

Franklin College

Sixth form college

Inspection dates		23–26 April 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Inadequate-4
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings for learners

This college is good because:

- The majority of students achieve high levels of success because teaching and learning are good and occasionally outstanding. Teachers have high aspirations for their students and encourage strong independent learning skills.
- Assessment is rigorous and this helps students to improve their work and make good progress.
- Very good guidance and support, provided by the college's 'Franklin Start' induction programme and throughout their time at college, have contributed significantly to the very high proportion of students who now complete their courses successfully.
- Students' progress is monitored rigorously and extensive support is available for those who are at risk of falling behind.
- The Principal, senior managers and governors have focused unstintingly on improving provision for all students and this has resulted in a rapid rise in students' achievements in the majority of subjects.
- Partnership working is excellent and has a very positive impact on provision for students, through, for example, the college's Careers Academy.
- Students enjoy college life and this is evident through their excellent attendance and punctuality. They value highly the culture of respect and the inclusive, friendly environment. Students are confident and articulate, and their behaviour is exemplary.

This is not yet an outstanding college because:

- The amount of teaching that is outstanding, although increasing, is not yet high enough.
- The proportion of students who achieve high grades has improved but is still low in too many subjects.
- Students' performance in a small minority of subjects is not yet good enough.

Full report

What does Franklin College need to do to improve further?

- Evaluate the impact of actions to rectify underperformance in the few remaining weaker subjects, ensuring that students' views are incorporated into this. Use this evaluation to plan further actions in order to effect more rapid and sustained improvements.
- Consolidate the improvements made to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teaching always challenges every student and especially stretches the more able, so that the proportion of high grades increases and all students achieve as well as they can.
- Provide further training to all staff to ensure that all judgements in self-assessment reports are sharply focused, self-critical, and lead to effective actions.
- As the new management structure continues to develop further, ensure that roles and responsibilities at all levels within it are clear to all staff.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Since the last inspection, college staff have been relentless in their focus on improving outcomes for students. The 'Franklin Start' programme has been very effective in ensuring that students are on the most appropriate courses. This, together with a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning, has resulted in a marked increase in the number of students staying to complete their courses in nearly all subject areas. College data indicate that the proportion of students completing their courses in the current year has continued to improve and is very high.
- Results on both academic and vocational courses at advanced level have improved significantly since the last inspection and are in line with or better than, the sixth-form college average in the majority of subjects. Most students make good progress, often from low levels of prior attainment. In a few subjects, including in AS-level science subjects and in AS psychology, student outcomes remain too low. The proportion of students achieving high grades at advanced level has improved markedly in many subjects but remains low in others.
- The college delivers a small amount of adult provision, most of which takes place in partnership organisations. This includes literacy and numeracy qualifications for learners being supervised by the Probation Service. Outcomes on adult courses are good.
- The percentage of students achieving grades A* to C in GCSE mathematics and science in 2011/12 was average. The percentage of students achieving a high grade in GCSE English declined in 2011/12 and was low. Students taking GCSE English are making good progress towards their qualification in the current year. Students taking functional skills tests in literacy and numeracy achieve well. The college is reviewing its current literacy and numeracy strategy to ensure that all students take the most appropriate qualification.
- Teachers are ambitious for their students and students respond by producing high standards of work. Students' attitudes to learning are very positive. Behaviour is exemplary. Attendance and punctuality are excellent and contribute significantly to the rising levels of achievement.
- Gaps in achievement between different groups of students have been narrowed. For example, although females have been more likely to succeed than males in the past, this trend is decreasing. Underperformance amongst students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has been remedied. Students' progress is monitored extremely closely and any who are at risk of underachieving are identified quickly and swift intervention made to stop them falling behind.
- A high proportion of students gain a place at university or progress to employment. An increasing number of students are successful in their applications to the Russell Group

universities. Progression between different levels, and especially from AS level to A level, is good.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
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- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved since the previous inspection and are now good in most areas and outstanding in a few. Teachers have high expectations and care deeply about their students. They use information from assessment and their extensive subject knowledge to plan lessons that inspire students to enjoy learning and achieve well. Most students make at least good progress when compared with their prior attainment levels.
- In the good or better lessons, students take an active role and develop very good independent thinking skills. They often lead lively debates or participate enthusiastically in realistic exercises to help underpin their learning and understanding. For example, in a public services lesson, students showed good decision-making and problem-solving skills when planning for, and organising, a large event.
- Teachers assess thoroughly students' learning and progress through a wide range of methods including quizzes, the use of mini whiteboards and very effective questioning techniques. Students engage confidently in peer assessment and demonstrate good analytical skills when tactfully feeding back constructive criticism to their fellow classmates.
- In the few lessons that require improvement, teachers often talk at length for too long and although they may be engaging, students do not have to think for themselves and this slows their progress. Teachers question students to check their understanding and, although they ensure all students contribute, the questions are often insufficiently probing to extend learning, especially at advanced level.
- Accommodation and resources to support learning are good. Many subject areas use the college's virtual learning environment (VLE) imaginatively to encourage students to work together and to assess each other's work. For example, A-level media studies students reviewed film clips on the VLE and contributed to a lively online debate with their peers. In many subjects, teachers use 'Twitter' to encourage peer review and also to post revision tips and reminders. In a mathematics lesson, students using an e-learning package faced individual challenges to attempt more complex questions and tasks.
- Assessment is good. Most teachers provide helpful comments and constructive feedback on students' written work to help them get to the next stage. In a minority of cases, insufficient homework is set, or work is not returned promptly.
- In the majority of subjects, teachers help students to develop their written English by correcting errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Teachers provide ample opportunities in lessons for students to develop their verbal English and, as result, many students have very good levels of oracy, but most teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities to help students improve their mathematics. However, students without GCSE English and/or mathematics receive good support to achieve these qualifications during their time at college.
- Academic target-setting and the monitoring of students' progress are rigorous and contribute significantly to students' motivation to do well. Teachers set challenging targets that take into account students' starting points and their career aspirations. Students value the close monitoring of their progress and the regular individual interviews they have with their teachers and tutors.
- Good advice and guidance ensure that students choose the right course to meet their needs. The college has established a bespoke induction programme; the 'Franklin Start' is proving to be highly effective in helping students to settle into college life and has contributed significantly to the marked increase in retention and achievement. The college's innovative 'Careers Academies' provide support for students to help them make informed choices at the beginning of, and throughout their time at, college. Vibrant and informative displays around the college, celebrating the successes of past and current students, provide positive role models.

- A wide range of trips and visits help to enhance learning and develop students' employability skills. For example, health and social care students benefit from work-experience placements, industry mentors and supported research projects, and English and foreign languages students benefit from exchange visits, study tours and theatre visits.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well in the majority of subject areas. Teachers are confident in making effective use of naturally occurring opportunities to promote equality and diversity or to challenge stereotypes.

Health and social care Learning programmes for 16-18

Outstanding

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding, which is reflected in the very high success rates achieved by students. A large proportion of students achieve high grades. Students have a very enthusiastic attitude to learning and this is demonstrated in their excellent attendance and very good punctuality. Students make outstanding and sustained progress.
- Lessons are planned well with close attention to the individual needs of students. Teachers use a good range of interesting and challenging activities to engage students and provide real-life experiences. For example, in one lesson, students developed excellent skills in how to plan and deliver a health promotion campaign. Other students developed very good practical skills when designing and delivering an anti-bullying campaign in local primary schools.
- Teachers use questioning very effectively to check students' understanding and extend their learning. For example, in one lesson, the teacher used probing questions skilfully to tease out students' understanding of the needs of older people, and encouraged students to challenge existing stereotypes. In a few workshop sessions, the aims set for individual students were not clear enough.
- Students have clear aspirational targets, and frequently exceed these. Teachers monitor students' progress carefully and have a very good understanding of their individual needs and, as a result, support is sharply focused. Teachers adapt their teaching and assessment strategies well to meet students' needs. For example, students can be assessed in a variety of different ways, such as through case studies and class presentations.
- Teachers provide clear, written feedback to students on how to improve their work and achieve higher grades. Spelling and grammar errors are corrected routinely. Students develop a good working knowledge of key terminology associated with health and social care and use terms such as 'multidisciplinary teams' with confidence and a clear understanding of their application.
- Students' work is of a very high standard. They take great pride in its presentation. For example, intermediate-level students produced excellent work on equality and diversity that related to their recent work placement. Students' research skills are very good. They use, and know how to reference, the most appropriate sources of information such as data on health inequalities to inform their work.
- Classrooms provide a stimulating and attractive environment with striking student-rich displays. Students use the VLE frequently, including during college holidays, to access the range of relevant resources designed to encourage independent study skills. However, the use of interactive whiteboards in classrooms is unimaginative.
- Students enjoy and value their work placements, which take place in a wide range of settings. They submit applications and are interviewed for their work placement to help develop their employability skills and give them real-life experiences. Guest speakers, such as occupational therapists and nurses, add significant value to the students' experience at college. Staff are well qualified with excellent industry experience. Progression into higher education, full-time employment and/or training is good.
- The college's Health Career Academy is a unique and innovative development which inspires students and provides excellent opportunities to pursue health-related topics in detail. The

Academy links students with professional mentors from the health and social care sector. In a recent project, students visited a college in Birmingham to research and compare health inequalities in different regions.

- Equality and diversity are promoted effectively and integrated fully through displays, classroom activities and work placements. Students have a very good understanding of the value base in the caring professions and are knowledgeable about how relevant legislation protects clients from discrimination.

Visual and performing arts Learning programmes for 16-18

Outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding, which contributes significantly to the very high proportion of students who stay to complete their courses successfully. Students make outstanding progress on the majority of courses. Attendance and punctuality are excellent.
- A strong sense of creative identity has been established across the area. Teachers are demanding and have very high expectations of students. Students respond admirably and develop a strong sense of responsibility for their own learning and progress. In an outstanding drama lesson, students demonstrated impressive analytical skills when making presentations about their directorial concepts of Georg Buchner's play *Woyzeck* and how the influence of Brecht might enhance such interpretations. Subsequent peer assessment demonstrated the depth of students' understanding, critical analysis and knowledge. Revision lessons, that could so easily be mundane, provided much stimulus, encouragement and enjoyment to students.
- Assignments are bold, challenging and ambitious. Performing arts students participate in difficult public performances such as Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*, in addition to the annual Shakespeare production. In art and design, students are encouraged to work on a large scale and enjoy the challenges such projects present. Music students devised, rehearsed and performed individual recital programmes to their peers who then offered considered assessments of what was achieved and possible areas for improvement. In another music lesson, students participating in a string quartet played Mozart's 'Eine Kleine Nacht Musik' with gusto and aplomb.
- Teachers insist that students work to industry standards, especially in dance; students consistently rise to this challenge. In one lesson they made remarkable progress in exploring and implementing the style of Bob Fosse into their own choreography for the Rich Man's Frug night-club sequence in *Sweet Charity*.
- Resources and accommodation are good. Rooms are maintained to a high standard and the vibrant displays that celebrate student work in all rooms and around the college are stimulating and endorse the sense of identity. The effective use of humour is evident in much display work and signs within art and design.
- Progression to higher education is impressive. The high proportion of students who are accepted at prestigious institutions such as Rose Bruford, Bristol Old Vic, Central St Martin's and the Doreen Bird Academy is outstanding.
- An excellent range of enrichment activities underpin students' high levels of success and enjoyment. Music students participate in chamber groups and big show bands, and art students visit Paris and participate in national exhibitions. High-profile international artists deliver master classes in life-drawing and composition. Drama students have toured Poland with Shakespeare productions, and dance students compete regularly in local and national competitions.
- Assessment is assiduous and the monitoring of students' progress against aspirational target grades rigorous and demanding. Feedback and subsequent action planning are detailed. Peer assessment is used very effectively. English and mathematics are developed well in most lessons.
- Equality and diversity are promoted seamlessly into the work of the area. Study materials, texts and images are used creatively to investigate the lives and experiences of others. Students in

performing arts carried out splendid work investigating the worlds of people who are visually impaired.

Humanities and social sciences Learning programmes for 16-18

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, which is reflected in students' achievements on most courses. Students make good progress in most lessons. Success rates are high except in AS geography and in AS history where they are below average.
- Teachers set challenging targets and students develop good analytical and independent research skills. For example, in a politics lesson students compared and contrasted the political processes and pressures in Britain and America that brought differing responses to gun control following the tragedies of Sandy Hook and Dunblane. In most lessons students engage in lively and enthusiastic debate, developing their ideas and understanding through group work and independent study. In a few lessons students make satisfactory progress, but fail to develop higher-order thinking skills. In such lessons students spend too long listening to the teacher and not thinking enough for themselves.
- Planning for learning is effective in the majority of lessons where students are engaged through a variety of activities and tasks that challenge and stretch them fully. For example, in a sociology lesson the teacher made effective use of the standard imagery of men and women, and this encouraged a lively debate on gender inequality and stereotyping. In these lessons teachers use good questioning techniques to stretch and extend students' knowledge and ensure points are securely developed and understood.
- The internet, the college's VLE and information and learning technology are used extensively by students to develop and extend their learning and carry out additional work. For example, sociology students used 'Twitter' to discuss feminist and gender issues with their teacher, while history students posted lesson starter activities on YouTube that they had devised themselves.
- Assessment for learning is good and used effectively to support and inform students of the progress they are making towards their target grades. Most feedback on students' written work gives clear and supportive direction on how they can improve and make progress. Students are clear about their progress and take great pride in mapping this carefully through their personal assessment folders. Grammar and spelling and use of numerical evidence, where appropriate, are checked and corrected routinely.
- Support for students is good and all receive high-quality advice and guidance and an early assessment of their support needs to ensure that they are on the right programme and have the necessary help to succeed. Students value the additional help they receive with their work and self-refer if they feel in need of extra support. Monitoring of progress is robust and those at risk of underperforming are guided towards additional help.
- Students develop and extend their understanding of equality and diversity effectively through topics within the subject syllabi; additional opportunities are flagged for students on schemes of work and in the better lessons these are fully developed. For example, in a history lesson students discussed and analysed discrimination and segregation within America as part of their study of the Civil Rights movement.

English and modern foreign languages Learning programmes for 16-18

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. The vast majority of students follow courses in AS- and A-level English, where success rates are close to or above national averages for similar colleges. In modern foreign languages, results are mixed and vary from year to year; performance was mostly above national averages in 2011/12. The proportion of students

gaining high grades of A* to C in GCSE English fell in 2011/12. Current GCSE English students are making very good progress towards their goals.

- Teachers have high expectations and challenge students consistently to extend their skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, revision of a poetry topic in English literature involved groups of students linking elements of the poems in original and creative ways which were then shared with the rest of the class. Teachers use resources inventively to involve students in group and whole-class teaching and learning. The use of information and learning technology in lessons is limited to teacher presentations.
- The standard of students' work is good. They use linguistic and literary terminology confidently: students of English literature presented their own original and interesting analysis of poetry using terms such as 'antithesis', 'enjambment' and 'personification' and, in an English language class, students could identify and describe non-fluency features in a transcript of spoken language. Students of modern foreign languages use the target language as the main means of communication in lessons and many students have excellent pronunciation and intonation.
- Students develop good independent learning skills. In English, students make good use of the VLE to access extension materials and explore links to wider reading. In modern foreign languages, students prepared a research presentation of their choice in the target language to share with others. Students take pride in keeping their assessment folders up to date.
- Students receive good pre-enrolment advice and guidance and teachers assess their work during induction to ensure they are on the right course. Students know their target grades and current level of performance, and accurately identify their own strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers know their students well and give high levels of support; students speak warmly and appreciatively of this.
- Students make good progress and teachers use a range of assessment strategies to help them to learn effectively. They annotate written work carefully with helpful advice on how to improve. Peer- and self-assessment are integrated into lessons and are effective in helping students extend and develop their knowledge and skills. GCSE English students acted as 'examiners' assessing a sample script. Students of French identified grammar topics they needed to practise and arranged 'revision rendez-vous' to work together outside lessons.
- English and functional skills have a high priority. Initiatives such as 'word of the week' and reading logs encourage students to extend their language skills, and teachers correct grammar, spelling and punctuation meticulously in written work. A broad range of enrichment activities is offered including theatre visits, competitions and a French film club, enhancing students' personal and social skills and increasing their motivation and enjoyment.
- Staff promote equality and diversity effectively through, for example, discussions about feminism and feminine attributes in a literature lesson. In one French lesson students discussed same-sex marriage and gender discrimination in the foreign language and a Spanish student based her research presentation on Eva Peron and explored the role of women in South American society.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leadership and management are good. The Principal, governors and senior leaders have developed a clear vision and ambition for the college which are communicated effectively. Their leadership, and the well-focused work and commitment of staff, have underpinned the rapid improvement in students' outcomes since the previous inspection. Senior leaders managed the recent restructuring, which has resulted in greater accountability, well. They have deployed the college's financial resources carefully to improve the learning environment. Managers acknowledge that there remain a few areas of weakness in performance and are addressing these with vigour. A small minority of staff are unclear about responsibilities within their subject area in the new structure.

- The new governing body structure has strengthened governors' capacity to provide challenge. They have good information to support their scrutiny and are keenly aware of specific areas of underperformance and that further work needs to be done to address these. Governors now have a much stronger focus on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and on evaluating the impact of their own work on students' experiences.
- Performance management to bring about improvements in teaching, learning and assessment is good. A wide range of interventions support improvements where practice is found to be less than good. Teachers have many opportunities to share good practice, for example through teaching and learning communities and facilitators. Professional development is well focused and teachers are enthusiastic about finding new ways of promoting learning. Performance reviews and associated targets link closely to outcomes and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Self-assessment and other aspects of quality assurance are supported exceptionally well by readily accessible management information. Training has helped to build the capacity of curriculum team leaders to lead on self-assessment. Self-assessment reports take account of students' views and identify accurately the strengths and weaknesses in provision; in some reports judgements are masked by too much description. Nevertheless, quality improvement plans reflect areas for improvement, and managers monitor plans closely. They recognise that in a few subjects the quality improvement plans have not led to rapid enough improvements.
- The college works exceptionally well with a range of partners to develop its curriculum and to play an important part in raising participation levels. Its offer is focused on advanced-level academic programmes with a number of vocational and intermediate-level options. The foundation programme meets well the needs of a small number of vulnerable students. The Careers Academies offer students an invaluable insight into the world of work and have helped the college to forge excellent relationships with employers. Wide enrichment opportunities help students to broaden their experiences and improve their health, well-being and career prospects.
- College leaders give a high priority to the promotion of equality and diversity and staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities. The single equality scheme and associated action plan have regular scrutiny. Managers analyse achievements of different groups, work effectively to reduce gaps, and plan to widen this analysis further. The few complaints that students make are resolved quickly. The college ensures that students with limited mobility are able to access all areas of the curriculum and is installing power-assisted doors throughout the college.
- Staff work well with external agencies to ensure that the college meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding students and that students' concerns are resolved appropriately. Students feel safe. Staff and governors have appropriate training on college procedures and understand their responsibilities. Governors receive an annual report on safeguarding. Recruitment procedures include appropriate checks which are recorded on a well-maintained single register. Health and safety arrangements both within college and off-site receive due attention. The college is planning to raise students' awareness of e-safety further.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Health and social care	1
Performing arts	1
Visual Arts	1
Humanities	2
Social Sciences	2
English	2
Modern foreign languages	2

College details

Franklin College	
Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 1,537
	Part-time: 1,100
Principal/CEO	Trevor Wray
Date of previous inspection	February 2012
Website address	http://www.franklin.ac.uk

College 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	4	N/A	53	N/A	1,450	30	N/A	N/A
Part-time	60	727	15	165	44	55	N/A	N/A
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	N/A	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							

Additional socio-economic information

Franklin College is situated in Grimsby and draws from a relatively wide geographic area covering north Lincolnshire. Within the area, post-16 education is also provided by a further education college. Of the 10 local secondary schools, all, except one, have become academies and four of these offer sixth-form provision. The proportion of local school leavers achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C was slightly above the national average in 2011/12. However, attainment on entry to Franklin College is generally lower than the sixth-form college average. Most students are from White British backgrounds. Within the college's catchment area, there is an outward migration of talented young people at 19 plus and a shortage of high-level skills. Unemployment is high among young people. Most employment opportunities are in low-skilled work and the gross average wage is low. The area is one of considerable contrast, with some districts in the region experiencing the least deprivation and others among the most 10% most deprived nationally.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Josephine Nowacki HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the deputy principal as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on students' 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 students, their parents and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed lessons, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the college. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

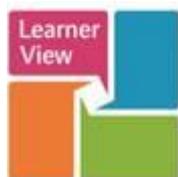
What inspection judgements mean

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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