

City of Bristol College

General further education college

Inspection dates		18-22 February 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Inadequate-4
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Inadequate-4
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Inadequate-4
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is inadequate because:

- Learners' success rates and the progress learners make are inadequate.
- Learners' attendance is very low.
- The development of learners' English and mathematics skills is weak.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate and varies considerably within and between faculties and subject areas.
- Teachers pay insufficient attention to the individual needs of learners and do not challenge learners of different abilities to achieve their potential.
- Learners' development targets do not help learners improve and make good progress. The monitoring of learners' progress against these targets lacks rigour.
- The marking and feedback of learners' work do not help learners to improve and progress.
- Teachers do not promote equality and diversity effectively in lessons and through assessment.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Annual staff appraisal does not use enough management information to measure performance accurately and rarely identifies underperformance.
- The promotion of equality and diversity through initiatives across sites varies considerably.

This provider has the following strengths:

- Very good outcomes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Good development of learners' practical, personal and social skills. Learners behave well and show respect to their peers and to staff.
- Good accommodation in most areas which provides an environment conducive to learning, and good resources which are used well to develop learners' practical skills.
- Wide commitment by staff to the new vision and mission from the new senior managers and governors which focus strongly on improving teaching and learning and outcomes for learners.
- The wide range of key partnerships which engage learners who have not traditionally attended college and provide very effective progression routes.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase the overall effectiveness of the provision in the inadequate subject areas and in functional skills by improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and leadership and management in these areas.
- Enable teachers to improve learners' English and mathematics skills during lessons and through marking and feedback of their work by sharing the good practice which exists in certain areas of the college.
- Increase the effectiveness of learners' short-term target setting so that they are specific to their needs and help them to progress rapidly. Through more effective use of the individual learning plan, ensure the frequent and rigorous monitoring of learners' progress against these targets. Enable rapid intervention to support less able learners and to challenge more able ones so that all learners achieve their full potential.
- Provide staff development to teachers and learning support staff so that they work cooperatively to improve the quality of the learning experience for all learners. Enable teachers to use a wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities which cater for the needs of learners of different abilities and which inspire them to make high levels of progress.
- Strengthen the monitoring of the effectiveness and usefulness of assessment for learners so that their work is marked appropriately and thoroughly and feedback really does enable them to improve in their next assignment.
- Increase teachers' awareness of, and their ability to make the best of, opportunities to promote issues which relate naturally to equality and diversity in lessons and through assessments. Share the good practice which exists in centres to promote equality and diversity more widely so that all learners and staff benefit from these initiatives.
- Improve the effectiveness of the appraisal process so that it takes account of a wide range of management information and evidence to inform judgements on staff's accountability for their learners' outcomes.
- Increase learners' success rates and the progress they make by applying the recommendations above with great rigour and by close monitoring of the effectiveness of action plans to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Inadequate
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- Long course success rates for classroom-based learners increased last year but are very low. Too many learners who start intermediate level courses do not achieve their qualifications. Most subject areas have low or very low success rates. The main reason for the poor success rates is that many learners do not complete their courses. Short course success rates for the very large number of learners involved also increased last year, but are low.
- Most learners on advanced level courses do not make the progress expected of them, given their relatively high prior attainment, except for learners on the diploma in childcare and those studying AS subjects. Consequently, the proportion of high grade passes gained by advanced level learners in the last three years is low. The proportion of learners achieving high grade passes in GCSE subjects is very low.
- Overall apprenticeship framework completion success rates are very low and the proportion of apprentices completing within their expected timescales is extremely low. Both measures are the lowest for three years. The proportion of learners completing their workplace learning

programmes within the expected timescale is very low and their overall framework success rates are low.

- Attendance has been poor for three years and during inspection was very low. Most learners who do attend arrive on time for their lessons. Most learners enjoy their lessons and college life and behave well. Many learners develop valuable personal and social skills. They interact maturely with each other and treat their peers and staff with respect.
- The standard of learners' work and the development of their literacy and numeracy skills are high for workplace learning in administration. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities produce work of a very high standard, develop their literacy and numeracy skills extremely well and make very good progress on their course. Most learners in other areas produce work of a satisfactory standard.
- The development of most learners' English and mathematical skills during lessons and through assessment is poor. The proportion of learners achieving their functional skills qualifications decreased significantly last year and is extremely low. Success rates on skills for life courses are extremely low for learners of all ages.
- Outcomes for learners from different minority ethnic backgrounds do not differ significantly from other learners, except for those aged 16 to 18 from Irish and White and Black African backgrounds and adults from any other Black/African/Caribbean backgrounds whose success rates are low. Adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve much better than those without a declared learning difficulty and/or disability.
- College data indicate that four out of five leavers last year entered further or higher education or employment. Managers have not had a rigorous and comprehensive system to collect and analyse learners' actual destinations, but a recent survey of a relatively small number of leavers aged 16 to 18 enabled college staff to work with them and to re-engage them.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The very poor standards of teaching, learning and assessment reflect the very poor outcomes for many learners. Teaching, learning and assessment vary significantly in quality both within and between faculties and subject areas. Managers acknowledge that unacceptable variations exist and, consequently, many learners do not make sufficient progress. In order to give a wider view of teaching, learning and assessment, a significant number of lesson observations took place in areas not directly inspected.
- Inspectors observed a minority of good or better lessons. In these lessons, teachers set high expectations and challenging tasks which motivate and engage learners and help them to develop skills to become independent learners. In the many less effective lessons, learners are not inspired or involved in their learning. Despite the fact that most teachers are knowledgeable and experienced, they have low expectations of learners and lessons are often dull.
- In the best lessons, teachers make creative use of the many good resources and pay good attention to health and safety in practical lessons. They use information and learning technology and the virtual learning environment to good effect to develop learners' independent learning skills.
- In many lessons, planning to meet the needs of individual learners is insufficient or is not implemented. This is particularly so in the very important functional English lessons. Teachers use a very narrow range of learning and assessment activities. They pay insufficient attention to adapting learning to ensure that weaker learners are supported and the more able are encouraged to achieve their full potential.
- The college provides good pre-course information, advice and guidance to enable learners to enrol on the most appropriate courses for their interests and abilities. Many learners benefit from a thorough initial assessment process which ensures they are placed on the right learning programmes. This also identifies their learning needs and additional learning support is provided promptly. The support needs of other learners, however, are either not met until too late in their learning programmes or not met at all.

- The quality of additional learning support is poor. A few learners receive highly effective and well-tailored specialist support which helps them to make good progress. Many learners, however, do not benefit from support because it is too general and is not integrated into their learning programmes. Teachers have profiles of their learners which identify their additional learning needs, but most do not make good use of this information to plan individual learning.
- Managers have extended the use of electronic individual learning plans, through which teachers agree targets with learners. Many of these targets are not clear, meaningful or demanding, and they are not specific to the individual learner. They are often about general coursework matters.
- Assessment of learners’ progress and understanding in lessons is poor. In the few good examples, teachers plan and implement very useful assessment activities in lessons and make good use of probing and well-directed questioning to check learning. In many weak lessons, however, learning objectives are less clear. Learners are unaware of their progress towards their learning goals and what they need to do to improve.
- Feedback on written assignments is weak. A few learners receive detailed and evaluative comments which identify clearly how they can progress. For many learners, the feedback is too brief and it does not aid improvement. Often, teachers do not correct spelling or grammatical errors, including those which change the meaning of the sentence. In workplace learning, tutors do not use progress reviews to help learners reflect on their vocational skills and how they might develop these beyond the immediate assessment requirements.
- Teachers pay little attention to improving learners’ English and mathematics skills. In the best lessons, tutors develop these skills effectively using examples relevant to learners’ vocational areas. However, in many lessons, teachers do not plan or use learning activities which develop and test their learners’ English and mathematics skills.
- Advice and guidance for learners’ progression are occasionally helpful. In business administration, learners have access to high quality vocational placements and in sport and public service programmes, learners are well prepared for future careers. Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities benefit from good partnerships that offer realistic and challenging work placements. Managers recognise, however, that in other areas advice and guidance are not offered early enough and have little impact in helping learners to progress to employment or higher education.
- Learners work in good learning environments that are conducive to learning. Teachers manage behaviour well and bullying and harassment are not tolerated. Equality and diversity, however, are not promoted appropriately in lessons. Whilst a few teachers pay good attention to celebrating diversity, such as in planning menus and developing website design, relevant opportunities to develop learners’ awareness and understanding of equality and diversity issues are frequently missed.

<p>Health, social care, early years and playwork</p> <p>Learning programmes for 16-18</p> <p>Learning programmes for 19+</p>	<p>Requires improvement</p>
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- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement and this correlates with the low outcomes for learners. Overall success rates are low, but on the better performing courses are close to average. Standards of teaching, learning and assessment vary considerably across the area, but attendance is improving.
- In the most effective lessons, learners are motivated to improve and are involved in a variety of well-paced, demanding and meaningful learning activities. They make good progress. In the less effective lessons, teachers do not inspire or challenge learners and they do not make as much progress as they could.

- Support for learners is good. Learners are assisted effectively by motivated, knowledgeable tutors and placement and support staff who are committed to improving teaching and learning. The provision of work placements for all learners is good because most gain useful work skills and meaningful first-hand experiences. Teachers make good links between theory and practical skills in many lessons and learners’ work experiences are used to enhance learning.
- Learning resources are good and are often used well by staff and learners to aid understanding. In the best lessons, teachers use the virtual learning environment, information and learning technology and interactive quizzes well to involve learners of all abilities in learning.
- The quality of lesson planning varies. In the best planned lessons, consideration is given to differentiated strategies to meet individual learning needs through very effective use of initial assessment and detailed profiles. In other lessons, however, generalised statements about differentiation and reference to initial assessment outcomes have little impact and learners of all abilities complete the same activity for the same length of time.
- Team leaders ensure learners are involved in tracking their own progress, but this is done in different ways. Plans are in place to standardise tracking across the department, incorporating the best practices from the early years section. In many lessons, questioning is general and it does not check individual learning rigorously or frequently. Group activities do not capture individual contributions and understanding.
- Learners’ progress on work placement is reviewed frequently. In the most effective progress reviews, tutors emphasise how learners can best make progress. In the less effective examples, however, planned progression is not clearly identified and minimum target grades are not reviewed when they should be.
- Assessment of learning is inconsistent. The best portfolios are organised and well presented. Learners receive specific feedback which encourages them to aim higher. Teachers correct spelling and grammatical errors and help learners to improve their English. In the less effective cases, the language used in written feedback is inaccessible to learners with low levels of literacy.
- The development of learners’ literacy and numeracy skills is inconsistent. In the best lessons, learners’ language skills are extended very successfully through carefully planned learning activities, glossaries and word walls. In the less effective ones, teachers miss opportunities to structure learning activities to develop language and literacy skills for less able learners.
- Information, advice and guidance are good. Learners have frequent opportunities through the year to receive good information about how they may progress on completion of their courses. Managers have planned curriculum development carefully to meet local and learners’ needs.
- The promotion of equality and diversity requires improvement. In the best lessons, planning ensures examples relating to socio-economic factors, cultural diversity and stereotyping are addressed. Resources and case studies reflect a multicultural society. In the less effective lessons, teachers miss naturally occurring opportunities to make appropriate links to matters pertaining to equality and diversity.

Motor vehicle	
Apprenticeships	Inadequate

- Teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate and relate closely to the significant differences in success rates between intermediate and advanced level apprenticeship programmes. Teaching, learning and assessment in lessons are uninspiring, tutor led, slow-paced, and fail to engage, challenge and motivate learners. Lessons are poorly planned to meet learners’ needs.
- Learning objectives are not sufficiently ambitious and the degree of challenge does not encourage learners of all abilities to excel. Lesson objectives are not linked to learners’ individual

learning plans. The planning of teaching and learning to meet individual needs is not effective. Checks on learners’ understanding, learning and progress are infrequent.

- Learners in the paint area benefit from using good learning materials through the recently developed virtual learning environment, but the material for learners on other apprenticeship programmes is insufficient for their needs. Teachers have high levels of vocational skill and practical knowledge and use these well to enrich the experiences of learners in practical workshop lessons. Learners benefit from using the extensive range of industry-standard resources and materials which significantly enhance their practical learning.
- The promotion of health and safety, particularly safe working practices, is good with strong attention paid to the hazards of working in motor vehicle workshops. Learners discuss confidently the correct use of protective equipment, hand tools and machines. They know how to report potentially hazardous incidents and act promptly to minimise risk to themselves and others. Employers help apprentices to work independently under the guidance of a workplace mentor.
- Assessment activities are not well planned. Learners organise their portfolios of evidence well, and make effective use of photographs, but there is an over-reliance on written description. Evidence presented in these portfolios does not do justice to the high levels of learners’ practical skills. Assessor feedback contains little information that helps learners to improve their knowledge and extend their skills. Tutors rarely correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Target setting is poor and does not challenge learners to improve as much as they could. Individual learning plans are ineffective and targets lack detail. The targets in review documents are often not specific or realistic. Review outcomes do not encourage learners to become more independent. A few learners have the potential to make accelerated progress through the learning programme, but these opportunities are often missed.
- The development of learners’ literacy and numeracy skills is not effective. Tutors do not plan to promote these skills and do not implement them in lessons. They miss opportunities to enhance learners’ literacy and numeracy skills in vocational sessions.
- Information, advice and guidance are poor. Learners do not have a clear understanding of progression routes to the next steps in their training or education. They have little knowledge of the career opportunities that exist within their area.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is weak. It is not included in lesson plans and is not covered in lessons. Tutors miss opportunities to include matters relating to equality and diversity. Learners’ understanding of equality and diversity is not well developed.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

Learning programmes for 16-18
Learning programmes for 19+

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement and this judgement matches that for outcomes for learners. Success rates on advanced level beauty therapy are comparable with the high national average, but on advanced level hairdressing have fallen to below average. Many learners do not complete their intermediate level courses. Learners’ attendance and punctuality are low.
- Learners make very good progress in practical lessons in which teachers relate their industrial experience effectively to the development of learners’ vocational skills. Learners demonstrate very good practical skills such as blow drying, cutting and colouring techniques. Beauty therapy learners work confidently and independently on treatments such as manicure, pedicure and facials. Initial advice and guidance are good, but the use of initial assessment and diagnostic profiles to support learners with learning needs in lessons is weak.

- In the best lessons, learners benefit from very good personal support. They develop positive relationships and enjoy their training and study. Teachers set high expectations and learners rapidly develop their understanding. Learners work effectively, both in groups and independently.
- In the less effective lessons, learners with low levels of concentration are not always fully engaged. Teachers talk excessively, questioning is too general and the more passive learners are bored. Learners make slow progress. Teachers do not manage learning well and do not challenge learners’ attitudes effectively. The use of additional support staff in lessons is not always well planned or managed.
- Staff are knowledgeable about their subject and relate industry standards to their lessons effectively. Learners benefit from using very good resources and commercial salons that help them to develop their employability skills. Learners make good use of their own iPhones and information and communication technology to expand and explore their learning and understanding.
- The use of individual learning plans to monitor learners’ progression is ineffective. A focus of tutorials and reviews is, quite rightly, on learners’ attendance, but the links between initial assessment, diagnostic testing, and learners’ progress on the course are unclear. Learners’ targets focus most appropriately on professional standards, but tutors do not monitor progress against these targets rigorously.
- Assessment of learning lacks rigour. In a few cases, teachers do correct learners’ weak spelling appropriately. Teachers’ feedback is often encouraging, rather than being designed to enable learners to make good and rapid progress onto their next stage. Learners are not challenged enough to progress to their full potential. Teachers occasionally use questioning techniques effectively during assessment activities to check that learning has taken place, but this is not applied consistently.
- The planning for, and promotion of, the development of learners’ mathematics and English skills are satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers use the results of the initial assessments of learners’ literacy and numeracy skills to plan learning activities to address these needs. In other lessons, teachers do not use activities to support the development of such skills. In lessons where there are natural opportunities for developing learners’ functional skills, such as in colouring techniques, teachers do not reinforce and develop learners’ numerical skills.
- Teachers do not promote equality and diversity so that learners are able to develop an enhanced awareness and understanding that supports not only their future employability but underpins their personal and social values. Teachers do plan to explore relevant issues linked to equality and diversity, but their use and impact in lessons are ineffective.

<p>Sport, leisure, recreation and public services</p> <p>Learning programmes for 16-18</p> <p>Learning programmes for 19+</p>	<p>Requires improvement</p>
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- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. Changes to curriculum organisation and teaching in this year have resulted in a provision which, whilst historical outcomes for learners were poor, is enabling current learners to benefit from an increasingly effective focus upon ensuring that they remain on their programmes of study and make good progress towards completion.
- Learners on long course programmes benefit from a well-structured induction programme which brings together learners from across the area and ensures that they are prepared well for their programmes of study. They enjoy their learning and value the support they receive from tutors in enabling them to complete their programmes of study. As a consequence, rates of early withdrawal are now low.

- In the best lessons, a variety of well-planned learning activities, supported by skilful questioning, ensure that learners make good progress. In these lessons, teachers have a good knowledge of learners’ prior experience and future aspirations and use this understanding effectively to support learners to achieve their goals. The planning of less effective lessons, however, lacks focus on the individual needs of learners. Consequently, teaching and learning are predominantly tutor led. Teachers make insufficient reference to checking or extending learners’ knowledge.
- Extremely effective pastoral support helps learners to make good progress towards achieving their qualification and employment outcomes. Learners make good use of material from the virtual learning environment to support their learning. Teachers do not, however, give enough priority and emphasis to the college expectations regarding attendance and the achievement of target grades.
- Tutors are well qualified and respected within the industry. They use their experience very effectively to enable learners to access a wide range of opportunities that develop skills to prepare them for their chosen careers. Effective local partnerships enable learners to widen their expertise and skills by using good practical facilities.
- Learners benefit from using a range of systems which enable them to monitor their progress effectively. In the best examples, learners benefit from frequent meetings with tutors which result in clear targets that help them to improve their work. A few learners, however, do not receive sufficiently frequent intervention and support to ensure they reach their potential.
- Assessment is satisfactory. In the best examples, teachers provide supportive feedback that assists learners’ development and celebrates their progress. Good feedback reinforces the development of learners’ practical skills. Less effective assignment briefs, however, provide little advice and guidance for learners to understand how to achieve higher level grades. Feedback is generalised and not specific to the individual learners’ needs.
- The development of learners’ English and mathematics skills varies considerably across the area. In the best examples, teachers give public services learners good support to improve their literacy. In general, teachers do not place enough emphasis on helping learners gain formal qualifications in literacy and numeracy. They do not routinely correct learners’ spelling errors or advise learners how to improve their skills.
- Teachers provide valuable advice and guidance which enable many learners to realise their aspirations to enter employment. They do this through supporting applications for entry into the police service, gym-based employment or outdoor education centres. Consequently, rates of progression into employment, apprenticeships and higher education are high.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is insufficient. Teachers plan to integrate matters relating to equality and diversity in their lessons, but this is not always realised in practice. Tutors miss naturally occurring opportunities in assessment and in lessons to raise issues pertaining to equality and diversity.

<p>Visual and performing arts</p> <p>Learning programmes for 16-18</p> <p>Learning programmes for 19+</p>	<p>Requires improvement</p>
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- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement. Outcomes for learners were poor last year, but through more careful monitoring and timely interventions of learners at risk, current retention rates have increased significantly. Managers recognise that teaching, learning and assessment do not always challenge learners enough to ensure that more achieve high grades.

- In the best lessons, learners are engaged and clearly achieve the required outcomes. They can discuss their own learning and how it fits with their future work plans. Learners are motivated and enthusiastic and produce creative and interesting work. They also benefit from the experience of teachers who are knowledgeable about their subject and are current practitioners.
- In the less effective lessons, questioning does not challenge learners or provide in-depth checks on their learning. Teachers often miss opportunities to ensure that learners develop more rigorous self-evaluation skills and to ensure they work quickly enough in all lessons.
- The range of resources available to learners is mostly good and learners in the music area have access to very high quality industry-standard software, equipment and accommodation. Art and design learners gain a wide range of skills in ceramics, photography and fashion and work on appropriate software such as Photoshop and Illustrator.
- Planning, learning and teaching are not always tailored to the needs of individual learners. Much of the planning for learning is generic and does not contain a wide range of learning activities to meet the needs of learners of different abilities. Teachers do not often use learners’ diagnostic outcomes well to ensure that individuals are challenged to achieve higher level skills.
- The use of online personal learning plans to set specific and stretching targets for individual learners is inconsistent. Although learners receive regular feedback and targets these are often carried out in a variety of ways which are not brought together. This means that learners cannot monitor all of their improvement actions in a simple and coherent way.
- The quality of formal assessment feedback is inconsistent. In the best examples, teachers’ feedback is very thorough and clearly identifies areas for further development which help learners understand how to improve their work. However, in the few less effective cases, teachers do not provide enough detail to help learners understand exactly what they need to do to improve.
- The development of learners’ English and mathematical skills is good. The quality of their written English is often improved by teachers making appropriate corrections on their assessed work. Learners understand how to obtain additional support should they require it and learning assistants provide direct support to help learners achieve. Learners have good access to support from teachers outside lessons to help them complete their work.
- Initial advice and guidance are appropriate to ensure that learners’ needs are met. Learners are routinely expected to audition for courses in the performing arts area and produce a portfolio before enrolling onto visual arts courses. The number of learners who progress internally to higher level courses and progress to higher education, however, is low.
- The promotion of equality and diversity varies. Many teachers actively encourage the understanding of different cultures within assignment briefs and through the texts chosen for learners in performing arts. Other teachers, however, miss opportunities to include the use of wider cultural influences through tutorials and to develop equality and diversity themes through cross-college activities.

<p>Foundation English</p> <p>Learning programmes for 16-18</p> <p>Learning programmes for 19+</p>	<p>Inadequate</p>
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- Teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate. In too many lessons, teaching and learning are not focused on the needs of the individual. Learners are unaware of what they need to do to improve their skills and knowledge of English. The poor quality of teaching, learning and assessment mirrors the consistently poor success rates at foundation and intermediate level.

- A minority of learners makes good progress with English. Adult learners develop their confidence and understanding in using English in everyday life and work well. Learners at lower levels and a few full-time learners on vocational courses studying, for example, brickwork make satisfactory progress in developing their reading skills to a satisfactory standard.
- Not enough teaching and learning are good or better. In the few good lessons, a variety of learning activities, including short film clips and the effective use of interactive whiteboards, keeps learners motivated. Learning materials are linked well to learners’ everyday life. In these lessons, teachers question learners well to promote discussion and to develop speaking and listening skills.
- In the many less effective lessons, learners do not participate fully in learning. Teachers do not plan sufficiently well to ensure that learning materials capture learners’ interest. Consequently, lessons are dull and uninspiring. In a minority of lessons, specialist support staff provide well-targeted, discrete support, particularly to improve learners’ reading skills. Teachers and personal support workers, however, do not collaborate to ensure appropriate assistance is directed to each learner.
- The use of the initial and diagnostic assessment of learners is inconsistent. In the best examples, teachers apply the detailed assessment results well to ensure that learners are guided to courses at the correct level. Many diagnostic assessments, however, are not analysed sufficiently by teachers to identify accurately what learners need to do to improve. Consequently, teachers do not advise learners precisely what each should do to develop their skills and progress to their full potential.
- Teachers’ setting of specific and measurable learning targets in learners’ individual learning plans is very weak. Targets are not clear and measurable. The tracking of learners’ incremental learning steps is inconsistent and learners are unaware of the progress they are making.
- Planning for the achievement of learners’ individual learning targets in lessons is poor. Teachers focus on the requirements of the qualifications, but do not consider the specific skills that individual learners need to develop and practise in order to succeed. Teachers do not identify specific learning activities to challenge learners or to support them in lessons.
- The quality of teachers’ marking of learners’ work varies considerably. A few learners receive good evaluative comments on their marked work. In many cases, however, teachers correct errors but do not indicate how learners can avoid them in future.
- The majority of teachers give good one-to-one support for learners in lessons and create a comfortable and safe learning environment for learners. The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons varies. A good lesson included a valuable emphasis on multiculturalism through identifying the origin of words. In many lessons, however, teachers do not take advantage of ideal opportunities to address matters relating to equality and diversity.

Independent living and leisure skills	
Learning programmes for 16-18 Learning programmes for 19+	Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. This correlates with the very high success rates that learners achieve in their functional skills awards and in skills for working life. Skilled and accurate assessment also contributes to the very good progress that learners make in achieving their personal, social and employability goals.
- Teachers have high expectations of their learners. In one lesson, learners made fresh pasta together with a fresh green pesto sauce. This was prepared and served in a professional manner. Teachers are very aware of how individuals engage with learning tasks most

effectively and in the best lessons they personalise activities so that all learners can complete tasks successfully.

- Staff and learners show mutual respect and teachers encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning wherever possible. Learners feel safe in college. They are aware of their rights and, although they do not experience harassment of any sort, they know how to assert themselves when necessary and are confident that staff will listen to their views.
- Teachers are very well qualified with extensive and relevant experience. They know their learners well. In most lessons, they put the information gained from initial and diagnostic assessment alongside their careful observations of learners to identify and plan how they will meet learners’ individual needs during lessons.
- Staff provide outstanding support for learners. Personal support workers are knowledgeable and are directed well by teachers. Staff use carefully planned support to enable learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties, who originally were isolated and unable to enter lessons, to become active members of their group. Learners who arrive at college in a distressed state are well supported through careful counselling and are enabled to rejoin their peers.
- The provision of work experience is good. Learners benefit from the wide variety of vocational environments that staff have arranged. Learners receive specialist coaching prior to their placements and agree clear targets to help them make good progress with their vocational skills.
- The assessment of learners’ starting points is good. Teachers use a wide range of initial, diagnostic and subject-specific assessments that ensure learners enter the college at the right level. In most lessons, teachers set their learners challenging targets and track their achievements carefully. Many learners are aware of their targets and make their own assessments of their progress. Learners are frequently involved in reviewing their development and updating their individual learning plans.
- Learners are successful in extending their functional skills through teachers’ skilful use of real life scenarios that promote the development of English, mathematics and information and communication technology. In one lesson, the production of the weekly newsletter provided an effective method of integrating all three skills. In many lessons, learners use the available classroom technologies with confidence and a few learners use the interactive whiteboard naturally to aid their learning.
- Staff provide an inclusive learning environment and access for learners with restricted mobility is good. The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons is satisfactory. In one lesson, learners used the events of Shrove Tuesday to examine and appreciate customs from other parts of the world. This type of application to religious or cultural events is not, however, a consistent feature in teachers’ lesson planning.

Administration	Good
Apprenticeships	
Other work based learning	

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and this matches the good outcomes for learners on administration apprenticeship programmes. Because of teachers’ high expectations, learners develop very good business and personal skills, enjoy their learning and participate with high levels of enthusiasm.
- Teachers plan learning well to meet the needs of individual learners and their learning styles. Staff are well qualified to carry out their roles. Learners benefit from the very effective use of teachers’ vocational knowledge and skills. Staff use a wide range of questions to check learners’

understanding and to extend their learning. In a small minority of reviews, assessors do not ask enough probing questions to challenge learners' understanding or knowledge.

- Learners benefit from high quality work placements, through which they develop a wide range of vocational skills. They take on extra responsibilities at work which improve their personal and independent learning skills. For example, they prepare good presentations for different groups of potential business clients.
- Staff use well-planned assessment activities to build on learners' prior knowledge and to extend their learning. They monitor learners' progress effectively through frequent reviews. Staff provide good verbal feedback on completed activities and tasks and this helps learners understand how they should improve.
- Initial assessment is very thorough and ensures that learners are on the right course and level of study and that appropriate support is provided. Specialist tutors give outstanding support to learners with specialist learning and social needs.
- Staff record learners' progress carefully in their learning plan. Progress reviews are effective. Learners know how well they are progressing and assessors set them clear targets so that they know exactly what they need to do to improve. Assessors provide motivational feedback in reviews and from direct observations of learners' workplace performance. Supervisors liaise with assessors frequently and effectively to plan training and assessment activities.
- Staff have improved the quality of target setting, including the development of learners' functional skills. Their use of information and communication technology, however, is insufficient to track and monitor learning and assessment effectively. Assessors spend too much time during learners' reviews completing common information on standard forms.
- Learners have good opportunities to develop and reinforce their English and mathematical skills in the workplace and in the classroom. Teachers pay good attention to the checking and marking of learners' written work. Learners use good levels of literacy and numeracy skills in their job roles, through the completion of tasks such as report writing, calculating sales figures and handling money. Functional skills teachers know learners' needs well and adapt their materials appropriately.
- Initial and final advice and guidance are good and learners access specialist support. Individual support for learners who have had poor educational experiences previously is particularly good. It enables such learners to become more engaged and motivated to succeed.
- The promotion of equality and diversity varies. In the best review sessions, assessors promote matters related to equality and diversity very effectively. Learners give good examples of how, in their workplace setting, they are aware of other learners' difficulties with the language and how they use plain English to ease communication. In the less effective reviews, assessors' questions on equality and diversity issues are superficial and do not encourage learners to be more aware of such matters.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The recently appointed Principal and governors have launched a new mission and vision effectively. These focus on improving teaching, learning and assessment. The executive team, senior managers and staff fully understand and support this new emphasis. They are in the process of implementing major strategies to secure improvements to learners' experiences. An impressively positive cultural change, instigated through highly effective communication, is enabling staff to become more responsible and accountable for learners' outcomes.
- The new chair of governors, new clerk to the corporation and four new governors bring a revitalised, more focused and stronger set of skills to oversee the college's improvement. The annual report of the curriculum and quality committee last year failed to provide the previous board of governors with a clear picture of the poor curriculum performance. Governors are well

aware now, however, of the shortcomings of the college and of the need to ensure that learners have every chance to be successful.

- The current staffing structure is too complex and lines of responsibility are unclear, especially at curriculum area level. The new proposed structure is more streamlined and provides direct and transparent lines of accountability in specific areas. It plans a major reorganisation of the management of learning.
- Strategic and development planning are logical, highly focused on the mission and vision, and contain key success measures that are reviewed frequently by the new executive team and the new governors. They contain short-term plans which enable managers to respond to further change as the plans become implemented and embedded.
- The emphasis on performance management to improve teaching, learning and assessment is strong. Managers are now able to take rapid and decisive action to effect improvements. The appraisal system, however, is not robust. It does not use college key performance indicators or learners' outcome data to measure and monitor staff performance and promote accountability. It is not linked to quality improvement strategies such as the outcomes of lesson observations.
- Senior managers now monitor course performance effectively through frequent review meetings with curriculum managers to consider attendance and retention rates and learners' performance. Staff have access to a single site that holds all college performance data and which enables them to check on learners' data at any time.
- Managers identify underperformance using a range of strategies such as frequent quality audits, observations of lessons and scrutiny of assessments. The number of staff on improvement plans has increased significantly compared with the same time last year. Despite this stronger approach to improvement, these strategies are too recent to provide a measurable impact on learners and on the quality of the learning experience.
- A wide range of outstanding partnerships continues to develop effective projects that engage learners who have not traditionally attended college and provide very useful progression routes from entry level to higher levels and into employment. Innovative projects, using a range of employers, promote higher level learning.
- The self-assessment process provides a realistic analysis of the main areas for improvement, although several key grades are over generous. Improved quality assurance systems have begun to provide a standardised and more rigorous approach to improving the quality of the provision for learners. It is too soon, however, to measure the full impact of these initiatives, especially on improving learners' outcomes.
- The college offers a calm and welcoming environment for its learners. A culture of mutual respect and tolerance pervades the various sites and learners behave in an appropriate fashion. The promotion of equality and diversity across all the sites varies and not all learners have the opportunity to benefit from the good initiatives present in a few centres.
- The college meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. The management of child protection matters, through the highly-skilled safeguarding team and clear accounting procedures, ensures that relevant issues are reported, managed efficiently and action is taken effectively. Health, well-being and safety are high priorities and are promoted effectively. A significant minority of staff, however, fails to take registers at the start of lessons, which has serious implications in the event of an emergency.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

City of Bristol 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	Apprenticeships	Other work-based learning
Overall effectiveness	4	4	4	4	4
Outcomes for learners	4	4	4	4	4
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	4	4	4	4	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	3	3	3	3

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Health and social care	3
Early years and playwork	3
Motor Vehicle	4
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	3
Sport, leisure and recreation	3
Public Services	3
Visual Arts	3
Performing arts	3
Foundation English	4
Independent living and leisure skills	2

Administration

2

Provider details

City of Bristol College	
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 5,315
	Part-time: 17,504
Principal/CEO	Ms Lynn Merilion
Date of previous inspection	January 2010
Website address	www.cityofbristol.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	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)								
Full-time	972	275	982	242	1,639	578	1	3
Part-time	383	3,514	211	2,479	267	1,139	8	333
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	750	673	406	550	15	20		
Number of learners aged 14-16	364							
Number of community learners	291							
Number of employability learners	3,271							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							

At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:

- The City Academy
- The British Engineering Manufacturers' Association
- Carillion Construction Training
- CSV Avon Training
- Hadley Hall Training
- Hartcliffe and Withywood Ventures
- KTS Training (2002) Ltd
- N-Gaged Training and Recruitment
- Princes Trust
- Second Chance Project Community Interest Company

Additional socio-economic information

The college serves a population of approximately 428,000. Bristol is the eighth largest city in England. Approximately 14% of the population is from a minority ethnic group, just above the national average. The proportion of pupils gaining five GCSEs at A* to C grades including English and mathematics in 2012 is 8% below average. Unemployment rates are just above the national average. Bristol has some of the most deprived areas in the country, but these are adjacent to some of the most affluent areas in the country. The city is ranked 79 (of 326) on the 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation. The main employment areas in the city are in health and social care, business administration and law, banking and insurance, retail and food services and engineering.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Shaun Dillon HMI

Four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and eight additional inspectors, assisted by the vice principal, business development skills and innovation 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 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. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the provider. 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.

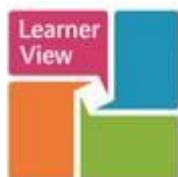
What inspection judgements mean

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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