

# Cheadle and Marple College

## Sixth form college

<b>Inspection dates</b>		04-07 December 2012
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Inadequate-4

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This college requires improvement because:

- Leadership is inadequate. The Principal and senior leaders have been unable to bring about rapid and sustained improvement to the quality of teaching and outcomes for students.
- Governance is inadequate. The self-evaluation process is disjointed, judgements are overgenerous and do not allow governors to hone in on the lack-lustre performance of many subjects.
- There is no overarching strategic plan. The performance management of staff is weak.
- In too many A-level and AS subjects, students fail to reach their full potential given their starting points. Too few students who start an AS course in a science subject complete the A level.
- The proportion of students gaining high grades on A-level and AS courses is low. Over the last three years, too few students make up ground and gain an A\* to C grade in GCSE English and mathematics.
- In lessons, too much variation exists in students' development of skills, knowledge and understanding between and within subjects. Teachers do not always set sufficiently challenging targets or provide work that stretches students.
- Although inspectors observed much good teaching, they found too few outstanding lessons. The impact of staff development varies and often has little or no impact on the quality of teaching.

#### This college has the following strengths:

- This is a very inclusive and welcoming college. Students get on well together and enjoy learning as can be seen through their high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- The large number of students on advanced vocational courses, which make up about 40% of the total, make good progress and success rates are high. Apprenticeship success rates are high and most apprentices achieve their qualification within the timescales required.
- There are many pockets of good teaching and management and inspectors did not observe any inadequate lessons. Data on students' performance is accurate and readily available.

## Full report

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of senior leadership by creating an ambitious strategic plan based upon a reliable evaluation of the quality of current provision and outcomes for students. Develop a clearer vision for the future and a mission with challenging, measurable targets.
- Improve the capacity of governors to hold leaders to account and evaluate the quality of provision. Develop an accurate measure of the performance of each subject area and build this into an evidence base that governors can use to hold the college to account.
- Devise a better system to measure the performance of teachers and improve the impact of staff development. Improve communication and the sharing of good practice particularly between staff who work at different sites.
- Increase the proportion of A-level and AS courses where students make consistently good progress in lessons. Increase the number of AS science students who complete the A level and the proportion of students on A-level and AS courses generally who gain high grades.
- As a matter of priority, increase the proportion of students who gain an A\* to C grade in GCSE English and mathematics. Ensure teachers always set challenging enough targets no matter what students' prior educational experience has been.
- Improve learning by giving students more opportunity to deepen their understanding and knowledge in lessons, for example using information learning technology more effectively. Build upon the good teaching in many vocational and some academic subjects to increase the number of outstanding lessons.

### Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outcomes require improvement. The overall success rate has improved since the previous inspection and is now around the national average for sixth form colleges. Success rates are lower for older students than they are for 16-to 18-year-olds. In 2010/11 success rates for older students were well below average, but have improved this year to a satisfactory level in most subjects.</li> <li>▪ In the majority of A-level and AS subjects, groups of students make satisfactory progress given their starting points, however, in too many subjects progress is weak and improvement in success rates have been relatively modest. In a few academic subjects, for example information and communication technology (ICT) and economics, progress is now very good.</li> <li>▪ Around 40% of students are on advanced-vocational programmes; in 2011/12, overall success rates were above average with a very significant proportion of students achieving high grades and making good progress. On a minority of programmes, retention rates were low, but measures to address this issue have been put in place this year.</li> <li>▪ The proportion of students retained to the end of AS courses has improved and is around the national average. However, in a significant number of subjects, including physics, chemistry, and biology, too many students leave at the end of AS without completing the A level.</li> <li>▪ Most students have below average prior attainment when they enrol, although in science, mathematics and modern foreign languages, entry requirements are higher. The overall proportion of students achieving A* to B grades in A-level and AS subjects is below average and has not improved significantly in the last four years.</li> <li>▪ Most apprentices are on business, health and social care or childcare programmes, where success rates have improved and are high. Most apprentices complete their qualification within the planned timescale.</li> </ul>	

- Many students enrol on GCSE English and mathematics courses to improve the grades they gained at school to enable them to achieve their career goals. In the last three years less than half the students who start courses in GCSE mathematics and English improved sufficiently to gain an A\* to C grade.
- Students in receipt of additional learning support achieve as well as their peers. The proportion moving from intermediate to advanced courses improved significantly last year and is now good.
- Attendance rates are very high and students are extremely punctual; they enjoy learning. The gaps in success rates between male and female students identified last year have closed and there are few significant gaps between minority ethnic groups and their peers.
- The development of skills, knowledge and understanding in lessons varies widely across subjects but college observations indicate that it is rarely inadequate. Although usually satisfactory progress is made, more-able students are not always stretched by their work and the development of independent study, ICT and research skills is patchy.
- Last year about two thirds of advanced-level students went on to study at university and several entered prestigious universities. About 15% of students left advanced courses to gain employment.
- Students on vocational courses develop particularly effective personal, social and employability skills, although apprentices are less involved in extra-curricular enrichment activities than their peers. Students on advanced vocational courses obtain useful additional qualifications and make best use of work experience, but this is not always the case for those on A-level programmes.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement to enable students to make better progress to achieve the grades of which they are capable. In most subjects inspectors found a balance of good and satisfactory teaching; this is reflected in the differences seen in students' outcomes across subjects and qualification types.
- In better lessons, teachers have high expectations and set ambitious aspirational targets. For example, in English, ICT, economics, law, sport and politics, teaching is personalised, questioning is challenging and carefully reinforces learning through the development of independent learning skills and problem solving.
- In poorer lessons, questioning does not always probe to check that higher-level skills, knowledge and understanding are developed. In too many subjects, the pace is pedestrian and more-able students do not have activities that challenge them. Teachers are beginning to share good practice about how they might learn from each other and become outstanding practitioners, but this process is not established across the college.
- Students value the vocational and subject expertise of their teachers and assessors and tap into this by asking them many questions about their work. However, students are not taught to be sufficiently independent, the use of the virtual learning environment (VLE) to extend learning is highly variable and innovative technologies are rarely used well to support learning, deepen understanding and develop research skills.
- In most lessons, teachers plan lessons carefully, and use effective activities to keep students focused on tasks. However, there is often a lack of variety and while students are well behaved and compliant, too often they show too little enthusiasm for their subject. This is particularly the case in GCSE mathematics, where students' prior experience and preconceptions of the subject as 'difficult' tends to be a barrier to learning.
- Students benefit from thorough initial assessment and staff use the results well to provide discrete and well-integrated learning support for those with additional needs; they perform as well as their peers. Students with specific learning disabilities and/or difficulties are assessed before they enrol so that support can be put in place quickly. Support is very good for the more vulnerable students and those with complex needs, for example, young people with mental health problems and those on the autism disorder spectrum.

- The recently introduced electronic monitoring system is well-understood by staff and students, but the impact it has varies widely between subjects. Apprentices and students on advanced vocational programmes benefit from frequent and well-planned assessment with good involvement from employers. Work experience is used well by these students to apply their learning and develop good vocational skills but this is not always the case on more academic programmes.
- The assessment of students' work varies in quality across subjects but is satisfactory overall. Many teachers are trying to improve their assessment and marking and provide students with better feedback on how to improve their work. This includes paying closer attention to correcting grammar, spelling and punctuation and giving feedback that clearly shows how students can improve their work.
- Teachers of English and mathematics are often seen by other staff as solely responsible for developing functional skills. Many other teachers pay too little attention to encouraging clear communication or confident speaking skills when responding to questions in class.
- Helpful and impartial careers advice and guidance support most students to begin appropriate programmes. Good transition planning supports the more vulnerable to move successfully into the college. The college has strong partnerships with schools, and taster programmes give students experiences of different subjects in order to help them confirm they are on the right programme of study.
- Promotion of equality and diversity in lessons varies widely between subjects; it is particularly strong in English, art and media. However, opportunities to promote and discuss equality and diversity are often missed. Discussions with students show that they have a good grounding in, and growing awareness of, issues related to equality.

**Mathematics and statistics**

**Learning programmes for 16-18**  
**Learning programmes for 19+**

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement, which is reflected in outcomes for students, which vary widely. Success rates for AS- and A-level mathematics have improved over the last three years and are now generally higher than the national average, although many students do not gain the high grades of which they are capable. The proportion of students gaining A\* to C grades in GCSE mathematics is low and shows little sign of improvement.
- Groups develop the best skills, knowledge and understanding in lessons where teachers take into account the wide range of their prior learning and plan activities and resources to match this. For example, in one A-level lesson, students were provided with a choice of problems, each on a different mathematical concept and then chose an activity matched to the area where they needed most practice.
- Teaching is best when mathematical concepts are related to ideas and experiences encountered outside of the classroom. In one lesson, which worked particularly well, students were shown a graph displaying a mechanism for monetary exchange rate calculations, followed by an informative video clip on the consequences for tourists of the falling exchange rate of the pound to the United States dollar.
- Students are sometimes given the opportunity to work in pairs and this often deepens understanding. Appropriate workbooks are provided for advanced level students with useful worked examples. The resources provided for GCSE students are weaker and often just a collection of mathematical exercises.

- Students enjoy their studies and talk positively about the good support they get from their teachers. Although challenging target grades are set for advanced level students, some are unable to recall what it is or explain how it helps them to improve. GCSE students are not set target grades higher than a grade C, which for many is insufficiently challenging.
- A disparity in the quality of teaching and learning exists between the two sites, with the better lessons often taking place at Cheadle. Too many lessons follow the same pattern, explanation of a theory by a teacher followed by students working on similar questions, leaving some of the more-able students inactive and a little bored.
- On other occasions teachers move to a new topic too quickly, without proper checks on understanding. Teachers often miss opportunities to explain and enthuse about the wider applications of the mathematical skills, particularly at GCSE level.
- A virtual learning environment is available to all students studying mathematics, but too few students take full advantage of these resources.
- Students are tested frequently and their progress is closely monitored. Advanced level students get clear advice on their marked work including what they need to do to improve, although there are not always enough formal support sessions available outside lessons.
- Opportunities to promote equality and diversity are often missed in lessons. Inspectors found very few imaginative examples of mathematical concepts in the context of diversity used in lessons.

**Visual arts and media**

**Learning programmes for 16-18**  
**Learning programmes for 19+**

Requires improvement

- Teaching and learning require improvement. Although the inspector observed much good teaching and there have been improvements in success rates, over time too many students make insufficient progress. Students completing most courses do not achieve at the level expected given their starting points.
- In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of students and students’ comments are valued and explored in depth. Individualised support and guidance effectively enable them to develop independent learning skills and to appreciate professional standards. A photography project at Cheadle Campus has built students’ self-esteem by arranging individual mini-exhibitions in a circuit of local shops.
- Teachers use their expertise as artists to enhance students’ learning. They are passionate about their subject and often inspire students to develop a similar enthusiasm.
- In many lessons, however, students are not always fully involved in the extended discussion and debate required to refine their ideas and develop deeper understanding. Students report that their teachers are very supportive and instil in them a sense of responsibility to meet deadlines for handing in work and arrive punctually.
- In places, teachers share resources and good practice, particularly in media and film, where film clips with analysis are placed on a shared data drive. However, this is not replicated across the subject area as a whole.
- Assessment and feedback are good. Marking is done frequently and work is promptly returned with clear advice on how to improve; the electronic assessment recording system is used well. Written work is of an appropriate quality but spelling and punctuation errors are not always corrected consistently.
- The quality of feedback is particularly strong in art and design where detailed comments, cross-referenced to exam assessment objectives improve students’ understanding of their progress.

Sketchbooks are well annotated and teachers use appropriate descriptive visual language to allow reflection on completed work and plan further work.

- Media students develop sophisticated skills in the use of professional design software packages. However, students are less able to articulate their ideas and plans verbally or in writing and do not always develop suitable design language.
- Open days and taster sessions provide good quality course information, valued by students and enabling them to enrol on the most appropriate courses. The subject area is very inclusive and welcomes applications by students without prior experience or specified qualifications subject to an exacting interview process.
- Teachers ensure learning embraces students from all backgrounds and abilities. In particular, in media and film studies teachers deal with issues such as race, gender and stereotyping in an open and structured way.

## Social sciences and geography

### Learning programmes for 16-18

### Learning programmes for 19+

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement and this is mirrored in the varied achievement and progress made by students. They are broadly successful at A level, although achievement of high grades is rare on most courses and at AS, success differs widely between subjects and years. In many subjects, progress is broadly satisfactory but in AS sociology and A-level geography students do less well than would be expected given their starting points.
- Most teaching staff have a sound knowledge of their subjects and in the best lessons set challenging goals for the students. In economics, teaching, learning and assessment are very good. In particular, within these lessons inspectors found many examples of ambitious target-setting.
- Students develop high order thinking skills and deeper learning in many lessons, such as in a politics lesson where students in discussion identified changing Conservative Party attitudes on gay rights as part of its traditional ideological principles of gradualism and pragmatism. However, too many weaker examples persist in other subjects where students make only satisfactory progress and fail to develop their analytical abilities and higher understanding.
- Lesson planning is inconsistent; in the better lessons a variety of activities develop, stretch and challenge all groups to their full potential. Weaker lessons are formulaic, students spend too long listening passively and activities fail to stretch the more able. The VLE is used well to develop independent learning in economics and geography, but its use remains underdeveloped in sociology and politics.
- Initial assessment is used well by teachers in the better lessons to support individual student's needs and learning. However, inspectors found considerable variety between subjects and this information is often underutilised; accurate data are widely available but not always used well.
- Most teachers use questioning well to test if understanding has been developed by individuals, although on occasions, teachers do not focus questions sufficiently to extend learning and deepen understanding. Marking gives clear direction and supports students to develop better standards of work.
- Entry requirements ensure that most students have well-developed skills in English and mathematics. Grammatical errors and spelling are usually corrected appropriately, but students are rarely given advice about how to improve their verbal communication skills.
- Most students are happy with the teaching and learning they receive and feel well supported. Initial interviews and 'confirmation of programme day', give students supportive advice and



guidance that ensure they make the correct choices to develop and progress towards their chosen career goals.

- Students develop a good understanding of equality and diversity through focused topics within the subject syllabi. Additional opportunities are flagged up and shared particularly well with students in economics.

## English and modern foreign languages

### Learning programmes for 16-18

### Learning programmes for 19+

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Although success rates on most courses are high the progress of more-able students over time has been only average and GCSE success disappointing. New, shared approaches, recently appointed staff and better systems for checking progress mean that teaching and learning have improved and most students are now developing good skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Students develop good study skills, confidence and independence and learn to break down demanding tasks into manageable components that they can apply to problem solving in other areas of their lives. Language students develop useful practical skills for work and leisure as well as further study.
- Expectations are high in most lessons. Students say their teachers are passionate about their subjects and that this enthusiasm is infectious; attendance is excellent. Students are encouraged to link their study to areas of personal or career interest; for example, an aspiring sports journalist analysed the language of football commentaries, and a student studying French and English pursued her passion for literature in both languages.
- Support is good, and language students have regular one-to-one sessions that develop confidence in speaking and listening. Teachers are generous with their time and ensure students get individual help and extension work. Teachers are using new systems effectively to identify those who in previous years did not achieve as well as they could.
- Lessons are well planned with a good variety of activities including independent work, games, paired and group activities. This arouses curiosity, maintains interest and motivation, and ensures that everyone participates. In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not plan classroom seating to get the best out of learning activities.
- An exciting programme of trips and visits abroad helps to extend learning. Language students have entered an international translation competition to extend their skills. Students make frequent use of ICT and find the VLE useful.
- Students are well prepared for their courses and fully understand how they will be assessed. Those needing extra help are identified early and teachers use initial assessment information well to provide the best support.
- Students know exactly how well they are doing through frequent tests linked to mark schemes. Detailed feedback helps them to improve. They all know what grade they can achieve, and are encouraged to aim high.
- Language students develop good grammatical accuracy in foreign languages and improve their English through translation and vocabulary building exercises. English teachers help students to communicate more effectively, to build a specialist and general vocabulary, to construct logical arguments and to develop a clear, accurate and fluent style. However, not all GCSE students are sufficiently aware of how important these skills will be for their future life and career.
- Equality and diversity are deeply integrated into all courses. Stereotyping and equality issues are routinely discussed; for example, students argued spontaneously in Spanish the extent to which

an advertisement was sexist. Students learn to consider other viewpoints and say this has helped them to become more tolerant.

## The effectiveness of leadership and management

## Inadequate

- The Principal and governors have been unable to bring about the necessary improvement to the quality of teaching and consistently improve outcomes for students. No overarching strategic plan is in place to ensure the college delivers its mission and strategic objectives. Governors are ineffective in holding the senior team to account.
- The college is currently undergoing a period of significant organisational change and a new curriculum middle management structure has been implemented. This is designed to give greater autonomy and decision-making power to managers at the separate sites and drive improvement more effectively at a local level. Managers and staff feel the new structure will enable the college to increase its rate of progress; however, it is too soon to see the impact of these changes.
- In the past three years, leaders have not been successful in improving outcomes consistently or quickly enough across different subjects. There has been an improvement in overall success rates since the last inspection, bringing outcomes in line with the national average. Vocational subjects continue to perform well, however, improvements in some academic subjects have been very modest and the success rate at intermediate level has not improved.
- An effective electronic system for monitoring students' progress has been introduced; it allows students, staff and parents to monitor performance against academic and personal targets, although it is not used consistently well across the college. Improvements made to the quality and accessibility of management information allow managers to gather data to monitor performance against targets, but the analysis and impact of this vary widely between managers and teachers across different subjects.
- The system used to monitor and improve the quality of teaching has too little impact and is not sufficiently focused on underperforming areas. A large number of lesson observations were carried out last year by college observers and a very large majority were judged to be good or outstanding. This is unrepresentative of the sample of observations completed by inspectors who found most lessons to be good with a very small proportion of outstanding and a minority that required improvement. Apart from lesson observations, the college uses little other evidence to assess the quality of teaching.
- Staff development and support for teachers has too little impact. Sharing of good practice, especially between sites, relies largely upon individual teachers being proactive rather than management initiatives.
- The Principal and senior leaders are not set challenging targets as part of their performance review. There is too little moderation or external assessment of the overall success of the college; leaders use too few objective criteria to measure the quality of Cheadle and Marple against similar colleges.
- The self-assessment process is weak. Course reviews do not inform the whole-college self-assessment report and too few links exist between self-assessment and improvement plans. Grading is overgenerous in many areas, particularly those related to the quality of teaching and the impact of leadership.
- The college provides a broad range of AS- and A-level subjects and a particularly good range of vocational programmes including apprenticeships. A new three-year curriculum plan has been drawn up to review the curriculum offer at all sites to ensure it remains viable and continues to meet the needs of the local community, but it is too early to judge the impact of this initiative.
- A good range of strategies are in place to gather the views of students. An annual conference focuses on obtaining students' views on all aspects of college life including the quality of



teaching and learning. Feedback from students, employers and parents is very positive about the quality of provision provided.

- A key strength of the college is its approach to providing an inclusive curriculum that attracts a broad range of students. The gap in success rates between male and female students was closed last year although some minor gaps remain according to age and ethnicity. Equality and diversity are promoted well at whole-college level although inconsistency is found across subjects.
- Safeguarding arrangements are comprehensive. The provider meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding students. All staff and governors undergo appropriate training. Students' responses to surveys indicate that they feel safe in and around all college sites and are fully supported. A safeguarding committee ensures all aspects of safeguarding are robustly monitored.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Cheadle and Marple College

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-18 Learning programmes	19+ Learning programmes
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	3	3	3
Outcomes for learners	3	3	3
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	3	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management	4	4	4

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Mathematics and statistics	3
Visual arts and media	3
Social sciences	3
English and modern foreign languages	2

## Provider details

### Cheadle and Marple College

Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 2301
	Part-time: 371

<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Ms Christina Cassidy
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26-29 September 2009
<b>Website address</b>	<a href="http://www.camsfc.ac.uk">http://www.camsfc.ac.uk</a>

<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 and above</b>	
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
<b>Full-time</b>	27	20	126	1	1800	125	0	0
<b>Part-time</b>	10	27	12	274	15	149	0	11
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	61	34	25	100	0	0		
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	0							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	0							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	0							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	Nil							

## Additional socio-economic information

The college has three main sites, one located in Cheadle and two in Marple. Less than 5% of the Stockport population are from minority ethnic backgrounds, this is reflected at the Marple campus, whereas the Cheadle campus is more diverse, reflecting the population of south Manchester. The borough of Stockport is relatively prosperous, although pockets of social and economic disadvantage exist. Many of the students who attend the Cheadle campus live in less prosperous areas. The college also draws students from rural Derbyshire who attend at the Marple site. The proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics is above average across the areas where the college recruits. However, the college cohort includes a high proportion of learners who did not attain these levels. Rates of unemployment vary widely across the catchment area but are around the national average overall.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Andrew Johnson HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the Head of Marple Campus as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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