Grade 3**

17. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The college has introduced a range of appropriate initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning and has appointed a team of well-qualified and enthusiastic staff to manage that improvement. The college's lesson observation procedures have been strengthened to ensure that judgements about the quality of individual lessons are more rigorous. During the inspection, inspectors agreed mostly with the judgements made by the college's own observers. However, the impact of recent actions to improve teaching and learning has been more marked in some areas than others, such as in discrete literacy and numeracy and creative and performing arts, so that the variability in the quality of teaching and learning, identified by the college in its own lesson observations, persists.

18. Teachers are enthusiastic and possess good professional experience which they use well to help learners acquire a well-informed view of current best professional practice. Relationships between staff and learners are good. Resources to support learning are very good throughout the college; equipment in vocational areas is of a good industry standard.
19. The majority of lessons are good but inspectors observed a significant minority which were satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers make good use of their knowledge of learners' starting points to plan lessons which are well suited to the needs of individual learners. This helps learners make good progress, particularly in the development of their practical vocational skills. However, in less effective lessons, planning is insufficiently detailed and does not always identify enough relevant learning activities to meet the needs of all learners. Consequently, learners make slower progress in these lessons.
20. In a minority of lessons, teachers provide good opportunities for learners to apply their literacy skills, for example through reinforcing the use of specialist terminology so that learners understand how to communicate clearly with other practitioners in their field. However, not all teachers pay sufficient attention to the development of learners' literacy in their planning with the result that there are insufficient opportunities for learners to practise using specialist vocabulary or improve their written English.
21. Teachers make satisfactory use of information and learning technologies to add interest to their lessons but sometimes they do not use all the available resources as creatively as they might. The college's virtual learning environment (VLE) is used very well in some subject areas to provide exciting additional work for learners and to stimulate their interest in research projects. However, practice is variable, and sometimes the VLE is used as a catalogue of text-based resources rather than to support learning.
22. The monitoring and assessment of learners' progress are satisfactory. The majority of teachers and trainers assess work accurately and provide sufficient guidance in their comments to help learners improve their work. In vocational settings, teachers and trainers monitor individual learners' progress closely but assessment is not always comprehensive enough to help all apprentices make swift progress.
23. The college provides a very wide range of provision, including progression opportunities in all subject areas, an extensive range of apprenticeship provision and employer-based training. Programmes are aligned well to local and regional employment needs and to opportunities for further study. Provision for unemployed adults, which is co-located with the city job centre, contributes to good employment rates. A good range of enrichment activities, including visits and trips, sports activities and charity events, provide learners with a broader understanding of their subject as well as good opportunities for personal and social development. Professional training environments such as

the commercial hair salons, motor vehicle garage, commercial restaurant and the college's gym are used well to prepare learners for employment and to showcase their skills. A high number of learners benefit from work experience and community-based projects.

24. Good partnership work improves learners' opportunities and maintains the college's strong commitment to social inclusion and economic development. The college is represented widely on strategic groups within the city and across Derbyshire, and works closely with schools, voluntary organisations and community groups to meet the needs of the community. It has developed good, well-established, partnerships with employers who speak very highly of the college's flexible and prompt response to their needs. Links with employers are used well to inform and enrich the curriculum.
25. The college recognised that historically learners were not always on the right level and has implemented significant improvements to the advice and guidance provided. Learners now receive accurate advice and guidance and are clear about the demands of their courses and the opportunities available on completion. Most learners' needs are analysed accurately and appropriate support arrangements are put in place. In a small minority of lessons, there is insufficient planning for learning support assistants to support learners with identified needs. Target setting for most full-time learners is effective but the milestones and support for some learners on apprenticeships is insufficiently monitored and/or recorded.
26. The college has implemented rigorous systems to monitor attendance and to provide clear and effective intervention for those learners at risk of not completing their courses. This results in timely and effective support for persistent non-attenders although the impact on overall attendance rates is not yet evident.

## **Leadership and management**

## **Grade 2**

27. The principal provides strong leadership, clear strategic direction and has been instrumental in placing the college at the centre of the local and regional community. The college is highly regarded by stakeholders and, in particular, by employers, both large and small. It fulfils its role in meeting employers' needs and thus supporting economic growth very well, as shown by its large volume of employment-based provision.
28. A new strategic plan was developed in 2011, following extensive and constructive consultation. It is aspirational and its five objectives are firmly embedded throughout business and curriculum planning. Roles and responsibilities within the new post-merger management structure are well defined, curriculum management is good and teams are working well together with a common purpose. In particular, managers' accountability for learners' performance is now strong. The new faculty structure enables good

communications and is promoting the sharing of best practice. Many management processes have been strengthened, standardised and are more coherent and rigorous than previously.

29. Self-assessment and quality improvement processes are good overall. Nevertheless, over the last three years, managers' work to raise standards has met with mixed success. In recognition of the need to bring about rapid improvement in success rates, there is now a much sharper focus on ensuring learners are successful. Good use of self-assessment to identify issues has resulted in a set of actions, most of which are being implemented successfully in the current year with firm signs of improvement. Challenging targets are in place across all aspects of provision; staff are clear about the importance of meeting targets and managers monitor performance regularly and closely. Retention rates, which have suppressed success rates in previous years, are substantially higher compared to a similar point in the previous year. Nearly all quality assurance arrangements have been strengthened. However, their effectiveness in reducing all inconsistencies in quality across subjects is variable. Data are used widely but the analysis and interpretation of progression, destination and value added data are underdeveloped.
30. Governors support the college well and ensure that legislative requirements are met. They are forward thinking in their approach and monitor the quality of learners' experience well. However, their scrutiny of learners' outcomes is not always comprehensive enough.
31. Safeguarding is given high priority and the arrangements are good. A large team of safeguarding officers work across all sites and is led by experienced designated senior safeguarding officers. All staff receive appropriate and regular training, which often covers a wide range of topics over and above the minimum requirement, such as in the prevention of extremist or gang activity. Site security is maintained at a high level through the use of secure access to sites and highly visible security guards. The arrangements for undertaking vetting checks on all staff are thorough and comprehensive. Health and safety are promoted well across subjects; for example, learners are often directly involved in activities such as undertaking risk assessments.
32. Recent revisions to the college's broad curriculum ensure it is inclusive, flexible and promotes equality of access. Staff receive effective training on equality and diversity but their expertise in promoting wider equality themes through the curriculum varies too much. In particular, promotion in apprenticeship programmes through progress reviews is often too superficial to develop and contextualise learners' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity topics. Although attention is paid to the success of different groups of learners, the analysis is insufficiently rigorous to ensure that all gaps are identified and that subsequent actions are specific enough to ensure full success. Good initiatives include the use of role models from minority ethnic groups to support achievement and the broadening of the hairdressing curriculum to include a wider range of styles to reflect cultural diversity.

33. Extensive effort is made to gather the views of learners and employers. Engagement with employers is high including through monthly meetings with larger employers. Their views are used well to plan and develop the curriculum and most are highly satisfied with the service they receive. Learners contribute well to college life and are involved in various improvement groups; their views are used constructively and widely in self-assessment. In contrast, opportunities are not maximised to use external stakeholders as critical friends to support the quality assurance of provision.
34. The management of staff and resources is good. Staff are deployed efficiently across the college. The provision and maintenance of an excellent learning environment is given high priority across the college; three of the four main sites have accommodation of a very high standard and the Ilkeston site has been considerably improved with plans for further significant development. Financial management is very good.

## Subject areas

### Construction

### Grade 3

#### Context

35. The college offers a range of full and part-time courses, apprenticeships and NVQ only programmes from entry to advanced level and include all the major crafts and professional construction programmes. Of the 426 college-based learners, 80% are aged 16 to 18 and 5% are female. A further 200 school-based learners are aged 14 to 16. Within construction, 26% of learners are studying at foundation, 51% at intermediate and 23% at advanced level. A total of 199 learners are following apprenticeship programmes, with a further 94 learners on NVQ only programmes.

#### Key findings

- Outcomes are satisfactory. Success rates are low at intermediate level and on foundation level construction craft programmes. Retention rates have traditionally been low at all levels but the college's in-year data indicates significant improvement. Framework success rates for intermediate apprentices in plumbing are high and improving. A high proportion of learners following NVQ programmes complete their programmes within the agreed time.
- The standard of learners' practical work is good both in the college workshops and the workplace, and often exceeds the course requirements. Learners take considerable pride in their work and demonstrate increased levels of confidence in practical activities. Portfolio and written work are satisfactory. Learners interact very effectively with their colleagues and college staff, and communicate well with customers and clients.
- Learners feel very safe. A strong focus on the development of safe working practices is evident in college workshops and in the workplace. All college workshops have stringent requirements in line with industry best practice. Learners speak with confidence about safety and feel able to challenge unsafe practices.
- Learners' involvement in community-based projects is good. These significantly enhance the learning experiences for learners, with construction diploma learners developing good project management skills and learners from all trades enhancing their practical skills in real life environments. Projects include listed buildings, sports pavilions and a national televised 'do it yourself' (DIY) project. Learners also develop a good awareness of construction sustainability issues.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Practical sessions are well organised and enable learners to progressively develop their practical competence. Learners develop useful employability skills under guidance from knowledgeable and experienced tutors. In one session, a learner demonstrated very competently

the manufacture of an ornate ceiling rose. In a minority of lessons, teaching strategies are limited and learners' progress is not maximised.

- Theory teaching is often less effective. A limited range of teaching strategies are used to enthuse and engage learners. Too little use is made of directed questioning to ensure that all learners' knowledge and understanding is explored. The pace of sessions is often governed by the pace of the slowest and there are insufficient opportunities to extend learning for the more able.
- Assessment in the workplace is thorough and supportive. Learners are well prepared for assessment. Assessors are unobtrusive, yet use questioning frequently to evidence learners' understanding. Learners receive clear, detailed and constructive verbal feedback on their performance. Feedback on learners' written work is less well developed; it is often cursory with insufficient attention paid to correcting grammar and spelling.
- Progress reviews are ineffective. Reviews lack sufficiently detailed information on learners' progress and well-focused targets to guide future learning and evidence gathering. Limited and repetitive questioning fails to develop learners' understanding of health and safety further or adequately promote equality and diversity in a workplace context.
- Programmes meet the needs of users very well. A wide range of programmes and levels enable learners to progress from school link programmes and foundation level through to advanced level and on to sustained employment and/or further education. Employer provision is flexible and well matched to the needs of the diverse range of employers in the community.
- Partnership working is good and impacts positively on the learner experience. The college has formed effective partnerships with 23 local schools including the Royal School for the Deaf. Learners with profound hearing impairment are well supported with dedicated signers and support workers. Workplace assessors form very effective working relationships with employers who value the contribution that the training adds to their business.
- Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed managers have successfully built a construction team that has high expectations for learner performance. The team uses data efficiently and successfully to review performance and improve learner retention. Staff teams work well together. Equality and diversity are promoted satisfactorily throughout learners' programmes of study, including within lessons.
- The self-assessment report is a comprehensive document that correctly identifies the main features of the provision, with the exception of the ineffective progress reviews for work-based learners. Staff contribute to the self-assessment report but the college recognises that a few staff are less familiar with the operational aspects of the resulting quality improvement plan.

### **What does Derby College need to do to improve further?**

- Improve learner success rates on intermediate craft courses and foundation level construction craft programmes through careful advice, guidance and the monitoring of learners' progress. In addition, ensure that feedback on learners'



written work is comprehensive and highlights literacy and numeracy issues, where appropriate, so that learners are clear about what they need to do to succeed.

- Improve teaching and learning, particularly in theory sessions, through the use of a wider variety of strategies that better cater for the different needs of learners. Ensure all teachers use focused questioning techniques and extension tasks to help extend learning, particularly for the more able.
- Strengthen the procedure for progress reviews by using more detailed information about learners' progress to set challenging short-term targets that encourage learners to make good and better progress in all aspects of their programme.
- Increase learners' understanding of equality and diversity in the context of the construction workplace by ensuring that both progress reviews and teaching sessions are planned carefully to promote and contextualise equality and diversity with learners.

## Hairdressing and beauty therapy

## Grade 2

### Context

36. The college offers full- and part-time courses from foundation to advanced level in beauty therapy and in hairdressing. Approximately 51% of enrolments are in beauty therapy and 49% are in hairdressing. Of the 785 learners following courses in this area, 419 are aged 16 to 18, 366 are adult learners and 96 are aged 14 to 16. 125 learners are on part-time programmes and 123 learners are apprentices. Around 4% of learners are male.

### Key findings

- Outcomes are good overall although success rates vary between levels. Success rates for advanced level courses remain high. Pass rates are consistently high on most courses and college in-year data show that the significant improvement in retention in 2010/11 has been maintained in the current year. Outcomes within work-based learning are broadly average.
- The development of learners' personal and employability skills is good. Professional practice and standards of customer care are promoted well. Learners benefit significantly from the good opportunities to experience commercial salon pressures and they are encouraged to aim high in their training. During inspection, attendance in a few lessons, particularly work-based learning, was low.
- Learners feel very safe. Health and safety are integrated seamlessly into lessons and learners have a good understanding how to ensure they protect themselves and clients. The importance of health and well-being are also promoted effectively so learners are informed clearly about what they need to do to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- Learners contribute effectively to the community through fundraising events and links to charities. For example, learners have delivered talks in school about hair and skin care to groups of vulnerable adults. Sustainability is promoted well through a range of recycling initiatives.
- Teaching and learning are good. Learners set their own challenging targets, make good use of time and evaluate their finished work. In better lessons, there is a focus on precision and creativity. Theory lessons progress at a brisk pace and effectively help to develop learners' analytical skills. Questioning is mostly effective, although it is not always challenging enough for the more able learners.
- Progress reviews are satisfactory. Reviews take place regularly but the quality of individual target setting is often weak and does not support apprentices or employers in measuring their progress through the apprenticeship framework. Most assessment sessions are thorough and learners benefit from constructive feedback. In a few lessons, learners spend too much time completing repetitive assessment-related documentation.

- The range of provision is good and responsive to local needs, with programmes ranging from foundation to advanced level. Programmes delivered in the workplace are planned flexibly to match employers' and learners' work patterns. Learners benefit from a wide range of additional qualifications and enrichment opportunities. Additional enterprise qualifications contribute to the development of good personal, social and business skills.
- Partnership work is strong. High quality professional salons provide very effective working environments for learners to develop their skills. Effective links with schools provide good vocational training for disengaged young people. Well-attended employer events are held, including seminars, that provide local salons with opportunities to observe new skills.
- Care guidance and support are good. Recent remodelling of the curriculum and initial advice and guidance has ensured that learners are placed on the right level and programme to suit their needs. Initial assessments and tests for dexterity are used effectively to identify and inform additional support needs.
- Leadership and management are good. Specialist resources and staffing are managed well. Staff monitor learners' progress closely. Strategies to retain learners have resulted in a sustained increase in retention rates on courses that had previously underperformed. Staff are commercially qualified and regularly update their skills.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory although teachers often miss opportunities to highlight and reinforce equalities themes in lessons and in work-based progress reviews.
- Accommodation and resources are outstanding and reflect high industry standards. Practical learning booklets are of a good quality, although documentation relating to learners' target setting is often burdensome. Access to information learning technologies is good and well used in lessons. Staff views and course reviews feed into a detailed self-assessment report which presents a largely accurate picture.

### **What does Derby College need to do to improve further?**

- Raise the level of challenge in a minority of lessons by increasing teachers' use of directed questioning to check learners' understanding, particularly but not exclusively, for more able learners.
- Ensure progress reviews for work-based learners are effective by setting more specific targets, including for attendance, reviewing progress against these targets, and providing more detailed verbal and written progress reports to apprentices and employers.
- Increase the amount of time spent on teaching and learning by reducing the duplication in completing assessment-related documentation in lesson time.
- Explore a greater range of equality and diversity scenarios in reviews and in lessons to extend and deepen learners' understanding of equality and diversity issues related to clients' needs.

## Sport, leisure and recreation

## Grade 3

### Context

37. The college offers a range of courses in sport and recreation from foundation to advanced level. A selection of additional qualifications, such as short courses in coaching and sports leadership, is also offered. Most of the 1,049 learners are full-time and aged 16 to 18. Approximately 43% of all learners are female.

### Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Success rates on foundation and intermediate programmes were broadly average in 2010/11 although trends over time are uneven. Success rates for most advanced level programmes were low. The college's in-year data indicates that more learners are likely to complete their courses in 2011/12.
- Learners develop good employability skills through a range of additional qualifications that equip them with the specialist knowledge and skills to meet employer requirements within different sections of the sports industry. Inspectors observed learners developing good team and leadership skills through practical lessons.
- Learners feel very safe. The college takes appropriate action to promote safe working practices within its sports facilities. Risk assessments are current and meet with national standard practice. Health and safety is actively promoted; for example, learners complete their own risk assessments for coaching activities.
- The health and well-being of learners is promoted well and enables them to make informed choices about their lifestyle. The majority of full-time programmes have appropriate health education embedded within the curriculum, including advice and guidance on healthy eating. Specialist staff run helpful tutorial sessions on sexual education and the consequences of substance abuse.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the majority of lessons, learners make steady progress but, at times, lessons are too teacher led, with infrequent checks on learners' understanding. In the better lessons, teachers differentiate activities well to meet the needs and abilities of individual learners.
- The assessment of learners' work is good. Teachers provide constructive feedback on practical activities and detailed feedback on learners' written work to indicate how learners could improve. Verification procedures, while accurate, are not always timely and result in delays for some learners in receiving their assessment outcomes.
- The range of provision meets the needs and interests of full-time learners well. Different pathways in fitness, player performance and coaching provide good progression routes for learners from foundation to advanced level. The courses are enhanced by an extensive enrichment programme which includes the

frequent involvement of learners in community and industry-based projects and in coaching initiatives.

- Care, guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. Learners receive appropriate advice and guidance to ensure they are on the right course. Relationships between staff and learners are positive and learners are well supported. Target-setting within learners' individual learning plans, however, is often too vague and, as a result, is not consistently effective in tracking learners' progress.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers' recent actions, such as earlier intervention for learners at risk of not completing, are beginning to prove effective. It is too early, however, to judge the full impact of these in-year improvements on learners' overall success rates, particularly where pass rates were also lower on some courses in 2010/11.
- Self-assessment processes are well established and evaluation of performance is broadly accurate. The quality improvement plan identifies targets for improvement and is reviewed frequently although not all staff use quantitative targets effectively to evaluate and improve performance at course level.
- Managers use staffing resources efficiently to provide a wide range of specialist units and additional qualifications. The college provides appropriate specialist sports accommodation and learning resources including sports analysis software. Learners very much appreciate access to the free on-site gym.

### **What does Derby College need to do to improve further?**

- Raise success rates, particularly on advanced level programmes, by evaluating and monitoring performance more sharply at course team level and by ensuring that staff at all levels use course targets effectively to evaluate actions taken to improve.
- Check frequently on learners' understanding in lessons to ensure all learners make at least good progress. This can be enhanced by sharing the best practice in teaching and learning that exists within the area.
- Strengthen the quality of target-setting on individual learning plans to enable learners to be clear about their progress and to help them plan for further targeted improvement.

## Creative and performing arts

## Grade 3

### Context

38. The college offers a range of vocational courses and academic programmes in performing arts, music and art and design from foundation to advanced level. Approximately 76% of enrolments are in creative arts subjects and 24% are in performing arts. The majority of learners study full time. Of the 598 learners enrolled to courses in this area, 9% are adults, 91% are aged 16 to 18 and 14 are aged 14 to 16. Around 61% of learners are female.

### Key findings

- Outcomes are satisfactory. Success rates are high and improving on the advanced diploma foundation in art and design. Trends at intermediate level have been uneven but improved to be broadly in line with the national average in 2010/11. Success rates on advanced art and design, performing arts AS level art and design and AS drama and theatre studies were well below the national average.
- High grade achievement, particularly for AS- and A level learners has been historically low. Recent improved tracking of learners, who are at risk of leaving or not achieving their potential, is leading to many more learners staying on to complete course. College in-year achievement data indicate that a greater number of learners will achieve higher grades this year.
- Overall, learners make satisfactory progress compared to their starting points. Their use of specialist and technical language, however, is underdeveloped because they are not always encouraged sufficiently to use more complex judgmental and analytical writing terms when describing or evaluating their work.
- Many learners develop good technical and creative skills. They produce work of a good standard in practical classes, especially within dance and performing arts. Most learners gain high levels of confidence and self esteem.
- Learners enjoy college, feel safe and value college measures to maintain a safe and secure environment. They show appropriate knowledge of safe working practices in studios and workshops.
- Learners engage actively in community projects, and make good use of a range of these projects to develop their skills. For instance, learners made a positive contribution to the community with their involvement in public art by designing and painting the walls at a local community centre and building textured panels of film stills for a care home. Music performers perform twice a year in public and work with a professional orchestra.
- Teaching and learning are good. Learners are challenged to take risks and encouraged to work independently to develop and pursue areas of personal interest. The most effective lessons are highly motivating and energising, and learners engage enthusiastically in a range of stimulating practical activities.

Assessment practices are good and learners value the timely written feedback they receive about their work.

- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not use questioning effectively enough to assess understanding and consolidate learning, and learners spend too much time listening to the teacher. In these sessions, learners do not always make the progress they are capable of.
- Partnership working is effective, particularly with the Royal School for the Deaf whose learners are integrated seamlessly into classes using appropriate support. The range of provision is good at meeting the needs and interests of learners. Specialist pathways within courses provide learners with good progression routes. A high proportion of learners progress successfully onto higher education.
- Enrichment opportunities are good. Educational trips and visits extend and enrich learners' courses. For example, learners visited the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and Gormley's figures on Crosby Beach and used the visits to produce some very creative work. Equality and diversity themes are well embedded into the curriculum to give learners the opportunity to explore other cultures.
- Guidance and support are good. Where additional support needs have been identified, such as dyslexia or hearing impairment, support is put in place quickly. Teachers know their learners well and are sensitive to their individual needs. Learners speak highly of the support they receive in lessons and through additional support sessions.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Lines of responsibility are clear. Staff feel well supported and are keen to implement strategies for improvement. Recent actions are proving effective in improving the quality of arts provision although it is too early to judge the impact on learners' success rates.
- Most specialist accommodation and resources are very good. Studios are large and well equipped for the activities taking place although in music the accommodation is often crowded. Staff professional development is good and supports the improvement of teaching and learning.

### **What does Derby College need to do to improve further?**

- Monitor learners' progress closely to ensure that learners make the maximum progress they are capable of, succeed in achieving their qualifications and that more learners achieve high grades.
- Ensure teachers encourage and support learners to use evaluative and specialist language so that learners to gain a thorough understanding of how to apply technical language when reviewing and analysing their work, particularly in academic subjects. Additionally, ensure all teachers use a range of questioning techniques in lessons to consolidate and extend learning.

## Literacy and numeracy

## Grade 2

### Context

39. The college offers discrete part-time courses at entry, foundation and intermediate levels in literacy and numeracy, both in the day and in the evening at four main college buildings and at 16 community venues. Of the 3,022 learners currently on programmes, 68% are aged 16 to 18. The majority of learners on vocational programmes study functional skills at all the levels, with 1,733 learners studying English and 1,618 studying mathematics. Most attend courses in functional skills at foundation level and intermediate level as part of their main learning programmes. The college also provides in-class and individual support for literacy and numeracy to 549 learners.

### Key findings

- Outcomes are satisfactory. Success rates for learners studying at foundation level are in most cases high. For those on intermediate programmes and some adult literacy learners, success rates are below national average. College data show retention rates have improved significantly this year. Attendance at several sessions observed by inspectors was low.
- Learners who complete the course make good progress and develop a good range of literacy and numeracy skills that improve their life chances and employment prospects. They demonstrate greater understanding and improved application of their newly acquired literacy and numeracy skills and the standard of their work is good.
- Learners feel very safe. They like the security arrangements and the insistence on wearing identity lanyards and complying with signing in procedures to gain entry to college buildings. Learners comment favourably about the harmonious learning environment. They feel well informed about the specialist services on offer and about whom to approach if they do not feel safe.
- Learners benefit from consistently good teaching and learning. Learners' work shows improved understanding and use of English and maths. Teachers plan learning in great detail and set specific and different objectives for learners across the full ability range. They organise varied activities and use very good resources to stimulate and maintain learners' interest.
- Assessment is good. A variety of effective methods are used to check learners' work. Peer support and assessment are encouraged and learners work well in small groups. In better sessions, learners relate the learning to the content and demands of their main programmes and are actively involved in practical and problem solving activities.
- The completion and use of individual learning plans and is underdeveloped. Individual learner targets are often too vague and teachers do not provide sufficient guidance to learners about how to achieve the set targets. The



outcomes of learners' initial assessment are not used consistently to plan learning.

- The needs and interests of diverse learner groups are met by a good range of courses. A minority of learners, however, are entered for functional skills qualifications that do not challenge them sufficiently and are lower than their potential capability.
- The college works well with local and regional partners to develop good practice in functional skills. Productive partnership working has led to the establishment of a wide variety of flexible literacy and numeracy provision and a positive response to the demands of local communities and employers.
- Support for learners is satisfactory and particularly effective for learners with disabilities. The role of support staff is well defined in the planning of sessions but in some sessions, weaker learners including those with language support needs do not receive sufficient support and they lose interest quickly.
- Information, advice and guidance procedures have recently been improved to ensure greater analysis of learners' maths and English at entry and this is impacting favourably on raising retention rates.
- Leadership and management are good. The college has taken swift action to offer a positive functional skills experience for young and adult learners and the quality of functional skills provision has improved. Much good classroom practice has been developed with regular professional development to build the expertise of staff.
- Self-assessment is inclusive and course reviews include an analysis of each subject area in the preparation for life and work department. The overall report however is insufficiently judgmental and doesn't give enough emphasis to improving outcomes and the quality of provision.

### **What does Derby College need to do to improve further?**

- Increase success rates on intermediate level and adult literacy programmes by ensuring sufficient time is spent on developing learners' skills at this level and improve the links between teachers of functional skills and other subjects so that all teachers share responsibility for the development of learners' literacy and numeracy.
- Continue to implement pro-active strategies to improve attendance and retention and develop a rigorous approach for monitoring the attendance of young learners on main college programmes.
- Ensure that staff and learners jointly set specific learning targets in individual learning plans so that learners know what they need to do to achieve their targets and teachers use the information wisely to monitor learning and progress.
- Increase the emphasis on outcomes and the quality of provision in the self-assessment report.

## Information about the inspection

40. Four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and 7 additional inspectors, assisted by the college's deputy 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, 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.
41. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of learners and employers. They also looked at questionnaires from learners and employers that had recently been completed for the college. Inspectors observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. They collected evidence from programmes across the range of subject areas offered by the college.

**Record of Main Findings (RMF)**

**Derby 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 <b>using the 4 point scale</b> 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
<b>Approximate number of enrolled learners</b>					
Full-time learners	5,515	0	4,641	874	0
Part-time learners	11,781	672	686	3,701	6,722
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	<b>2</b>				
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3				
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3				
How well do learners progress?	3				
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2				
How safe do learners feel?	1				
<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				
<b>Quality of provision</b>	<b>3</b>				
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2				
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2				
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3				
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>				
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>	3				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3				
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2				
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	2				
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2				

\*where applicable to the type of provision

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231 or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012