

St Vincent College

Sixth form college

Inspection dates		12-15 March 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- Outcomes for learners, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the effectiveness of leadership and management all require improvement.
- The majority of learners attain their learning goals but make no more than the progress expected of them, based on their starting points. Many students take vocational qualifications and make good progress on those qualifications. The college ensures that students develop their personal and social skills well.
- The college provides a friendly and welcoming environment. Male and female students and those from different minority ethnic groups have similar success rates to the average for the college. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have higher success rates than the college average.
- A high proportion of students progress onto higher learning or into employment.

This provider has the following strengths:

- the inclusive nature and caring culture in the college
- the good progress made by students on vocational courses
- the good development of students' personal and social skills
- the good development of partnerships which improve opportunities for students
- the college's accurate judgements about its performance.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve how teachers plan and organise teaching, learning and assessment by spreading good practice more systematically. Ensure that lessons always have appropriate pace and levels of challenge for students of all abilities.
- Ensure that teachers consistently use questioning techniques and other appropriate methods to check students' learning effectively and actively involve all students.
- Ensure that assessment and feedback to students are always frequent enough and always have sufficient rigour to enable students consistently to develop their skills effectively, including their skills for independent learning. Coordinate deadlines for students to submit work in different subjects so that pressure points are avoided.
- Set targets for students that are always precise, rigorous and help them to make good progress.
- Improve the system for providing management information. Provide managers and other appropriate staff with training in interrogating data so that they use it effectively as a key tool to drive improvement.
- Produce an appropriate strategic curriculum plan that prioritises the needs of students and meets local and national priorities.
- Ensure that the self-assessment report provides a clear and detailed account of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and identifies priorities so that key improvements can be made speedily.
- Evaluate the impact of actions taken at regular intervals throughout the year and modify actions quickly, if necessary, to ensure that sufficient progress is made.
- Ensure that staff and governors receive effective training to broaden their awareness of equality, and ensure that teachers integrate aspects of diversity into lessons more effectively.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
------------------------------	----------------------

- Outcomes for learners require improvement. The proportion of students completing vocational qualifications and A-level qualifications successfully has increased since the last inspection and is adequate. These qualifications make up most of the college's work. A small proportion of students study AS-level qualifications exclusively. Many students who study AS-level qualifications take them alongside vocational qualifications. Success rates at AS level improved in 2011/12, but remain low.
- The majority of students take vocational qualifications and generally make good progress relative to their starting points. Students make the progress expected of them in many academic subjects, but they make too little progress in a small number of subjects.
- Many students are articulate and confident. They have good personal and social skills which stand them in good stead for the future. Students attend enrichment and careers events which prepare them well for higher education or employment. Their learning is enhanced through well-considered educational visits, volunteering activities and presentations from highly engaging speakers.
- The quality of students' work is at least satisfactory and often good. In information and communication technology (ICT), students create imaginative, purposeful web designs and evaluate accurately the suitability of their websites for users with visual impairments. Students on a range of courses develop effective research skills which enable them to prepare for higher education or employment. Students in travel and tourism develop a keen sense of commercial awareness when they recommend holiday packages for a range of different clients. Many

advanced-level students use the technical vocabulary of their subjects effectively when engaging in critical analysis and evaluation.

- Students develop their English and mathematics effectively in many lessons through written tasks, discussions, teamwork, independent enquiry and problem solving. These skills are not always reflected in examination success in English and mathematics at foundation and intermediate levels.
- Male and female students and those from different ethnic backgrounds have similar rates of success. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have higher success rates than the college average.
- A high proportion of students progress to higher-level learning, higher education or into employment that meets local and national needs.
- Attendance and punctuality have improved, but require further improvement to be good.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement and reflect outcomes for learners which also require improvement.
- Teachers have high expectations of students in the better lessons and they ensure there is an appropriately demanding pace and range of learning activities which promote learning effectively.
- In a minority of lessons students are not challenged sufficiently and the pace of learning is slow. Students do not make the most productive use of their time in such lessons. Teachers' expectations enable many students to achieve adequately in these lessons, but students are not often challenged effectively enough to achieve beyond this.
- In better lessons teachers ensure that the learning of all students is secure and that they make good progress. This often involves the teacher in directing questions appropriately at particular students, according to their ability. When questioning techniques do not involve all students, some students remain passive while more confident students dominate.
- Questioning techniques are useful in the majority of lessons, but teachers do not check the learning of all students effectively when they only use non-directed questions. Teachers often check and enhance learning well when they use questioning and other methods to probe and extending students' learning.
- Students' individual learning needs are met effectively in the majority of lessons, but lesson activities are not always well suited to the needs of all students. Extension activities, in particular, are not always used effectively by teachers to provide sufficient challenge for more able students.
- Lesson planning is generally adequate and sometimes good. In the best examples, teachers plan their lessons effectively to meet the needs of all students, based on their individual starting points. In these lessons teachers plan lessons and homework skilfully so that students develop the ability to become good independent learners. A minority of teachers have insufficient understanding of the need to plan effectively in order to enable students to become independent learners.
- Initial assessment is comprehensive. Students receive good support and their needs are identified at an early stage. The early identification of students' needs is strengthened by the college's close working with partner schools. Teachers readily provide support for students outside lessons. Academic tutorials are well attended and productive, and individual tutorials are good.
- The virtual learning environment (VLE) is a useful resource for students and well used by them. It provides a range of extension activities and additional resources, many of them interactive, which help to develop students' independent learning skills.

- Target setting to help students improve is good in some subjects but its quality is inconsistent and targets are too often imprecise, doing little to support improvement. In the best practice, students are set precise targets which are reviewed regularly and help them to develop well. The assessment of students’ work is often good, although there are instances of work being marked too generously and of feedback sometimes leaving students unsure about what they need to do to improve or unaware of the grade they are realistically working at.
- Assessment schedules lack sufficient coordination across subjects. Pressure points are created during the course of the year when students regularly have to submit work for several subjects at the same time.
- Students receive good advice on making applications to university or employment and careers advice is strong. High numbers of students attend employability events and many receive useful guidance on preparing for interviews and making job applications. Work experience is available in most vocational subjects, but is less well embedded in academic areas.
- Many students benefit from the extensive enrichment programme, which offers opportunities for charity work and volunteering which enhance students’ learning and help to develop their personal and social skills.
- Students benefit from impressive wall displays in classrooms which are designed to motivate and inspire them. The learning resources centre is currently being expanded. It provides spaces for independent work but it presently struggles to meet the demand from students at peak times.
- Students develop their English well in lessons, including the technical vocabulary for their subjects, through discussions, written work, making presentations and working in groups. Mathematics is developed in a number of subjects, but not routinely so in all. Students who particularly need to develop their mathematics attend additional lessons.
- Significant changes made to initial advice and guidance this year ensure that students have the appropriate entry qualifications for their courses. Interviews are now, appropriately, conducted with subject specialists.
- The college promotes a strong culture of respect and tolerance, particularly in relation to disability. Opportunities to address broader aspects of equality and diversity are evident in most schemes of work, but are under developed in lessons.

Science and mathematics	
Learning programmes for 16-18	Inadequate
Learning programmes for 19+	

- Teaching, learning and assessment in science and mathematics are inadequate, as is reflected in inadequate outcomes for learners across this curriculum area overall. Teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics still require improvement, but are not inadequate. Success rates in mathematics improved in 2011/12 for the much-reduced numbers of students taking AS- and A-level qualifications, from low at the last inspection to above average. Most success rates at AS and A level in science are low or very low. High-grade pass rates at GCSE were low in mathematics and biology in 2011/12, but recent results show that A* to C pass rates for the small number of students who sat GCSE biology are high. The progress made by advanced-level students, based on their prior attainment at GCSE, requires improvement. There is satisfactory progression to higher education by students who complete their courses successfully. Students develop effective personal and social skills.
- In the better lessons, teachers have high expectations and provide a useful variety of activities to maintain students’ interest and extend their learning. For example, in a vocational science lesson, video clips were used well to help students understand the microbiological principles of biotechnological applications. In mathematics lessons, mini whiteboards are used effectively to

reinforce and reflect learning. Students draft calculations and discuss and compare their approaches helpfully before they formalise their answers.

- Many of the weaker lessons did not challenge students enough or were too slow to develop students’ learning effectively. Teachers do not always use questions well to develop learning; they often use question and answer techniques to check students’ learning, but they do not involve all students nor check their learning securely enough. Students do not make detailed notes in science lessons, so they do not have good revision notes when they need them.
- Teachers know their students well, are caring and supportive. Students value the extra sessions that teachers provide to help them improve their understanding of a topic or to catch up with missed work.
- Lessons are much better planned in mathematics than in science. Mathematics lessons take better account of the needs of all students, for example by using extension activities to challenge more able students. In science, extension activities are infrequent and lesson plans lack sufficient detail to ensure that the needs of students of all abilities are met effectively. Often, just a list of tasks or the content of the lesson is displayed for students rather than identifying what they should be able to do and know as a result of the lesson.
- Teachers use students’ GCSE scores to set minimum target grades, but they do not routinely use this information to plan lessons, particularly in science. Students are not given clear enough short-term actions to help them to reach their targets.
- Mathematics students are more effective independent learners than science students despite the latter having a good range of materials on the VLE, especially in chemistry. Science students are not encouraged to use the internet in lessons to help them to broaden their learning or to read more widely around their subjects.
- Homework is set frequently. Teachers provide feedback to students about their work, but its usefulness varies too much; some teachers provide little detail, whereas some give a good number of helpful comments to ensure students know what they have to do to improve. Spelling and grammar are not routinely corrected.
- Teachers frequently mark students’ work too generously; they give students the impression that they are working at a higher standard than they really are working at on A-level qualifications. Predicted grades are often misleading and students do not work as hard as they need to in order to obtain the best grades they are capable of achieving.
- Initial advice and guidance are better than at the last inspection and students studying GCE AS qualifications now have the required entry qualifications for their courses. Many students with low prior attainment in mathematics do not reach the standard of a grade C at GCSE in the short time available.
- Students are taught in a caring environment and those with disabilities or learning difficulties are well integrated with other students in lessons. Equality and diversity are not promoted effectively enough in lessons. Teachers do not take the opportunities they have in lessons to highlight activities and achievements in science and mathematics by different ethnic and cultural groups.

English

Learning programmes for 16-18
Learning programmes for 19+

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, and this is reflected in learners’ outcomes which also require improvement. Students make expected progress based on their prior attainment at GCSE. They are making good progress this year on A-level qualifications. Retention rates declined but have improved well this year. Many students are confident and articulate and demonstrate adequate or good standards of work. A high proportion of students progress to university.

- In the more effective lessons, teachers have high expectations of students and set challenging tasks. Students are suitably involved and work productively. Students often work collaboratively and develop independent learning skills at least adequately and often very well. For example, in one A-level English language and literature lesson students worked successfully in pairs to agree on the 20 most appropriate quotations to summarise Ibsen's *A Doll's House*.
- Lessons on AS-level qualifications do not always provide enough challenge for all students and the more able are not always fully engaged throughout. Students spend too long on matching activities and are not properly required to demonstrate their deeper understanding of texts through extension work.
- Teachers use questioning techniques effectively to check and extend students' understanding. In the majority of lessons, teachers consistently use questioning to help students develop higher-level thinking skills effectively, including by directing questions at particular students. In less effective lessons, questions are often too general, do not involve all students sufficiently and the more confident students provide most of the answers.
- Teachers plan a wide variety of activities which motivate students well. Students identify appropriate literary and linguistic terminology effectively and enjoy their lessons. They do not always analyse literary and linguistic techniques well enough within the context of the text at AS level.
- Teachers provide students with effective support during group or individual tasks, but less able students do not always receive tasks which are appropriate for their level of learning. Students attend additional lessons if they need to improve their mathematics.
- Room displays and support materials are good and enhance learning. For example, AS- and A-level English language and literature students have a grammar reference booklet which provides examples of required literary and linguistic techniques and which they find very helpful.
- Students make good use of the VLE which supports their learning. It is well populated with resources from lessons, interactive and extension activities, past examination papers and a wider reading list for literature students. It is used well to develop students' independent learning skills.
- Target setting is good and students have appropriate individual targets which help them to focus on what they need to do to improve. Students find the target-setting process useful and motivating. They receive detailed, well-constructed feedback on their work which enables them to progress effectively. However, AS-level students do not always receive enough practice or feedback in developing their writing.
- Initial advice and guidance and careers advice are helpful to students. They receive good advice and support on university applications and other opportunities such as employment and gap years.
- Students learn in a harmonious and mutually respectful environment, but opportunities to promote equality and diversity are not always used effectively in lessons. In one particularly good example of how equality was promoted in a lesson, students who were analysing the linguistic features of a recipe from the era discussed productively the cultural significance of women's domestic roles in early Twentieth Century England.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers are committed to their students' success and have given a strong message to staff that improving teaching, learning and assessment for all students is a high priority. Senior managers have effectively taken difficult decisions in order to tackle poor performance by staff.
- Changes to governance have enabled governors to be more aware of their responsibilities. They are more actively involved in scrutinising and questioning the performance of the college, not

only in financial matters but in the outcomes for students and in teaching, learning and assessment.

- Senior managers tackled the recommendations from the last inspection energetically, such as improving standards on intermediate level courses, developing the VLE, and raising students' aspirations. However, in spite of improvements in science and mathematics, neither the success rates nor the standards of teaching in this area are yet good enough.
- The performance of teachers is regularly reviewed through appraisals that are closely linked to improving teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers share targets to improve outcomes for students. Actions to eliminate inadequate teaching have been effective.
- Teachers receive good professional development which enhances their ability to improve teaching and support learners effectively. The programme of activities includes, for example, regular weekly sessions to share good practice, undertake e-learning, staff conferences with experts and specialist training in mental health awareness. Teachers are well qualified and receive good backing from their managers to develop their teaching skills and expertise, such as positive encouragement to become examiners in their subject areas.
- The observation of lessons is regular and effective. Observers' assessments of the strengths and areas for improvement in lessons are generally accurate and result in clear, helpful feedback to teachers. Teachers receive detailed and appropriate actions for improvement following observations and managers carefully monitor how effectively improvements are implemented.
- The process of self-assessment involves all staff and uses the views of students appropriately. The college's judgements about its performance are accurate. However, self-assessment has not contributed effectively or urgently enough to improvements. Key objectives and targets for improvement are not prioritised. Targets and goals are unrealistic and sometimes too ambitious to bring about improvement. The self-assessment report identifies clearly what the college needs to improve, but it does not analyse evaluatively the quality of teaching, learning and assessment or explain well enough how these can be improved.
- Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the college's strengths and weaknesses, which are reflected in quality improvement plans. Although curriculum area reports are detailed, they are not sufficiently evaluative and do not make good enough use of data and management information to set realistic and measurable targets.
- Managers do not produce or distribute essential information about students promptly or accurately enough for their colleagues to analyse performance, set accurate targets and bring about improvements quickly. Moreover, even when they receive them, not all managers are sufficiently adept at interpreting these data.
- The college works very effectively with partners to improve the curriculum and opportunities for its students. It has strong links with the Royal Navy locally and is developing appropriate apprenticeships and productive relationships with employers. Good partnerships with local schools help to smooth the transition to college of many vulnerable students. The college works well with other organisations and the county council and has been successful in engaging into formal education many of those students who might otherwise not take part.
- Curriculum planning and modelling are not strategic enough. Changes to the curriculum, such as focusing more on vocational courses, are not planned systematically. Managers are not guided by a clear curriculum strategy, including priorities, when planning changes.
- The college is very inclusive and works effectively with vulnerable students who have learning difficulties and disabilities. Students are respectful of each other. Staff have received training, but managers have not actively fostered an appreciation of the wider aspects of equality and diversity across the college. Broader aspects of diversity are not always promoted sufficiently in lessons.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and are well developed at management level. The behaviour of students is good and instances of bullying are rare and dealt with promptly.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

St Vincent College

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Science	4
Mathematics and statistics	3
English	3

Provider details

St Vincent College	
Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	14+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 954
	Part-time: 848
Principal/CEO	Ms D Lloyd
Date of previous inspection	November 2011
Website address	www.stvincent.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	72	8	103	16	580	76	0	0
Part-time	42	106	36	158	27	231	0	9
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
Number of learners aged 14-16	29							
Number of community learners	0							
Number of employability learners	0							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gosport Pro-Active Sports Training Limited 							

Additional socio-economic information

St Vincent College is a small sixth form college based in Gosport, Hampshire. The college provides vocational as well as academic subjects and almost all students study courses from entry level to advanced level. The college provides for a number of students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and health problems. Gosport contains both areas of affluence and wards with high levels of economic and social deprivation. Students' average qualifications on entry are below those of most sixth form colleges. The proportion of school pupils attaining at least five GCSEs, including English and mathematics, at grades A* to C is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Gloria Dolan HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the Quality Manager 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>

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



Learner View is a new website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too.

To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and provider inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013