Learning and Skills inspection report Date published: March 2013 Inspection Number: 388326 URN: 130588



# John Leggott College Sixth form college

Inspection dates		12–15 February 2013		
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement-3</b>		
Overall enectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate-4		
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3		
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3		
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2		

# Summary of key findings for learners

#### This provider requires improvement because:

- Although teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection, there are still too many lessons that are not yet good.
- The rate of learners' progress is too inconsistent across subjects; it varies from excellent progress on some courses to slow progress on others.
- Success rates on a minority of courses are below the national averages.
- Insufficient attention is paid to the development of learners' English and mathematical skills.
- Some aspects of quality assurance remain weaker than others, for example, the rigour in course reviews is not matched in the staff appraisal system.

#### This provider has the following strengths:

- The senior leadership team shows a determined and effective drive to improve the college, which led to a significant increase in success rates in 2011/12.
- Staff now share a positive culture, with a strong commitment to bringing about further improvements in teaching and learning.
- Support systems are good and learners speak highly of the range of additional help they can access outside lessons.
- The college has a self-critical approach which ensures it identifies accurately the areas that are not yet good, leading to sharply focused action plans.
- The college values the views of learners very highly and responds promptly to issues they raise.

# Full report

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

- Raise success rates and improve learners' rates of progress on underperforming courses by strengthening further the identification and sharing of good practice in teaching, learning and assessment. Ensure all teachers pay close attention to how individuals learn most effectively, and that they use this information to plan activities to stretch and challenge all learners. Ensure all teachers understand the importance of individual progress measures as well as course success rates.
- Raise the profile of English and mathematics across the whole college and place a much stronger emphasis on the development of learners' English and mathematical competencies. As a matter of priority, increase the proportion of learners who gain A\* to C grades in GCSE English and mathematics.
- Draw together more effectively the different strands of quality assurance and strengthen the effectiveness of weaker aspects. In particular, ensure that the appraisal system holds individual staff to account for the performance of learners on their courses and that they set challenging targets for learners' progress.
- Develop further the system for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that targeted staff development leads to sustained improvements in the quality of lessons delivered.

## **Inspection judgements**

Outcomes for learners Requires improvement

- The college made significant progress in improving outcomes for learners in 2011/12. Success rates on advanced-level courses, on which the overwhelming majority of learners are enrolled, increased by 10 percentage points and are now in line with the national average for sixth-form colleges.
- On AS- and A-level programmes, both the proportion of learners retained on courses and pass rates are now at the national average. This is a significant improvement, particularly for AS-level courses, since the last inspection. However, within this overall picture a minority of advancedlevel courses have not demonstrated the same level of improvement. Strategies in place to address this are beginning to have some impact in the current year.
- Success rates on intermediate-level courses remained too low in 2011/12. Action has been taken to broaden the range of courses on offer and to ensure learners are on the correct course. In the current year the retention of learners on these programmes is much better.
- Learners generally develop an appropriate range of skills. They increase their confidence in carrying out independent research as well as working together in groups. The college's current priority on developing oral skills is helping learners to explain their ideas and carry out presentations more effectively.
- The progress made by learners is too variable across the college. It is generally good on courses leading to BTEC qualifications. On AS- and A-level programmes, learners' progress varies from excellent to poor. Generally, learners from a higher-ability level achieve challenging targets but for too many of the other learners the level of progress they make is better on some courses than others.
- The college has successfully narrowed the gaps in achievement between some identified groups of learners. There is now very little difference between success rates for male and female students. Learners from minority ethnic groups achieve at least in line with their peers and many achieve higher success rates. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve

success rates that are slightly above the college average. The very small number of students aged 19+ achieve less well than other learners.

- The development of English and mathematical skills requires improvement. Too many learners who retake a GCSE in these subjects do not improve to grade C or above. In the current year, the college has introduced a diagnostic test to gain a better understanding of learners' levels of literacy and numeracy at the start of their course, and alternative qualifications are now in place for those who are not yet ready for the GCSE.
- A high proportion of learners who complete their courses make good progress when they leave the college. A substantial number of those going on to higher education gain places at prestigious universities. Others go on to further education or training or gain employment.
- The college delivers a successful course for young people at risk of not being in education, employment or training when they leave school. Many of these learners progress into employment at the end of their course.

#### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet consistently good to enable learners to make the progress they are capable of in all lessons. However, the quality of teaching and learning is improving, which led to much better success rates on the majority of courses in 2011/12. Learners' attendance is monitored closely and attendance rates are good.
- Improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is a key strategic priority for the college. Teachers are enthusiastic and are beginning to identify and share good practice more effectively. The introduction of teaching and learning coaches and a focused staff development programme are promoting a culture in which staff reflect much more on their classroom practice and are keen to improve.
- Academic support for learners is good. Learners benefit from a lot of individual informal support from their teachers. They are also able to attend timetabled extra support sessions for each subject and many learners speak highly of how these sessions help them.
- In the better lessons, teachers have high expectations for learners, set high standards and use a variety of active learning techniques. For example, in law, learners' analytical skills are fully extended through the use of case studies, and art and design students develop sophisticated evaluation skills when interpreting composition in painting.
- Good use is made of information technology to enliven some lessons. For example, learners on a travel and tourism course used online discussion boards effectively to share ideas about survival in an air crash. Use of the college's virtual learning environment is mixed. In the best examples, teachers provide a good range of interactive resources which learners can use to extend their knowledge and understanding. Less effective examples are where teachers just use the system for posting basic course documents.
- Although teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection, too many lessons still require improvement. In these classes, teachers do not use questioning effectively to encourage discussion, check understanding or help learners develop their own ideas. Although most teachers set additional work at the end of lessons, too often the conclusions of lessons are rushed and students do not have enough time to reflect on their learning. In a small number of lessons, learners complete assignment work with insufficient input from the teachers and no review of individual targets.
- Information, advice and guidance are appropriate. The extended induction and initial assessment period introduced this year provides detailed information about learners and is helping to ensure they are on the correct course. Learners at risk of underperformance are identified early and required to attend support sessions, although take up is mixed. Good links exist with schools and transition arrangements are effective, including arrangements for students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These learners receive high-quality support and are successful.

- A recently introduced electronic system provides a comprehensive summary of learners' performance to help monitor their progress. Communication between subject specialists and pastoral tutors (known as community mentors) is generally good. Community mentors set short-term improvement targets with their students and most learners have regular individual reviews with their mentor.
- The assessment of learners' work varies in quality and rigour across subjects. Some teachers provide detailed and thorough feedback to help learners to improve but in other examples marking is too superficial. Good examples include sport, where detailed and timely teacher feedback and peer reviews enable learners to reflect upon their work and identify areas for improvement. Where assessment is less effective, insufficient attention is paid to correcting grammar, spelling and punctuation and feedback comments are too brief.
- The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons is mixed. Examples of good practice exist in some subjects, including visual arts and media, and social sciences and humanities, where teachers help learners to explore issues such as class, race and stereotyping. Promotion of equality and diversity is not yet embedded in all subjects. However, there is an inclusive culture in the college and learners from a wide range of backgrounds work very effectively together.

#### Science and Mathematics and statistics Learning programmes for 16-18 Learning programmes for 19+

- Variability in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment leads to better outcomes for learners on some courses than others. Overall success rates are around the national average. In physics, success rates have been significantly higher than average for several years. In other AS- and A-level courses, success rates show an improving trend.
- The progress made by learners is too variable. In 2011/12, learners made excellent progress in physics, expected levels of progress in some subjects and slow progress on a few courses. Improvements to teaching and learning on underperforming courses in the current year are having a positive impact on the progress made in lessons.
- Many teachers are ambitious for their learners. In the better lessons, teachers provide engaging and interesting activities and relate these to the real world. In applied science, for example, a task on calculating the earth's diameter helped learners to link the theoretical and practical aspects of the course.
- The weaker sessions are too reliant on teacher-led activities in which learners are passive and not engaged in a range of activities to develop their understanding. In many classes, teachers use information about learners' previous knowledge and ability to plan the learning but this does not yet happen in all lessons.
- In the better planned lessons, learners benefit from timed activities and a good pace. This encourages them to challenge themselves and work at a level suited to their individual needs, with some learners working on more difficult questions. This good practice is not shared sufficiently between different subject areas.
- Support for learning is generally good. Learners benefit from additional workshops held at lunchtime although some of these are better attended than others. In one of the popular sessions, learners were helped to improve their understanding of a difficult mathematical topic.
- Learners are assessed appropriately at the start of their course to inform their individual targetsetting. Where additional short-term targets are set in class, these help to motivate students to do better. All learners are aware of the grade they are currently achieving and what they need to do to improve.
- Assessment and questioning are used more effectively in some classes than others. In the weaker sessions, questioning does not stretch the learners. Students generally benefit from regular marking of their work. Peer assessment is used skilfully in the better lessons to help learners understand the demands of external tests and practical assignments.

- Development of skills in English and mathematics requires improvement. There is a lack of planning to identify opportunities in courses to develop the skills of learners in a systematic way. However, there are some better examples, such as the development of learners' oracy skills in applied science.
- Information, advice and guidance have been strengthened to ensure that learners are on the correct course. The recent introduction of 'pathways for learning' ensures learners are enrolled on an appropriate mixture of courses. In addition, entry requirements have been reviewed for some subjects to ensure learners have the correct level of skills to succeed on the course. These measures contributed to significantly improved success rates on AS chemistry and biology in 2011/12 but it is too early to see an impact on A-level results.
- Learners meet regularly with their community mentor to review their progress. Follow up of learners who are underachieving is not systematic in some subjects. Learners receive good support in their applications to higher education and many achieve their ambitions to study at university. Good links are made with specific university departments to help learners who want to study medicine and dentistry.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is adequate. Learners work well together and respect each other. Specific support is in place for learners with additional needs. For example, in a mathematics class a bilingual dictionary was provided to help a learner, who speaks English as an additional language, to understand and progress in the lesson.

#### Visual arts and Media Learning programmes for 16-18 Learning programmes for 19+

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and ensure that most learners' achievements are also good. Learners produce high standards of work and these are celebrated appropriately by displays around the classrooms. Learners develop sound research and evaluation skills and work hard both independently and collaboratively. Art and design students make good progress relative to their starting points but on a few courses in the media area progress is more limited for some learners.
- Most lessons are carefully planned with good attention paid to the needs of individual learners. Teachers make the aims of each session clear at the start of the lesson. They set relevant homework and extension activities to encourage learners to continue researching and working outside of lessons.
- The quality of planning is not effective in a minority of cases and the very good practice of some staff is not shared sufficiently with others. Students are enthusiastic in most lessons; they show less interest in a small number where teaching is dull and uninspiring.
- Learners produce lively, experimental sketchbooks and high-quality research journals. Exceptionally good teaching of visual analysis successfully develops learners' skills. For example, after class evaluation of a large modern abstract painting, learners skilfully transferred the skills to analyse artwork of their own choice.
- Learners have access to good resources. They are surrounded by good quality and imaginative examples of relevant contextual displays. Access to computers and specialist equipment and materials is good.
- Feedback to learners in lessons is regular and helps them to improve their work. In a minority of lessons, there is insufficient use of directed questioning to check understanding and involve all learners. Plenaries to recap learning at the end of lessons are sometimes too rushed.
- Students' behaviour is very good. Learners feel safe at the college and the promotion of health and safety is generally good. Occasionally, teachers allow learners to wear headphones and listen to music while they are working, which prevents them hearing information.

- Monitoring of learners' progress is very effective. Teachers are good at devising interesting activities that encourage learners to reflect on their own work and evaluate it against clear criteria. Assessment is frequent, rigorous and closely linked to targets. Learners value the timely marking of their work and the comprehensive feedback they receive to help them make further improvements.
- English and mathematics are appropriately embedded into coursework. Essays and assignments show good levels of written skills and confident use of vocationally specific terminology. Learners use annotation skills competently in design work. Development of their information technology skills is good and they are used effectively in research and design tasks.
- Effective support and guidance enable students to learn successfully. Entry tasks have been devised to strengthen initial assessment and ensure learners can benefit fully from their chosen courses. Good links with schools help potential students to understand course requirements. Learners value highly the extra support sessions they can attend during their course.
- Promotion of equality and diversity is good. Many different cultural references are explored in art and design and media assignments and stereotypes are challenged. Learners write carefully thought-out briefs exploring issues of race, religious tolerance and bullying.

#### Humanities and Social sciences Learning programmes for 16-18 Learning programmes for 19+

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because too few learners make sufficient progress over time. Although most learners who complete their courses pass the examination, some are capable of higher grades than they achieve. Progress is better in history, geography and politics than in sociology and psychology. In recent years, too many learners did not complete AS-level courses but this trend was reversed in 2011/12 and retention in the current year has improved further.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects, which many use skilfully to help learners gain a sound grasp of concepts and theories. Most lessons begin with a good recap of previous learning which consolidates students' knowledge and understanding. Teachers pay close attention to examination criteria but teaching sometimes becomes too focused on examination criteria to the detriment of deeper learning and understanding.
- Although some lessons are carefully planned to meet the different learning needs of individuals, others pay insufficient attention to students' learning and progress. There are too few checks on learning and the timing of activities is not sharp enough, so that learners become easily distracted.
- In the better lessons, teachers use learning activities which motivate students. Students have specific times to complete tasks and their focus on learning is good. In a well-structured history lesson learners were engaged in effective group work to give assessments of Viking society, including notions of democracy, freedom and slavery. In a psychology lesson on schizophrenia learners used practical objects to demonstrate and help them understand the impact of drugs on the brain.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers use questioning skilfully to challenge learners to justify and develop their answers. For example, in a geography lesson on earthquakes learners were encouraged to give detailed answers which extended their learning. However, in several lessons teachers do not target their questions sufficiently. Although most teachers set additional work at the end of lessons, too often the conclusions of lessons are rushed and students have little time to reflect on their learning.
- Learners access a good range of resources, including useful teacher-produced booklets. Good use is made of the college's virtual learning environment in most subjects. In psychology teachers have recently added excellent work produced by students as learning and revision aids. In history and sociology self-supportive lessons are available on the intranet to help learners

with revision and additional independent work. Enrichment activities include subject-related societies and visiting speakers.

- Learners know the targets they are working towards and their progress is monitored regularly. Teachers have a good knowledge of their students and give them valuable support to improve. This includes regular focused revision and study sessions at lunchtimes for groups and individuals. Initial guidance and recruitment have improved this year to ensure a better match between learners and the subjects and levels for which they have enrolled. Written work is set and marked regularly and learners receive useful feedback to help them improve.
- Appropriate attention is paid to the development of learners' English and mathematical skills through subject teaching.
- Promotion of equality and diversity is good. For example, in politics the topic of race in the United States is deliberately chosen as an area for exploration. Teachers are sensitive to the differing backgrounds and experiences of their students. In one sociology classroom a map of the world is displayed to demonstrate the cultural diversity of students in the group.

#### **Business studies and Law** Learning programmes for 16-18 Learning programmes for 19+

- Most of the lessons observed were judged as requiring improvement. Although there have been some improvements to teaching and learning, which have contributed to increased success rates, the majority of teaching lacks variety and learning activities are not sufficiently challenging. In A-level law, learners make very good progress against their previous attainment but on business studies courses learners' progress is more mixed.
- Staff have good subject knowledge which they use effectively in the better lessons to bring the learning to life. In one example, learners extended their knowledge of consumer rights with reference to recent events regarding the labelling of meat products.
- Learners generally work diligently and enjoy their learning. They demonstrate good employability skills including communication, teamwork and organisation. For example, in ASlevel business, learners develop analytical skills which they demonstrated clearly and confidently in a lesson which explored different types of leadership and how this impacts on employees.
- Lesson plans include a range of information about learners but this is not always used effectively to meet the needs of individuals in the class. In some lessons learners are too passive because of an over-reliance on a teacher-led approach which does not engage learners and get them to think for themselves. The pace of learning is too slow and teachers do not build on, challenge and extend learners' knowledge sufficiently. In too many lessons teachers do not effectively question learners to determine their level of understanding.
- In the better lessons, classroom delivery includes a range of activities which encourage learners to work independently and collaboratively, for example, where learners worked effectively in groups to research and prepare a promotional marketing campaign. Accommodation and resources could be used to aid learning more effectively by improved use of interactive technology and by ensuring group work takes place in rooms that can be organised appropriately.
- Initial assessment of learners is thorough and carried out over a six week period. This approach assists teachers in determining the level of learners' abilities and whether they require additional support. Target grades are set for learners and recorded on their individual learning plan, which is updated regularly after assessments. This enables learners to have a clear view of where they are up to and what they need to do to achieve their qualification.
- The development of English and mathematical skills requires improvement. Students are not always reminded to check their spelling, punctuation and grammar. For business students, mathematics is integrated into finance lessons.

- Support for learners is good and they value the help they receive from additional support tutors in lessons, the community mentors and learning mentors. Learners can keep up to date with the progress they are making by checking their electronic progress tracker, and they know where to seek extra assistance if required.
- Good oral feedback provides learners with helpful pointers, but feedback on learners' written work is inconsistent. Good examples of constructive comments help learners to know how they can improve their work but in other cases there is very little feedback on learners' work.
- Advice and guidance from community mentors effectively support learning and progression. Learners receive good information and guidance to enable them to make choices about further study and career progression. The majority progress to further training or higher education.
- Learners have an adequate understanding of equality and diversity and treat each other and staff with respect. Equality and diversity are addressed at induction and in subsequent sessions with community mentors. However, their promotion in lessons is underdeveloped. For example, typical stereotyping about male and female roles is not always challenged.

#### The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The governors and principal have taken decisive and effective action to reverse a declining trend in success rates. The Principal has led developments to drive change and establish a culture focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning, and the learner experience. Governors sought external support to develop their capacity to monitor the college's performance and provide an appropriate degree of challenge, which they are now doing increasingly effectively.
- The short-term development plan sets clear and challenging targets for learners' success rates in 2013, building on the significant improvements made in 2011/12. Longer-term planning is at an earlier stage of development. Much research has been done into local needs, and links with other local educational institutions and agencies are productive.
- The college curriculum offer provides a wide range of AS- and A-level courses and a smaller number of vocational courses. The intermediate-level curriculum has been revised appropriately this year, with further plans for September 2013. Improved information, advice and guidance ensure that learners take an appropriate combination of courses. Improving retention rates in the current year confirm the effectiveness of this work.
- The management of teaching and learning has been strengthened since the last inspection, with individual support plans in place to develop teaching judged to be less than good. Reobservations check that practice is improving although the college recognises further work is needed to ensure improvement is sustained.
- As well as targeted support for individual teachers, all staff benefit from training on specific themes such as the use of questioning and how to develop learners' oral skills. Departments have been paired for the purpose of identifying and sharing good practice. Managers have started to carry out 'learning walks' through classrooms to check implementation. This is in addition to the grading of formal observations that was introduced after the last inspection. This closer monitoring is helping managers to identify where further training is required.
- As a result of the focus on teaching and learning, there is now very little inadequate teaching and an increasing number of lessons that are good or better, although the college recognises that this needs to be increased further.
- Quality assurance arrangements have been reviewed and are more rigorous. The college's quality plan is sharply focused on the learner experience, and students' contribution to college decision making has been enhanced greatly. Learners welcome this, including 'buzz the boss', which allows them to send a message directly to the principal. Learners' views are collected regularly and elected student representatives play an important role, especially in course reviews.

- The self-assessment report is informed by detailed comparative data and judgements are realistic. Quality improvement planning is more effective. Course and subject plans follow a common format that ensures staff teams focus on actions that will impact on outcomes for learners. Plans include specific and challenging targets for success rates although targets for improving learners' progress are too modest in some cases. Regular course reviews take place to check the effectiveness of improvement plans.
- Middle managers have had training to develop their leadership skills and are now being held more accountable for the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility. The formal staffappraisal process does not draw sufficiently on data relating to each individual teacher's performance. Targets arising from appraisals are sometimes expressed in vague terms that are not always sufficiently measurable. Nevertheless, where individual performance issues are identified through other quality assurance processes, they are followed up assiduously. Work to strengthen the appraisal system has begun.
- The performance of different groups of learners is monitored carefully, leading to effective closure of gaps in success rates. For example, success rates for learners from Bangladeshi heritage and Pakistani heritage, which were too low at the last inspection, have now surpassed the college average and are higher than the national rates for these groups of learners. The equality and diversity forum is now working to build awareness among staff of the good practice that exists in some areas to promote equality and diversity in teaching.
- The college meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. Staff and governors are trained appropriately.

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

Provider name John Leggott 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
Overall effectiveness	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	2	2	2

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Science	3
Mathematics and statistics	3
Visual Arts	2
Humanities	3
Social Sciences	3
Business Studies	3

# **Provider details**

Provider name John Leggott College			
Type of provider	Sixth form college		
Age range of learners	16+		
Approximate number of all learners over the previous	Full-time: 1,578		
full contract year	Part-time: 520		
Principal/CEO	David Vasse		
Date of previous inspection	November 2011		
Website address	www.leggott.ac.uk		

Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	5	0	83	5	1,629	34	0	0
Part-time	0	0	16	4	119	3	0	0
								-
Number of apprentices by	Intermediate Ad			Adva	vanced Higher			r
Apprenticeship level and age	16-18	19	)+	16-18	19+	16-	-18	19+
	n/a	n,	'a	n/a	n/a	n/	′a	n/a
Number of learners aged 14-16	n/a							
Number of community learners	n/a							
Number of employability learners	n/a							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-	None						

# Additional socio-economic information

Students are recruited from a wide geographical area that encompasses Lincolnshire, the East Riding and South Yorkshire, with the majority living in North Lincolnshire. This area is economically and socially diverse, with pockets of socio-economic disadvantage and low educational attainment among the adult population. The proportion of school leavers that gained five or more GCSEs at grades at A\* to C, including English and mathematics, was below the national average in 2012. In

Scunthorpe, where the college is based, the occupational profile is largely unskilled or low skilled. The largest minority ethnic populations in Scunthorpe are Bangladeshi and Pakistani.

## Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Susan Harrison HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the college's director of curriculum and performance 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 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 collect the views of learners and parents; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the college. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the 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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