

# Southport College

## General further education college

Inspection dates		11–15 March 2013
Overall effectiveness	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good-2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This provider is good because:

- While outcomes require improvement there is a strong upward momentum and success and retention rates are improving. Much of the significantly larger provision is consistently above national averages for success and achievement rates. Weaker performing areas are demonstrating significant improvement and achievement gaps are closing. Apprenticeship programmes are good and students are now making good progress across a majority of provision.
- There has been a major focus on re-energising teaching and learning which has led to good and improving provision. Using their strong vocational expertise staff are highly effective in motivating students and in linking theory and practical sessions. Additional learning support is strong and its high quality ensures that all groups of students have the opportunity to make good progress.
- The new Principal, working with governors and senior staff, has reinvigorated the college. A strong strategic direction has been established. Staff morale is high because they are fully involved in the improvement processes. Self-assessment and quality assurance processes are comprehensive and are bringing about improvement.
- Performance-management systems are robust and challenging. Governors hold senior leaders to account for college performance. The college is a very safe environment where staff and students show high levels of respect for each other.

#### This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Success rates need to be further accelerated. In particular retention rates for 16 to 18-year-olds require further improvement so that they are consistently good or better. Attendance needs to be further improved. The more-able learners are not sufficiently challenged across all provision.
- The most successful and innovative practice in teaching and learning is not sufficiently spread across all areas so as to ensure that teaching across all provision is good or better.
- Systems to enable and sustain improvement are not yet fully embedded across all provision so as to eradicate pockets of underperformance in a minority of areas.

## Full report

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

- Increase success rates across those courses currently underperforming by:
  - maintaining and accelerating the focus on improving retention
  - continuing to improve attendance rates
  - ensuring that in all subjects the more-able students receive sufficient challenge to enable them to meet their full potential.
- Further develop the sharing of good and outstanding practice so that innovative approaches observed in areas such as health and social care and performing arts are spread to all areas and are used to enhance teaching further. In doing this ensure that the small minority of provision which requires improvement benefits from teaching which is consistently good or better.
- Ensure developments in quality assurance are fully embedded in all areas so that the pace of improvement does not drop.

### Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student outcomes require improvement. Success rates for students across all levels on long courses for 2011/12 were at or just below national averages. While outcomes for significant curriculum areas, such as health and social care and construction, are consistently above national averages there remains some variability across provision. Adult success rates are consistently above national averages at entry and intermediate levels.</li> <li>▪ Retention rates for 16 to 18-year-olds are below the national average. The college has begun to tackle low retention across some courses and current college data demonstrate a much improved picture.</li> <li>▪ Those students who are retained do well. Achievements are in line with or better than national averages across many courses. However, there remains variability across a minority of provision. Male students do less well than females. The college is aware of this gap and has implemented well thought-out and focused strategies. Current college evidence indicates a significant narrowing of the gap.</li> <li>▪ Apprenticeship provision has been traditionally small with good success rates. This provision has now expanded significantly. Inspectors in business and in hospitality and catering found that students were making good progress on workplace learning and apprenticeship programmes.</li> <li>▪ Pass rates on functional skills programmes have been below the national average. Reorganisation and staffing changes have led to improving trends in achievement rates on English and mathematics courses for 16 to 18-year-olds although there still remains too much variability within this provision. Students on a range of adult literacy and numeracy courses do well.</li> <li>▪ The overall standard of students' work seen during the inspection was good. Students across a range of courses are now making good progress. Students in receipt of additional learning support achieve as well as their peers and often better.</li> <li>▪ In many subjects students use their increased confidence and good teaching to develop wide-ranging knowledge and practical skills. In a minority of subjects, which require further improvement, the development of students' independent learning skills is weaker.</li> <li>▪ The majority of students develop good personal, social and employability skills. A strong enterprise culture is being established across the curriculum. For example, a college student</li> </ul>	

recently won Liverpool City region 16 to 24 Sefton Apprentice of the Year. A wide variety of courses are offered across provision to enrich the curriculum. Many students obtain useful additional qualifications and gain positive workplace experience.

- Students have high standards of behaviour and develop positive attitudes to learning. A high number of students progress to employment and higher education and a significant proportion of students move from intermediate to advanced courses within the college.

<b>The quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	Good
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- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. The college has had a major focus on improving teaching, learning and assessment within the last 18 months. Staff are enthusiastic about developing their teaching and learning methods and demonstrate good skills.
- Many teachers are skilful at linking practical work to theory. In a forensics science lesson, students carried out role play in a simulated crime scene, which enabled them to demonstrate their knowledge and deepen their understanding. In a health and care session, the teacher helped students to understand the theory of foetal alcohol syndrome by practical demonstration using liquids and sponge.
- In the better lessons, teachers check students' previous knowledge and encourage them to draw upon their own experience in discussions. Many students are becoming more independent learners and taking greater responsibility for their own learning. Enterprise skills are promoted well by the college, with students from a range of areas becoming involved in activities that help them to develop organisational and employability skills.
- In weaker lessons teachers do not take sufficient account of the information gained about individual students from initial assessment. Activities are not planned well to meet the different needs in the group. Work is not always well designed to ensure the most able benefit fully from lessons.
- As a result of well-planned training, teachers are increasingly confident in using information and communication technology to enliven lessons and help students to assess their work. However, the college is aware that its virtual learning environment (VLE) is better used in some areas than others. Where it is well developed, students find it helpful to gain access to resources outside lessons and to communicate with staff on their assignment work.
- Assessment of students' work is generally good. In a few cases, students do not receive feedback on work that is sufficiently detailed to help them improve. Monitoring of students' progress is generally effective. More intensive monitoring takes place where concerns are identified. Targets for individual students are sometimes too vague.
- Work-based assessors plan coaching and learning well, leading to a good development of skills. Trainees' progress in gaining qualifications is tracked and monitored effectively.
- Support for learning is good. Students speak highly of the various ways they can gain access to extra help with work and how this helps them to make progress. The introduction of resource based centres linked to curriculum areas provides them with a useful opportunity to carry out research or work on assignments. Students on advanced courses also have a weekly 'value added' session with the course tutor to help with assignments. Students with learning difficulties or specific disabilities are supported well.
- Resources for learning are generally good. Students benefit from up-to-date specialist resources in many vocational areas. Many teachers are skilful at using learning resources in lessons to develop and stimulate students' interest.
- The development of students' English and mathematics skills is improving and inspectors found good examples in a number of curriculum areas. The college recognises that further staff development is needed to ensure all staff regularly reinforce these skills with students.
- Initial advice and guidance have been strengthened to ensure students are on the right course and this is having a positive impact on retention, although attendance is still an area for further

improvement. Advice and guidance to help students move on at the end of their course is very good.

- Equality and diversity are promoted well in some areas. In all curriculum areas students show respect for others; they work well together in lessons and a harmonious culture exists in the college. Some teachers make very good use of opportunities within the curriculum to reinforce understanding of equality and diversity but this is not yet widespread across the college.

**Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies**  
**Learning programmes for 16-18**  
**Learning programmes for 19+**

Good

- Good teaching, learning and assessment enable students to achieve successfully. Pass rates have been historically high. In 2011/12 success rates on a few courses dipped; these issues have now been tackled. In-year data indicate significant improvement in retention.
- In the most effective theory sessions activities are well planned by knowledgeable and experienced teachers. Teachers demonstrate relevant industrial experience and bring examples of realistic working practices into the classroom and workshops. They use a wide variety of questioning techniques to check understanding. Students' motivation and application are high, as are skill levels.
- In practical sessions most students develop good knowledge through challenging differentiated tasks. Well organised teamwork is used effectively. Students are well motivated through stimulating and relevant working environments and tasks.
- In a very small minority of theory sessions the pace was too slow and not all students were fully engaged. Planning was less effective in promoting learning activities. These sessions were too teacher led.
- Work is regularly and effectively assessed. Written feedback on students' work shows clearly what students need to do to improve. Verbal feedback is supportive and constructive and is linked to developing trade-specific understanding. In a small minority of sessions target-setting was vague and did not provide sufficient challenges to students.
- Interactive learning technologies (ILT) are used effectively to enrich the students' experience. For example, in one session a video demonstration enhanced students' understanding of how blue dye was used to check surface levels in metals. Workshops have good resources and equipment which are well maintained by technicians supporting teaching.
- Induction programmes are thorough. Monitoring and tracking arrangements identify students who are at risk of underperforming or leaving their course early. Students are familiar with the assessment processes. Realistic targets are set within portfolios and are linked to both practical and theory sessions. Internal verification is not always developed sufficiently; this is recognised by the area and appropriate action is planned to tackle this. Attendance is good across most lessons.
- Advice and guidance are effective in ensuring students are placed on the appropriate course and levels. Good arrangements are in place for those who require additional learning support to gain relevant qualifications and improve their literacy and numeracy. For example, in one motor vehicle session, subject vocabulary was embedded in resources to test and improve both literacy and subject understanding.
- The promotion and checking of the understanding of equality and diversity is underdeveloped and appropriate opportunities are not always taken to inform student knowledge. The better lessons incorporate equality and diversity using relevant examples related to the electrical engineering trades.
- Teachers promote good health and safety practice, particularly in the workshop environment. Health and safety issues are covered in group tutorials and risk assessments are carried out on hazardous materials and equipment. Hazardous training checklists have been introduced to ensure students are aware of the risks involved in using hazardous materials.

**Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy  
Learning programmes for 16-18  
Learning programmes for 19+**

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment are good, and this is reflected in the rapidly improving and high success rates on many courses. Retention declined on many courses in 2010/11. Through well focused strategies it has now improved and is currently good.
- In the best lessons teachers stretch and motivate students. Students work independently with confidence and prepare their work areas professionally. Teachers use good questioning that enables students to be self-critical and improve their learning outcomes. Students contribute confidently to debates and discussions in class.
- In a few lessons there are insufficient clients for all students to work on. In these lessons some students have to use practice blocks for the whole session. Consequently, tasks lack sufficient challenge and are not fully matched to real industrial hairdressing experience.
- Staff are enthusiastic and have good subject knowledge and vocational experience which enriches students' knowledge and understanding. Theory is related well to the practical through good use of commercial examples. Students make good progress in developing their practical skills when colouring and styling hair. Beauty therapy students demonstrate good skills when applying facial, manicure, pedicure and electrical treatments.
- Progress reviews are effective; they are motivational and encourage students to plan their learning. However, targets set at review are variable and some lack sufficient challenge. Some targets are too broad and lack suitable time-scales.
- Students' portfolios are organised and presented well. Students use ILT effectively to support research and illustrate scalp conditions. Students receive helpful constructive written feedback on their theory and practical assessment plan to improve performance. Spelling and grammar are systematically corrected.
- Support is good. Individual support for students with dyslexia enables them to carry out client consultation with ease and confidence. Students value and speak highly of the support they receive from the support tutors and the vocational staff.
- The learning environment is bright, well maintained and commercially relevant. However, one of the beauty salons is too small and cramped for students to work effectively. Students' use of ILT is good in class. They often work on assignments using lap-top computers in practical and theory sessions. The college's VLE is used effectively to enrich learning.
- The development of students' English and mathematics skills is good and embedded well within the curriculum. For example, in practical lessons students' understanding of fractions is reinforced when measuring hair bleaching products.'
- Students receive good motivational advice which supports their career progression. This includes advice from prestigious commercial companies and local salon owners. Internal progression to a higher level is strong.
- Equality and diversity are embedded well into lessons. For example, a diverse group of adult students who were very nervous and apprehensive when first starting the course, are now extremely confident in class, treat each other with mutual respect and are making good progress in their studies.

**Hospitality and Catering  
Learning programmes for 16-18  
Learning programmes for 19+  
Apprenticeships**

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement. This is reflected in the success and retention rates which have historically been low on a number of courses. However, retention for current students has improved and they are making better progress.
- In the better practical sessions students are engaged, enjoy their work and develop industrial standard skills. Teachers have good subject knowledge and good working relationships with students. Teachers are starting to use a wider range of teaching methods to motivate and engage students in lessons.
- The off-site learning experiences for apprentices are good. Work-based assessors plan the coaching and learning well. Apprentices are observed regularly in the workplace and generally make good progress.
- In the less effective lessons the pace of learning is too slow and not well matched to the individual student's prior experience or ability level. In these lessons the more-able students are not sufficiently challenged to develop their understanding beyond the requirements of the course. In a few lessons teachers do not check students' understanding frequently enough to ensure their previous learning has been consolidated.
- Assessment practices are too variable. Marking and feedback do not always provide sufficient detail about what students need to do to improve and teachers do not always correct spelling and punctuation. The resources available are generally of industry standard and are used well.
- Initial assessment, advice and guidance are adequate. Students wishing to progress to a higher-level course take a useful skills test to assess their suitability and this is effective in most cases. Initial diagnostic assessment and the resulting student profiles are not used consistently by teachers to plan lessons or to set stretching targets for students to achieve.
- Arrangements for setting and monitoring students' academic achievement targets are satisfactory. Targets are set and are reviewed regularly and follow-up interventions put into place. However, these are not always effective and, as a result, some students are behind in submitting work. Apprentices' progress is tracked and monitored effectively by the assessor.
- The development of students' personal, social and employability skills is good and students are successful at gaining employment in the catering industry. Communication and team-working skills are developed through additional qualifications that are relevant and work related. In the better sessions teachers are starting to develop literacy and numeracy skills within the vocational context.
- Initial assessment identifies students' support needs and support is provided. Many students have specific learning difficulties and get support to keep them on track. Students value the support they get from teachers; however, challenging targets are not always set to encourage them to become independent learners.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is appropriate. In most lessons students display respect for each other and teachers and learn productively. While students develop a basic understanding of equality and diversity themes, opportunities to further promote, reinforce or develop students' knowledge are not maximised.



**Sport, Travel and Tourism and Public Services**  
**Learning programmes for 16-18**  
**Learning programmes for 19+**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good; this supports the good progress students are now making. Action has been taken to tackle underperforming courses and in-year data indicate significant improvement in retention.
- In the better lessons students demonstrate good evidence of employability skills including confidence, communication, and a willingness to contribute in lessons to discussion and presentations. Students work well independently showing good levels of concentration, engagement and application. In a few lessons teachers do not provide sufficiently challenging extension work for the more-able students.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and industrial experience is regularly updated bringing realistic working practices into the classroom. Good relationships between students and staff enable the development of confident learning environments. Students feel safe and enjoy coming to college.
- Assessment of students' work is robust. Students receive detailed feedback with clear references to criteria met and how to improve their work. In some lessons, teachers do not plan a range of assessment and learning activities to meet the differing abilities of students. Some target-setting lacks rigour.
- Development of literacy, language and numeracy in lessons is good. For example, inspectors found good examples of students calculating different time zones in travel and tourism and of applying workload intensity percentages for resistance training in sport.
- The college has good facilities and resources; classrooms and specialist areas are well equipped. High quality resources are used effectively to develop students' understanding, such as a mock cabin that creates a realistic working environment for training air crews. Students have access to good ILT resources to develop knowledge and understanding using the college VLE system.
- Students are very well supported and value highly the additional support from tutors in lessons, the library learning centre and individual tutorials to enable effective progress. Staff in the curriculum areas work closely with specialist subject-support staff who are fully involved in lessons and work very positively with students to support their progress.
- Strong links with and visits to local schools, sports clubs, travel and service industries provide highly relevant work-related experiences; for example, the Royal Navy conduct entrance tests for public service students which are valid for entry to the force for three years.
- Opportunities for voluntary work within college and local schools benefit students and support their personal development. Additional courses and qualifications are available for all students including employability skills; for example, in travel and tourism, certificates for airline cabin crew and resort representatives enhance their studies and employment opportunities.
- Students have a good understanding of progression opportunities and internal progression across levels is very good. A high proportion of students progress to higher levels of study or employment. Progress tutors monitor students closely and are using strategies effectively to improve attendance and progress.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good in the college. Students have a sound understanding of issues relating to equality and diversity but opportunities to develop their knowledge are not always fully explored. The better lessons incorporate and embed equality and diversity; relevant examples were seen in travel and tourism that challenged stereotypes.

**Preparation for Life and Work: Literacy**  
**Learning programmes for 16-18**  
**Learning programmes for 19+**

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in literacy requires improvement. Although success rates have been below average for 16 to 18-year-olds, student outcomes are improving. However, there remains too much variability both in teaching quality and outcomes. Adult students, across a wide range of literacy and numeracy courses, make good progress.
- In the better lessons, students benefit from raised expectations and challenging tasks to extend their skills. For example, intermediate creative media students developed their understanding of how language, in particular alliteration, can be used in persuasive writing. Teachers use their skills and expertise to plan learning carefully in order to fully engage their students. In one lesson, a group of boys on a GCSE programme watched a video clip on the use of sub-text in relationships and then discussed its relevance; they developed in confidence and made good progress.
- Where learning is less effective, activities are not planned well enough or offer insufficient challenge. As a result the students are not fully engaged and this has a negative impact on their progress. In some lessons, teachers set low-level uninspiring tasks and, as a result, the pace of learning and progress is slow.
- Students increasingly benefit from good support in lessons. Effective use of support assistants ensures students at risk of becoming disengaged are kept on task. Students say they feel supported and are encouraged to improve their writing skills. Increased opportunities for staff to reflect upon and share best practice across different courses are having a positive impact upon the progress students make.
- Independent learning is well developed and promoted through planned activities in lessons and by directing students to complete extension activities outside the classroom using the college's good VLE and ILT resources. Innovative use of bar codes placed on student noticeboards around the college encourages learners to swipe for tips on how to improve their literacy skills.
- Feedback on assessed activities to enable students to make progress and achieve is variable. Where feedback is good, individual learning targets are made clear and communicated to students. Where feedback is less effective students are unclear on the skills they need to develop in order to improve.
- Students benefit from good pre-course information, advice and guidance to enable them to make informed choices. Students are advised on the most appropriate qualifications that lead to future career options and routes onto more advanced courses and into higher education.
- Timely advice is given to adults on part-time courses who are nearing completion of their programme. Students have the opportunity to discuss their options and benefit from information sessions from external support agencies.
- Skilful integration of equality and diversity themes in planned learning activities raise students' awareness. In one lesson, students completed a practice examination question using their understanding of how the needs of vulnerable services users are met by local health services in the area. Teachers foster a safe and supportive environment in which students support each other.

**Business and Business Administration**  
**Learning programmes for 16-18**  
**Learning programmes for 19+**  
**Apprenticeships**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. In 2011/12 the success rates for students on business and accountancy courses were below national averages. However, recent



improvements to the provision are already having an impact, with significant improvement in retention rates. Apprentices' overall success rates are good and achievements of their frameworks are significantly above national rates.

- In the better lessons teachers provide good individual support and encouragement which motivates the business and accountancy students. Teachers organise learning activities well and use questioning techniques skilfully to assess learning.
- Apprentices make good progress. They develop good workplace skills and quickly make a contribution to the work of their organisations, for example, in leading teams, increasing telephone sales and calculating profit margins. Business students develop good employability and enterprise skills. Assessors provide regular coaching in the workplace.
- In the less effective lessons teachers do not stretch and challenge students sufficiently. In a few lessons the review and checking of learning is too brief, and teachers rely too much on worksheets. Planning is not a strong feature of these lessons. Information from students' initial and on-going assessment is not always used sufficiently well to plan learning.
- Teachers have good occupational skills and knowledge, and they use their expertise to good effect in course planning. Teachers routinely upload information and learning resources onto the VLE which is used well by business students. Although ILT is used in most lessons scope remains for more imaginative use.
- Students receive regular feedback on their written work. The detail of the feedback they receive through the newly introduced electronic system for submitting and marking their assignments varies. Although teachers include activities to improve students' English and mathematics skills, the correction of grammar and spelling errors is too variable.
- Individual learning plans are effective in identifying the individual components of the apprenticeship framework. Apprentices review their progress regularly. They know what they have done well and where they need to improve. However, the recording on the reviews is not always sufficiently detailed and personal targets are not always identified.
- Effective use is made of guest speakers, social enterprise activities and visits to investigate businesses to increase students' understanding of the world of work. Students enjoy working in the newly established Enterprise Centre where they develop entrepreneurial skills and relate very effectively their learning to practical fundraising projects.
- Business students' attendance, punctuality and progress are recorded and monitored electronically and any problems quickly followed up. Attendance is improving. In the weekly tutorials, business students regularly review their own progress.
- Initial advice and guidance have improved ensuring students choose the most suitable course. In-class additional support is effective and advanced-level students receive good additional support in the hour-long study sessions. Students have good opportunities to progress to higher-level courses and to employment.
- Students have a clear understanding of equality and diversity. They treat each other fairly and work well together. However, equality and diversity are not consistently promoted and integrated into teaching and learning activities. Apprentices have a good understanding of the relationship of equality and diversity to their work roles.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

**Good**

- The Principal has worked with alacrity to refocus and reinvigorate the college. He has been well supported by governors and senior leaders. A strong emphasis has been placed on re-energising teaching and learning and improving provision in areas where students' progress was not strong.
- Although outcomes are judged to require improvement, inspectors found a clear upward improvement trend. This is strongest in those areas with previously weaker performance. A

number of improving performance indicators, such as retention rates, reflect the progress that is being made in ensuring all departments reach the same high levels.

- Staff understand the strategic vision and priorities of the college. The management style of the new Principal and the introduction of events such as the Principal's briefings have improved communications. Staff morale is high.
- Governors have high levels of expertise and know the college well. They now have a more detailed understanding of the strengths and areas for development. They are also using their knowledge to greater effect in providing more effective challenge and support to the college leaders and managers.
- A more comprehensive variety of professional development activities is helping staff to develop further the skills and craft of teaching. Good practice is more effectively shared across the college. The college acknowledges that there still remains some variation in practice in a minority of lessons.
- Performance-management processes have been strengthened with strong links to the robust lesson observation process. Good and better practice is recognised and rewarded. High levels of support are put in place when issues are identified. A strong culture has been established which challenges underperformance.
- The self-assessment process involves staff at all levels. Detailed action plans are developed for courses and these effectively support departmental improvement. Progress is regularly monitored through course meetings and also through the performance-management group and other mechanisms, such as the red and amber flagging of courses.
- Quality assurance mechanisms cover all aspects of provision effectively, including the newly developing apprenticeship programmes and subcontracted provision. The positive impact of the processes can be seen in a number of interventions. For example, when monitoring identified issues with one subcontractor, actions were put in place to support improvement. When these did not bring the provision back up to the high level of performance expected by the college the contract was not renewed.
- Managers carry out highly effective, on-going curriculum reviews to ensure the programmes offered continue to meet the needs of the students, employers and the local community. The college marketing department analyses a wide range of information to ensure college staff are fully aware of what is needed at present and in the future.
- Well-developed progression pathways ensure students are able to progress on to employment and higher education. College managers have significantly increased the number and type of apprenticeship programmes offered and these are proving highly successful and are well-regarded by employers. Leaders and managers are involved in numerous productive partnership arrangements.
- Equality and diversity are an integral part of all aspects of the college. Data are used to analyse the performances of different groups and identify any achievement gaps. Training and events such as the equality and diversity week are used effectively to raise students' and staff' awareness and understanding of issues. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are integrated well into subject areas across the college.
- The college meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding students. Staff have developed a wide range of effective strategies to ensure the college is a very safe and welcoming environment for students. These strong practices are also applied to those working away from college sites, such as apprentices.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

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

<b>Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies</b>	2
<b>Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy</b>	2
<b>Hospitality and Catering</b>	3
<b>Sport</b>	2
<b>Preparation for Life and Work</b>	3
<b>Business</b>	2
<b>Travel and Tourism</b>	2
<b>Public Services</b>	2

<b>Literacy</b>	3
<b>Business Administration</b>	2

## Provider details

Southport College	
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	14+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 1853
	Part-time: 1241
Principal/CEO	John Clarke
Date of previous inspection	November 2007
Website address	www.southport.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+
<b>Full-time</b>	192	52	341	108	817	326	10	3
<b>Part-time</b>	55	463	59	382	32	210	1	59
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	59	141	28	124	0	1		
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	98							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	203							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	189							
<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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Carillion Construction Training</li> <li>■ Crosby Training</li> <li>■ Training Days Consultancy Ltd</li> <li>■ Directions Management Services Ltd.</li> </ul>							

## Additional socio-economic information

The college is situated within the seaside town of Southport. It lies within the Metropolitan Borough of Sefton, which had a population of 274,000 in 2011. Most learners are White British. Students come from a broad catchment area. Provision is offered from entry level through to higher education, with the majority of learners on programmes at entry, foundation and intermediate levels. Apprenticeship provision has increased significantly within the last year. Unemployment in Sefton is above the national average, with about 7.8% of young people not in employment, education or training. The number of school leavers gaining five or more GCSEs, including English and mathematics, at grades A\* to C in 2012 was 59.5%, just above the national average. Data indicate that about one third of college students are recruited from areas of socio-economic disadvantage. The current principal took up post in August 2011.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Patrick Geraghty HMI

Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by a vice principal 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, telephone calls 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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