

# Thomas Rotherham College

## Sixth form college

<b>Inspection dates</b>		2-5 October 2012
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	Requires improvement-Grade 3
	<b>Previous inspection:</b>	Satisfactory-Grade 3
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>		Requires improvement-Grade 3
<b>Quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>		Requires improvement-Grade 3
<b>Effectiveness of leadership and management</b>		Inadequate-Grade 4

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This college requires improvement because:

- Too many students are not encouraged to have sufficiently high aspirations and their target grades are frequently too low to support this. Consequently they do not make the progress expected of them given their prior attainment and the proportion of students achieving high grades at A level is low.
- Several subjects set work that is too easy and do not expect students to complete it to the highest standards. Too many learning activities do not encourage students to develop a broader interest in the subject; as a consequence, the breadth and depth of their learning are limited.
- Managers do not make the best use of data to inform self-assessment and quality assurance to ensure that there are prompt and effective actions taken to raise success rates so that they are consistently high in all subjects.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. Target setting at all levels is not sufficiently rigorous to drive up standards to enable the college to meet its strategic objectives. Performance against targets is not monitored well enough and there is a lack of staff accountability for students' performance in their subject area.

#### This college has the following strengths:

- Very good performance by students in a number of subjects, for example, mathematics, modern foreign languages, economics, visual and performing arts, media and sport.
- High level of student motivation to learn including their responsiveness and willingness to engage; their high attendance; and their impeccable conduct on the campus.
- Very good electronic resources on the virtual learning environment in many subjects.
- Highly effective arrangements for securing the safety and welfare of students, including through partnership arrangements.

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<b>Inspection Number</b>	<b>399023</b>
<b>URN:</b>	<b>130530</b>

## Full report

### What does Thomas Rotherham College need to do to improve further?

- Improve the proportion of students who achieve high grades and fulfil their potential by reviewing the content of lessons, learning materials and assessment activities in the lower-performing subjects. Raise standards by ensuring that the outcomes of this review lead to a consistent improvement in the breadth and depth of students' learning in these subjects.
- Make better use of data in quality assurance and self-assessment to develop strategies to identify swiftly and intervene effectively where the performance of individuals and groups of students is below expectations. Ensure that such interventions lead to consistently high success rates in all subjects.
- Improve arrangements for the performance management of teachers and managers. Strengthen accountability arrangements so that all staff recognise fully their responsibility for performance in their area.
- Improve the rigour and consistency of target-setting at all levels, and ensure that ambitious targets for all aspects of the college's work are linked coherently to strategic priorities and communicated unambiguously throughout the college. Implement rigorous procedures for monitoring progress against these targets.
- Ensure that college leaders are successful in creating a shared culture of continuous improvement across the college that is focused relentlessly on raising expectations.

## Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student outcomes require improvement. In 2011/12 the college's overall success rate improved slightly for the second consecutive year and it is now close to the national average of sixth form colleges. The overall success rate disguises the significant variation between subjects and in several subjects the fluctuation in student achievement across recent years.</li> <li>▪ Retention is high but the proportion of students achieving high grades at A level is below the average in similar colleges. Far too many advanced-level students leave the college between completing their AS subjects and moving to A level. Attendance is very good.</li> <li>▪ In 2011/12, 38 A-level students achieved A* and A grades in all their A-level subjects. However, in too many subjects not enough students achieve grades A*-B. Student progress at AS is close to that predicted by their prior attainment but remains slightly below what can be expected at A-level. The small numbers of students on advanced-vocational programmes achieve well and the majority make good progress.</li> <li>▪ Individual students' progress is too reliant on the subjects they have chosen to study. In several subjects, and particularly in law, psychology, ICT and music, students have underperformed in recent years. Their progress is poor as too much of the work is not sufficiently challenging and they are not inspired to achieve the grades of which they are capable. Students have consistently achieved very well in media, visual and performing arts, economics, mathematics, modern foreign languages and sport.</li> <li>▪ Too many students did not achieve GCSE grade A*-C in 2011/12. The high grade pass rate is particularly poor in English and science. Progression from GCSE to advanced-level courses is low.</li> <li>▪ In 2011/12 the achievement of male students improved and the gender gap was reduced. The achievement of Pakistani heritage students has improved in recent years; their success is now broadly in line with their peers, although they are less successful in passing A-level general</li> </ul>	

studies which is no longer a compulsory subject.

- The standard of students' work is too variable across subjects and between different classes. In too many subjects students are not expected to produce work of a high standard. On too many occasions the work set is not sufficiently demanding and students are not expected to complete more extensive research or wider reading to develop their analytical skills in sufficient depth.
- Around two thirds of advanced-level students go on to study at university. In recent years the vast majority successfully gained the grades to study at their chosen university. The college has initiated strategies to raise the number of students who progress to the more prestigious universities and this has been successful for a targeted group of the most able students.
- Students have an appropriate range of opportunities to complete additional qualifications, voluntary work and work experience which helps them to develop the knowledge and skills to support them in life after college, including those who wish to move into an apprenticeship or employment. The learning activities in several subjects provide good opportunities to develop students' leadership and team-working skills, but this good practice is not shared.
- Students improve their planning skills through practical work in visual and performing arts and science. In applied vocational courses students are frequently given too much support and direction in completing assignments and this does not help them to develop their independent learning and research skills to a sophisticated level.
- Too much work is focused on meeting external assessment requirements and completing examination style questions which does not engage students' broader interests in what they are studying, develop the confidence to articulate their thinking, or develop their ability to apply what they have learnt to the real world.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement to enable a higher proportion of students to make more rapid progress and to achieve the grades of which they are capable. Although most lessons are good, in too many subjects the volume, breadth and depth of students' learning both inside and outside the classroom are insufficiently challenging. As a consequence, students do not always develop the higher-level skills, knowledge and understanding that would enable them to reach their full potential.
- The best lessons are characterised by a sense of purpose and good pace, with attentive students eager to learn about new ideas and develop new skills. Teaching is interesting and demanding. Teachers have high expectations of their students' capabilities, explain difficult ideas clearly, set challenging tasks to reinforce learning, and use skilful questioning techniques to ascertain the progress and understanding of all the students.
- In a significant minority of subjects and lessons there is a lack of urgency, learning materials are uninspiring and often at too low a level, and the tasks set are mundane. Lessons frequently centre around very brief explanations by teachers, episodes of rather basic questioning by the teacher, and students then completing tasks based on worksheets or other resource stimuli. A minority of teachers appear to be reluctant to introduce concepts and ideas to the whole class through thorough and detailed exposition supported by appropriate checks on understanding.
- Teachers work hard to devise workbooks to support learning in most subjects, and in a few subjects, such as modern foreign languages, geography and economics, these are highly effective. In too many cases the workbooks are appropriate to help students to reach a secure grasp of basic subject knowledge but they are too superficial for more-able students to develop higher-level understanding.
- Recently the college has used the outcomes of internal lesson observations appropriately to develop staff training designed to raise further the effectiveness of learning. For example, in most lessons teachers integrate opportunities to assess students' progress during the lesson through a range of activities including peer marking of short tests and whole-class assessment

activities. However, too often the skills or knowledge being assessed are not at sufficiently high a level for teachers to be sure that students are making rapid progress.

- Assessment of students' work completed outside lessons is inconsistent both in frequency and quality. Feedback on marked work ranges from the perfunctory, with little advice on how to improve, to comprehensive and perceptive commentaries on students' work that signpost clear areas for improvement. In a minority of subjects, students' files reveal a distinct absence of regular work completed outside the classroom, and gaps in note-taking and task completion. Too often, students have insufficient opportunities in essay-based subjects to complete extended pieces of work that involve wider reading and academic research.
- In a few subjects, for example media studies and economics, teachers make highly effective use of technology both in and out of lessons to stimulate students' imagination and widen the scope of their learning. In other subjects, teachers display a lack of confidence in both the use and the potential of modern technologies to inspire deeper and wider learning. The virtual learning environment is used well by students in most subjects, and the resources made available to students through it are very good in several subjects.
- The monitoring of students' progress is a clear area for improvement. A new electronic monitoring system has the potential to be highly effective but it is too early to see its impact. As the college recognises, the minimum target grades set for students based on their performance at GCSE are not aspirational and are at the lowest end of what students should achieve. Although these targets are negotiable, there is no formal system for updating students' targets so that all teachers and the students are clear about the grade aspired to.
- Students with specific learning disabilities and/or difficulties receive very good support that they value highly. Students undergo a thorough initial assessment to identify those who need extra help with literacy, numeracy or study skills. The support available for students who need help is good. However, too many students do not take advantage of the support available, and the college does not put students under sufficient pressure to attend additional support sessions.

### Science and mathematics Learning programmes for 16-18

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is too varied and requires improvement, particularly in advanced-level biology and environmental science, as too many students do not achieve their qualification. In 2011/12 only a third of GCSE science students successfully gained a grade C or higher. Mathematics teaching is good and most students achieve their qualification and make at least good progress.
- In the better lessons students develop good scientific and mathematical skills. Their personal and social skills improve as a result of well-managed group and pair activities. For example, in a chemistry lesson on oxidation states, students worked well in pairs, developing their team-working skills and reinforcing their understanding of chemical formulae.
- In less effective lessons the teachers spend too much time talking and simply passing on information. Students are not required to develop fully their answers or to explain why they have given a particular response. In these classes the more-able students are not challenged as all students complete the same tasks.
- Most teachers provide effective academic support in and out of lessons. In 2011/12 the success rates in AS and A-level chemistry improved following a successful strategy of lunchtime support for students needing help. A-level student mentors provide good support to AS mathematics students.
- Science practical lessons develop students' planning and coordination skills. For example, AS students use good microscope skills to identify plasmolysis in plant cells. A minority of students' practical skills are weak as they do not follow routine safety procedures such as wearing laboratory coats, and were unable to weigh substances correctly.

- Teachers use technology, including interactive whiteboards, effectively in lessons. In an environmental studies lesson animation was used well to demonstrate the reduction in the size of a large inland sea. In an outstanding mathematics lesson, all students used a deductive reasoning game to understand the concept of functions.
- Students value the well-stocked virtual learning environment and use this resource frequently in college and at home. Biology students can download revision cards on key topics. Homework is posted in advance and students can complete more complex questions. However, resources are more limited for students wanting to achieve top grades or who want to read more broadly around a topic.
- Most students' written work is at an appropriate standard. Homework is set frequently and returned quickly. In mathematics, teachers' comments help students know exactly what they need to do to improve. Science teachers' written feedback is too superficial. Most homework is completing past examination questions. The quality of students' files is varied and several are untidy and contain work with incorrect spellings.
- In several science lessons, teachers include activities that improve students' mathematical and employability skills. In a science lesson students were estimating their domestic use of water and plotting a graphical representation. In a chemistry lesson students were learning about the issues that commercial gas producers face.
- Students are not developing fully their broader skills of discussion, debate and presentation. They rarely have the opportunity to give presentations to their peers or to wider audiences. Many students find it difficult to discuss freely their work or broader college experience.
- The assessment of students' progress requires improvement. Teachers monitor and record weekly test results and homework scores. Underperforming students are directed to twice-weekly subject workshops but their attendance at these is not monitored with sufficient rigour. In mathematics specific aspects of a topic that students are finding difficult are clearly identified and students are set individually tailored work.
- The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons requires improvement. Very few lesson plans or schemes of work identify how relevant issues will be integrated into topics. As a consequence students' understanding is not developed fully.

**Visual and performing arts and media**

Good

**Learning programmes for 16-18**

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Students in art and design, media and performing arts achieve well and make good progress. Success rates are high on all courses except AS music. Music and music technology students are not made sufficiently aware of the performance aspects of these courses prior to enrolment.
- Most lessons include a variety of activities. In the best lessons these are delivered at a good pace and provide suitably challenging work; for example, art and design include text and website references for further research and extension tasks.
- Art and design and media assignments enable students to develop individual responses to generic themes which supports their motivation and creativity well. Performing arts students develop their performance skills and self-confidence to manage their own performance through individual and group work.
- Teachers use their expertise as practising artists and examiners, and links with community arts and external organisations, to enhance students' learning. Passionate and enthusiastic teachers challenge and inspire students to achieve their very best. Performing arts students' goals and aspirations are raised and monitored closely using a skills wall chart.
- Technology is used well in teaching and assessment. Interactive whiteboards, video recordings and a good range of resources on the college's virtual learning environment are enhanced further using blogs and social media. A vibrant dedicated media website is well planned and

inspirational. Practical workshops contain specialist equipment and industry-specific software.

- Equality and diversity are promoted well through assignment briefs and external projects. Students research a diverse range of genre, cultural backgrounds, beliefs and artists that inspires their work. In art and design students participate in community art projects and media students contribute to the Sheffield Ethnic Community Radio Station.
- Practical work is of a good standard. Students are challenged to develop their skills through exploration using different methods. Media students develop adept technology skills to enhance their work. In art and design there is an over reliance on internet research and insufficient primary source drawing to develop students’ drawing skills.
- Students participate in live performance, exhibit work locally and take part in national competitions to enhance their portfolio and employability skills. Media students have designed advertising for a local bus company and they organise an annual awards ceremony to showcase their work. Several art and design students have won external competitions and have designed prints and artefacts to sell commercially.
- Studios and workshops provide a safe working environment. Students develop confidence and improve their personal and social skills. Students work together effectively on small and large group exercises. Teachers provide good support on assignments while fostering students’ independence and creativity. Written work is good but spelling and punctuation errors are not corrected consistently.
- Students’ views are used effectively to influence course content and delivery. Art and design students post comments on the communication wall to inform decisions on matters such as additional resources and trips. Media students’ ‘Green Room’ comments, on their dedicated website, have influenced what units are taught and provided extra resources for their learning.
- Assessment practice and the quality of assessment are inconsistent. The best assessment practice is not always shared across subjects and there is too much peer- and self-assessment in performing arts. Teachers’ feedback does not always contain sufficiently specific targets to help students to improve and progress is not always reviewed regularly.

**Social sciences**

Requires improvement

**Learning programmes for 16-18**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement in psychology and sociology. Achievement is high in economics and geography and most students make good or better progress. For several years too many psychology students have not successfully achieved and their progress is weak. In 2011/12 AS sociology pass rates fell significantly and very few students achieved a high grade.
- In AS lessons most students are making good progress at the start of their course and they develop a basic understanding of core principles. For example, AS-level economics students discussed the laws of supply and demand fluently. However, individual students’ progress is not monitored rigorously to ensure their knowledge, skills and understanding are extended and developed fully in all subjects.
- The best lessons use relevant and interesting activities to engage students’ interest to complete further work outside lessons, supported by well thought-out materials on the virtual learning environment. For example, geography students investigate the impact of tourism on the natural world and their understanding is enhanced using well-designed and challenging workbooks and extended individual research.
- In weaker lessons teachers do not plan learning and assessment activities that adequately differentiate between students of different ability. All students complete the same work and too often it is at the discretion of the student as to whether or not they complete extension work, some of which is not sufficiently challenging.
- A few classrooms are crowded and this inhibits learning activities. Resources are good and

most teachers use technology well to support learning. In several lessons the interactive whiteboard was not used to its full potential. The well-stocked learning resource centre is frequently used by students to study outside lessons.

- Psychology students' progress is not monitored closely enough and there are not yet effective strategies to raise pass rates. The proportion of students achieving high grades is poor as not enough attention is given to the volume and breadth of work students complete outside lessons.
- Additional support and exam revision is not targeted at those students who would benefit most from attending. Expectations that students will retake module examinations where they have performed poorly are not sufficiently robust.
- Initial assessments before students start their course are comprehensive but several have not completed these; those that have do not yet know their results and the outcomes are not being used consistently well enough by teachers in the planning and delivery of their lessons. Students' individual targets are not always sufficiently challenging.
- Teachers' feedback varies in frequency, quality and detail and does not always provide students with an understanding of how to improve. Geography and economics' assessments regularly challenge students to achieve higher grades. In these subjects teachers encourage students to develop a broader interest in what they are studying. Psychology and sociology assessments are too frequently restricted to completing past examination questions and teachers' written feedback is too brief.
- Most students' progress in developing academically relevant subject vocabulary is good. However, not enough emphasis is placed on self-reflection and improving the accuracy of students' written work. Too many learning resources such as worksheets, teachers' electronic presentations and displays contain spelling and grammatical errors.
- Support is good for those students who seek it out but it is not always directed to those who would benefit from it most. Strategies to encourage students who are reluctant to attend the twice weekly workshop support sessions are not sufficiently robust in sociology and psychology.

**English and modern foreign languages**

**Learning programmes for 16-18**

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement in English as too many students do not make sufficient progress. The proportion of students achieving high grades at advanced level and in GCSE English is low. In modern foreign languages pass rates are excellent; many students achieve high grades and most make at least good progress.
- The best teaching is enthusiastic, planned well and delivered at a good pace. Carefully structured lessons develop students' skills and confidence. In English language empathetic writing tasks are used to develop students' skills to write a monologue. In several lessons the planned activities are not sufficiently challenging and they do not fully engage all students.
- Modern foreign language teachers are native speakers who conduct lessons almost entirely in the target language, which quickly develops students' very competent speaking and listening skills. For example, German students use sophisticated grammar when engaging in lively debates on the environment.
- In the most effective lessons teachers use effective questioning techniques to develop students' responses and promote good learning. However, in too many lessons the use of whole-class questioning is not effective. Discussions are often dominated by the teacher and there is insufficient checking of student learning.
- Sharing best practice in modern foreign languages is more successful in improving the quality of students' written work than in English. Nearly all English teachers are experienced examiners but this expertise has not been used to full effect to raise the proportion of students achieving

high grades. There is insufficient sharing of good practice between English and modern foreign language subjects.

- Assessment in English is not always rigorous or detailed enough to support students to achieve their full potential. Modern foreign language students are given individual feedback sheets that contain detailed constructive comments, specific advice and clear explanations on how they can improve their grades. Too much marking in English focuses on praise and does not explain what individual students need to do to achieve a higher grade.
- In modern foreign languages teachers set very high standards and expectations of what their students can achieve. A large proportion of their students study languages at university. Languages students are constantly encouraged to improve the quality of their work and they take up opportunities provided to achieve higher grades. English have not yet developed sufficiently robust strategies to ensure students make good progress.
- Modern foreign language students' motivation and excitement for their studies is enhanced through outstanding enrichment opportunities. A very wide range of additional activities develops students' language skills, cultural awareness and social well-being. Activities include email correspondence with European language students, work experience in France and a visit to Germany to complete project work with language students from other European countries. Enrichment in English is not as extensive but includes theatre visits, including a trip to see Othello to develop students' understanding of Shakespeare.
- Students on all courses appreciate the support offered in subject workshops. Sessions are available for those who are struggling with a particular topic or are at risk of not achieving their predicted grade. Modern language staff have successfully targeted specific students and monitor attendance to workshops. This strategy alongside intensive exam revision has increased the proportion of language students achieving high grades.
- Equality and diversity issues are embedded across all courses. Students regularly consider gender and class issues. Teachers carefully choose texts and topics that offer opportunities to promote an appreciation of different cultures and attitudes. For example, GCSE English students discussed topical issues about racism in football and in Spanish they looked at immigration problems.

### The effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The Principal and governors have agreed a mission focusing on being a centre of educational excellence in Rotherham. Their strategic objectives for 2008/13 include students achieving success rates at least one percentage point above sixth form college national averages and significantly positive added value. However, the pace of improvement has been too slow and most targets have not been met in the last three years.
- Leaders and managers have not been successful in improving outcomes consistently across the college because approaches have been implemented inconsistently, quality assurance has been ineffective and expectations of student outcomes have been too low. The senior team has recently been reorganised and a number of new initiatives have been introduced to improve students' outcomes, the quality of teaching and learning, and student monitoring; but it is too soon to know whether these will be effective.
- Governors have played an active role in strategic and financial planning and have challenged underperformance. However, management reports to governors have not been specific or evaluative enough to allow them to monitor rates of progress sufficiently in all subjects.
- Despite efforts to remedy the problem, governors are aware that the composition of the governing body does not currently represent the college or local community and there is a growing gender imbalance. A staff governor vacancy has not been filled. In 2011/12 students were not represented at board meetings until March 2012.
- Arrangements to manage the performance of staff have been inadequate, particularly where student outcomes have been persistently poor. Quality improvement meetings, alongside



discussions on professional development, consider progress in each curriculum area four times a year. There has not been a formal appraisal process with specific individual staff targets set for each staff member in the last year.

- Target setting is weak. The targets set are not always sufficiently measurable to focus improvements and they are not linked together to drive forward consistency. Staff development in teaching and learning is clearly planned using ungraded lesson observation feedback and the leadership team are now consulting on the introduction of an appraisal scheme including clearly measurable targets for all teachers.
- Self-assessment is poor. Leaders understand the importance of improving student outcomes and many curriculum managers have written detailed self-assessment reports, although they are not sufficiently evaluative and the action plans are too vague. New guidance on self-assessment is explicit and rigorous with a focus on setting clearly measurable targets but it is not yet embedded and the quality of self-assessment reports remains inconsistent.
- The college provides a good range of AS and A-level subjects, limited vocational provision at intermediate and advanced level and a GCSE resit programme. In recognition of the differing needs and abilities of its students and curriculum changes in local schools, the college has introduced advanced vocational courses in five subjects, including areas of previous underperformance at AS and A-level.
- The college has a good range of strategies to gather the views of students, particularly in relation to induction and assessment. Subject areas hold their own focus groups but the effectiveness of how the feedback is used to make improvements is inconsistent. An innovative approach to capturing the views of minority ethnic students has resulted in the college reconsidering its values statement. The college now recognises the need to incorporate the views of parents and employers in its self-assessment reports.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good. Appropriate policies are in place and the college's links with external agencies ensure they are well placed to meet the needs of vulnerable learners. At-risk students are identified early and appropriate mentoring support is available to them before they enrol. Incidents relating to bullying and equality and diversity are managed proactively; where appropriate, mediation and counselling is provided. A well-informed designated governor attends the college's safeguarding forum. Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure students' health and safety.
- Overall equality and diversity are promoted satisfactorily although there is inconsistency across subjects. Effective focused work on male underachievement narrowed the gender achievement gap in 2011/12. The achievement of Pakistani heritage students has improved in recent years and their success in core subjects is now broadly in line with their peers.

**Record of Main Findings (RMF 2012)**

**Thomas Rotherham College**

**16-18 learning programmes leading to qualifications:** FE full- and part-time courses.

<p><b>Inspection grades are based on a provider’s performance:</b>                  1: Outstanding                  2: Good                  3: Requires improvement                  4: Inadequate</p>	Overall	16-18 Learning programmes
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	3	3
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	3	3
<b>The quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	3	3
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management</b>	4	4

<b>Subject areas graded for quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Science and mathematics</b>	3
<b>Visual and performing arts and media</b>	2
<b>Social sciences</b>	3
<b>English and modern foreign languages</b>	3

## Provider details

<b>Thomas Rotherham College</b>	
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2-5 October 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Bev Barlow HMI
<b>Type of provider</b>	Sixth form college
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16-18
<b>Number of learners in 2011/12</b>	1,391
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Richard Williams
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	May 2009
<b>Website address</b>	www.thomroth.ac.uk

<b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>				
<b>Main course or learning programme level</b>	<b>Level 1 or below</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 4</b>
<b>Total number of full-time learners excluding apprenticeships</b>	N/A	59	1,429	N/A
<b>Age of full-time learners</b>				
	<b>14-16</b>	<b>16-18</b>	<b>19+</b>	
<b>Total by age</b>	N/A	1,498	N/A	
<b>Number of part-time learners</b>				
	18			
<b>Number of main sites</b>				
	1			
<b>Funding received from</b>				
	SFA and EFA			

## Additional socio-economic information

Rotherham has a population of 257,000 and 7.5% are of minority ethnic origin. Unemployment is three percentage points above the national average and the average wage in the area is 10 percentage points lower than the national average. Rotherham is ranked 52<sup>nd</sup> out of 326 English local authorities on the 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation. The main employment in the area is public services, care, retail and hospitality services. A significant proportion of the local population have no qualifications and only two thirds have achieved intermediate-level qualifications; only 40% hold qualifications at advanced level or above, 13 percentage points below the national average. In 2011 the proportion of pupils achieving five GCSEs at A\*-C, including English and mathematics, was just below the national average.

## **Information about this inspection**

Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the Assistant Principal for Quality, as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gather the views of learners and employers. These views are reflected throughout the report. They observed lessons, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the college. Subject inspectors looked in detail at a sample of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in visual and performing arts, media, social sciences, English and modern foreign languages.

## What inspection judgements mean

Provider		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding provider is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its learners' needs. This ensures that learners are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good provider is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its learners' needs. Learners are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A provider that requires improvement is performing less well than it might be reasonably expected in one or more of the key areas. This provider will receive a full inspection 12-18 months after the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A provider that is inadequate is one where the provider is failing to give its learners an acceptable standard of education and/or training and the provider's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the provider. This provider will receive a re-inspection within 12-15 months after the date of this inspection.

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