

Central Sussex College

General further education college

Inspection dates		22–26 April 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
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 college requires improvement because:

- Too much teaching is not yet good or better. In a significant proportion of poorer teaching sessions, teachers do not meet the individual needs of all learners due to insufficient planning.
- Too many learners, at all levels, are unsuccessful in achieving their intended qualification, most markedly, those aged 19 and over on longer courses.
- Learners on advanced level courses often make too little progress relative to their starting points at college, and do not achieve their full potential.
- The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons is not consistently good. Teachers too often miss opportunities to help learners understand equality and diversity and the way in which it relates to their studies.
- Quality improvement and staff development initiatives are having insufficient impact on maintaining and raising the quality of provision.
- The college has a significant financial deficit.

This college has the following strengths:

- Highly motivated staff, managers and governors are determined to work in the best interests of their learners.
- Outstanding provision in visual and performing arts and in early years education.
- Good advice and guidance for learners, with particularly good support for their progression to employment and higher education.
- The good assessment of learners' work by teachers. Learners are clear about the standards they need to achieve and about what they need to do to improve.
- High success rates for school pupils on linked college work-related courses.
- Very good college accommodation, providing outstanding teaching facilities for learners.
- Very productive working relationships with the wider local community, including schools and employers.

Full report

What does the college need to do to improve further?

- Improve learners' attainment of their qualifications. Build on the significant examples of excellent teaching and learning practice existing in the college in order to increase the proportion of sessions that are good or better.
- Consistently use the outcomes of learners' initial assessments and their individual profiles to plan teaching which meets the needs of all learners. Fully take into account the range of learners to ensure that each is suitably challenged by the activities in teaching sessions.
- Ensure that target setting for learners' improvement, especially in their tutorials, is always given a high priority by tutors. Fully implement the newly introduced college-wide arrangements for electronically recording and tracking learners' progress.
- Better promote learning through teachers' more extensive and ambitious use of information technology in their teaching. Help them to work with learners to better exploit the potential of the college's virtual learning environment, especially for self-study.
- Secure a consistently thorough approach to teachers' promotion of themes of equality and diversity in teaching sessions. Help teachers to realise the potential of using naturally occurring examples of equality and diversity in the subjects they teach.
- Increase the extent to which advanced level learners make progress with their subjects relative to their prior attainments.
- Review the effectiveness of quality improvement and staff development in bringing about higher standards, including the effectiveness of sharing good practice from the highest performing areas in the college.
- Finalise the detailed financial recovery plan for the college and fully implement new checks and balances for governors to support the financial recovery.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners' attainment of their qualifications requires improvement. For classroom-based courses, the college's overall success rate over the last three academic years is around the national average for similar colleges. It recovered well, to 82% in 2011/12, from a poorer position the previous year. The college performs at around the same level as colleges in areas with similar levels of social and economic deprivation. ▪ Overall college success rates for longer courses show the same trend and pattern, but for the substantial short course provision overall success rates have improved significantly and are now just above the national average. ▪ Overall success rates for learners aged 16 to 18 and for those aged 19 and over each improved slightly in 2011/12 to the national average. However, on longer courses, for learners aged 19 and over, overall success rates fell significantly over the last three years to well below the national average. In contrast, they improved markedly for short courses to just above. ▪ Long course success rates in 2011/12, for learners aged 16 to 18, improved for all levels. For advanced level, with by far the largest number of learners, overall success improved to just above the national average. For older learners, success rates fell significantly for all levels, except advanced level, which improved markedly to above the national average. College data indicate good improvement with the retention of learners during the current academic year. ▪ Workplace learners and apprentices' achievement of their full qualifications has been poor, but is now improving. Areas with large numbers, such as early years education and engineering, have 	

improved well to at, or above, national rates. For apprentices, completion within agreed timescales is improving, with more current learners successfully completing their courses to plan.

- The very large number of school pupils aged 14 to 16 attending vocational linked courses succeed well. Their overall success rate is high, at 92% for the 2010/12 cohort.
- Many learners make good progress on their courses, but at advanced level, as measured from their starting points and previous attainment, too few make better than expected progress. Whilst learners make good progress in many subjects at AS level, most GCE A-level learners only make the progress expected of them.
- Learners' success rates for the many functional skills subjects and levels vary considerably. Overall success has improved over the last three years, and is now satisfactory.
- The college analyses data well to identify any differences in the performance of specific groups of learners. This has allowed it successfully to rectify any differences in performance and no significant performance gaps are evident.
- Learners enjoy their life at college. Their standards of work, and the skills they develop, are often good, especially in practical tasks. In early years education and in the visual and performing arts, for example, the standard of work is often high. In engineering and in hospitality and catering, learners demonstrate high standards of practical work.
- The college places considerable successful emphasis on improving learners' personal, social and employability skills and learners make good progress in improving their economic and social well-being. Overall, their attendance is satisfactory. Progression to higher education is relatively low, but has consistently grown, both for applications and acceptances.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- To raise standards of teaching and learning, senior managers have established a comprehensive and reliable scheme of lesson observation, accompanied by a valuable staff development programme. Teachers are supported to improve by experienced and able teaching and learning managers and coaches.
- Overall, teaching, and learning require improvement. Whilst good teaching and learning in many subject areas help learners to achieve increasingly well, too many teaching sessions require improvement and the overall impact on improving learners' outcomes is insufficient. Inspectors saw very little teaching and learning that was inadequate, but only a small amount that was outstanding.
- Teachers often have high expectations of their learners and encourage them to develop good practical and academic skills. They know learners well, develop positive working relationships with them and encourage a strong work ethic. In good or better sessions, teachers integrate the development of employment skills to raise learners' aspirations. Workplace learners are fully introduced to the working practices of their vocational areas and pupils on linked courses are introduced to life after school. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have a particularly good range of work-related activities.
- In better sessions, teachers support learners to develop independent learning skills and use well-planned group activities that encourage problem solving and peer learning. Teachers plan sessions to take into account the different needs of learners, providing additional activities to enable the more able to achieve higher grades.
- In the significant proportion of sessions which require improvement, teachers insufficiently plan activities to meet the differing needs of learners, with too little challenge and a focus on completing tasks rather than improving learning. Sessions progress too slowly and the checking of learners' understanding is insufficient. Although teachers now receive speedy and reliable information about learners' prior attainment, the extent to which this is taken into account by teachers varies significantly.

- Information and learning technology (ILT) to support learning is under used by teachers. In a few subject areas, very effective use is made of technology in sessions to maintain learners' interest and promote learning. The use of the college's virtual learning environment (VLE) to support and extend learning outside sessions requires development. In English language and literature and in construction, teachers use podcasts, social media and materials that are topical and useful for learning, but in a large minority of subjects the VLE is largely used to download documents and presentations.
- Tutorial support for learners is satisfactory overall, but its rigour varies across subjects. In the best cases, learners have frequent one-to-one support and monitor the progress they are making in achieving their target grades and qualifications. However, all tutors do not agree targets with learners which are sufficiently clear to aid improvement. To tackle this, managers have recently started to implement a new electronic system for recording and monitoring learners' progress.
- The assessment of learners' work is good. Teachers plan assessments well, tasks are vocationally relevant and written feedback is thorough, with a clear indication of strengths and weaknesses helping learners to improve the quality of their work. On GCE A-level courses, regular homework is set and detailed feedback provided.
- Learners are well supported, both before and during their studies. They receive good advice to help them make informed choices. Those with identified needs, requiring particular support, are well served. Learning support tutors work well with them to ensure that their progress is equal to that of other learners. Learners are well informed and guided about progression to employment and higher education.
- Learners make appropriate use of specialist language, related to their subjects, during sessions and in assessments. They apply mathematical skills well to practical tasks, for example in science, engineering and dance. However, teaching and learning on foundation and intermediate level mathematics courses require improvement.
- Teachers create an environment that is inclusive, in which learners are treated fairly and learners demonstrate positive behaviour and respect for each other. The extent to which teachers build on these themes in sessions varies considerably, with both good and poorer practice. A substantial programme of life skills activities, organised by the student support department, is valued by learners.

Early years education

Learning programmes for 16-18

Apprenticeships

Other work based learning

Outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding, as are outcomes for learners. Success rates are very high. Learners make very good progress and develop good vocational skills. A high proportion progresses to related employment, further education and training. Teaching and learning activities are interactive, carefully planned and fully engage learners. They work productively and confidently with their teachers and with each other. Learners on work placements work very professionally with children and with their colleagues.
- Support for learners is good and highly valued by them. Teachers, support assistants and pastoral tutors know their learners well and, as a team, ensure that learning needs are fully met. For example, skilled support for hearing impaired learners has ensured their good progress, both in college and on work placements.
- Teachers draw on their extensive vocational experience in the care and early years sectors to engage the interest of learners and to make theory relevant to professional practice. Foundation level learners carefully selected electronic toys for babies and explained how these would support their development. Learners carefully planned a balanced budget for a pre-school

midday meal, catering well for all specific dietary needs of the children. Staff and learners use technology very effectively in the research and presentation of work.

- Teachers carefully assess the basic skill levels of learners at the start of their courses. Detailed learner profiles are compiled and particularly well used in the planning and delivery of teaching, ensuring that all learners are able to take a full part in sessions and make good progress. Additional learning support is well planned and very effective.
- Teachers thoroughly assess learners' assignments and comments on learners work are clear, detailed and constructive. Learners understand what they need to do to improve. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are carefully corrected. English and mathematics are developed in sessions and the use of specialist vocabulary, at all levels, is carefully supported. Opportunities to integrate the learning of mathematics are occasionally missed. Advanced level learners confidently apply the requirements of the early years foundation curriculum to their practice, together with other very recent developments including the 'Every Child a Talker' programme.
- Learners receive excellent information, advice and guidance from expert staff. They are placed on the most appropriate programmes and are provided with accurate and timely information to support their progression into work or further study. The work placement programme is highly effectively managed and supports the development of good practical childcare skills, providing an excellent preparation for employment.
- Teachers ensure that the promotion of equality and diversity is integral to the early years curriculum. For example, in sessions, learners discuss how to adapt activities, toys and care arrangements to ensure that all children are included in the activities planned. In a session for foundation level learners, they explained very clearly how they could ensure that the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child would be met in a nursery setting. Activities in teaching and assessment strategies are very well chosen to meet the diverse and specific learning needs of learners.

Science and mathematics

Learning programmes for 16-18

Learning programmes for 19+

Requires improvement

- Teaching and learning require improvement, which is reflected in the variability of success rates, with declining trends and low rates in too many subjects. Assessment is generally good.
- In better lessons, teachers are adept at very quickly checking learning and understanding. They are very knowledgeable in their subject and often engage learners in a variety of interesting activities. For example, in one physics lesson, learners used data from the recent Kuril earthquake, recorded by the college's own seismograph, to analyse the complex propagation paths of the shock waves, integrating aspects of several scientific disciplines into one inspiring learning activity. In most lessons, learners work effectively in pairs and small groups to discuss and solve problems together.
- Teachers too often pay insufficient attention to the planning of lessons and what they need to do to maximise learning. In a minority of lessons, the most able learners wait whilst others take more time to finish their task, and classroom and laboratory activities do not develop the knowledge and skills that learners need. In mathematics lessons, computers too often lie idle.
- Biology lessons often have a strong ecological or conservation theme, for example the sustainability of natural resources; although, in a few lessons, teachers do not allow learners to take a sufficiently active part in these discussions.
- Learners have formed their own science society and meet regularly to perform experiments. They organise trips to science establishments and invite guest speakers to the college. For example, an eminent scientist recently gave a thought-provoking lecture entitled 'Juggling and Relativity'.

- Learners' work and progress are frequently assessed by their teachers. Learners are set clear targets for improvement and their progress is closely monitored. Those at risk of not succeeding are directed to subject workshops for help. However, learners' attendance and performance at these is not formally monitored. Learners speak highly of the extra support that teachers offer them outside lessons.
- The range and scope of assignments often promotes learners' progress. They make good use of colour and three-dimensional diagrams to show, for example, a cross section of the layers in human skin. Course work for GCE A-level chemistry is especially good, for example in the use and interpretation of graphical data. Some of the language that learners use is too colloquial and not appropriate for scientific reports and some work is too descriptive and insufficiently challenging. On the newly developed vocational science course, assignments do not always require learners to produce work of sufficient depth and quality.
- Teachers set homework frequently and mark it promptly. Marking is informative and explains clearly to learners exactly what is needed to improve further. Grammatical and spelling errors are usually, but not always, corrected.
- Specialist science accommodation is excellent, with most lessons taught in a new building at the Haywards Heath campus, utilising semi-circular work benches that ideally suit both theory and practical lessons. However, there are not enough microscopes and the laptop computers are old and slow. In most subjects, learners regularly use the college's VLE to download resources and course materials, although the amount of resources to support independent learning is too small.
- Good advice is available to learners on options for higher education and career choice. A high proportion of science students that go on to higher education choose to study a science-based course.
- Learners work in an environment where equality and diversity are valued, but in lessons teachers miss opportunities to develop themes to enhance learners' understanding of equality and diversity.

Engineering

Learning programmes for 14-16
Learning programmes for 16-18
Apprenticeships

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and promote high success rates for learners. Highly enthusiastic, well qualified teachers motivate learners to achieve well in their examinations and assessments. Outcomes for the relatively small number of apprentices have recently improved to around national averages. Overall, learners make good progress from their starting points.
- Teaching and learning in practical sessions are good. Learners demonstrate high levels of confidence and communication skills, allowing them to work as part of a team or independently.
- Learners achieve good standards and skills in their practical work. For example, welders measure, cut, dress and weld different metals to fabricate high quality practical, serviceable items. Electronics learners use mathematical formulae effectively to work out series and parallel circuit wiring. Engineering apprentices transfer two-dimensional drawings into three-dimensional products using lathes to machine billet to accurate shapes and sizes. They finish materials to industrial standards. All learners demonstrate high levels of awareness for personal protective equipment, protecting themselves, their peers and fellow workers.
- Teaching and learning in the relatively small proportion of lessons on engineering theory require improvement. Lessons insufficiently capture the interest and involvement of learners, especially of less able learners and the objectives too often fail to stretch the more able. Teachers' questioning does not always develop learners' understanding, thinking, or problem solving skills.

- Assessment is good in college practical sessions and at least satisfactory in the workplace. Teachers and assessors use visual observation, coupled with good directed questions to probe learners' knowledge, practical skills and understanding of their professional fields.
- Teachers' detailed written and, more immediate, verbal feedback on practical tasks and assessment enables learners to further enhance the quality of their work and their skills. Teachers help them to improve further through ambitious, detailed targets, although short term specific targets are insufficiently recorded to help learners to remember them.
- All learners benefit from thorough initial assessment to ascertain their prior attainment. Where needed, they receive additional learning support quickly. Teachers, assessors, employers and tutors communicate well to make sure any additional support is comprehensive and carefully planned, resulting in good progress for learners.
- Teachers and instructors develop learners' mathematical skills particularly well in teaching sessions and in the workplace. Learners master and apply complex mathematical formulae to their professions and trades. English skills are insufficiently developed to improve learners' spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Staff provide good initial advice and guidance, helping to ensure that learners are on the correct course, at the right level. Monitoring of learners' attendance is particularly good, with employers, pastoral staff and carers fully involved in tackling poorer attendance.
- Learners receive good guidance through electronic tutorial tracker systems. These effectively involve staff, employers, and parents and carers in planning progression routes. As a result, learners receive timely information about their next steps for education or employment.
- Learners share a culture of mutual respect between themselves, their teachers and employers and have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities. They recognise equality and diversity themes, such as discrimination, bullying and harassment. However, teachers and assessors miss opportunities in teaching and in progress reviews to emphasise naturally occurring wider themes of equality and diversity, to further develop learners' understanding.

Visual and performing arts

Learning programmes for 16-18

Learning programmes for 19+

Outstanding

- Outcomes are outstanding and reflect the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Success rates are particularly high for GCSE art, AS and GCE A-level art, design and theatre studies and the national certificate and national diploma in performing arts. Overall, learners make rapid progress relative to their starting points.
- Art and design learners develop their ideas well, using drawing, digital images and sculptors' preliminary models and sketches. Sketchbooks reveal exciting visual journeys, particularly at GCE A level. Performing arts learners display high performance skills and are confident when discussing moral and ethical issues. For example, in one theatre studies lesson, learners successfully improvised a scene from *Our Country's Good* with careful reference to the 18th century British penal system. Music learners have good technical skills and are encouraged by peer critiques to improve their performance skills.
- Teachers are well qualified and use their expertise to establish professional learning environments. Exceptional progress is made in physical theatre and performance lessons where learners are excited, and sometimes surprised, by the progress they make in creative interpretation. In one lesson, the theme of school bullying and gender roles was developed powerfully from static poses into jump style street dancing.
- The outstanding teaching promotes a culture of high expectations. The most effective teaching is highly interactive with a range of challenging tasks and activities. Collaborative learning and peer assessment are used highly effectively in many lessons to develop students' team working skills.

- In a few lessons, teachers' planning to meet the diverse needs of learners, as identified in the group profiles, is insufficient. Lessons move slowly and some planned activities towards the end of the lesson are rushed. In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not use questioning sufficiently to engage the entire group and to promote confidence in discussion.
- Teachers promote the development of English and mathematics well, reinforcing appropriate technical vocabulary. In an art lesson, learners worked collaboratively to develop analytical word lists to emphasise research and resolution. Opportunities to embed mathematics occur regularly in the performing arts, as when the number of steps in a dance sequence was not concurrent with the music time signature. The initial confusion of the class was correctly identified and solved by a music learner.
- Art and design studios, music suites, rehearsal rooms and the professional theatre are outstanding and used to develop high standards of work. Exciting learner work and performance photographs are displayed in classrooms. Course workbooks are comprehensive and highly valued by learners. E-learning technology is used appropriately and effectively.
- Teachers' support of learners is highly effective. Learners value the individual discussions in lessons and the opportunity to work in the studios, alongside taught groups when space permits. Technicians work successfully as part of the team to support the high quality practical work and to promote safe working practices. Additional learning support for learners is timely and effective.
- Assessment of learners' work is thorough and rigorous, with clear written feedback for improvements. Discussions of learners' work in art and design lessons are frequent, with feedback notes kept in sketchbooks. Workbook diaries are kept by performing arts learners. Plenary critiques are used well in many lessons to assess progress and to develop individual texts; but, in a few cases, these can be too dominated by the teacher. Progression to higher education is high, with a small number of learners progressing to apprenticeships and employment.
- The wide range of enrichment activities is much appreciated by learners. Visits are designed to develop their understanding of the contextual background to texts and projects. Visiting theatre companies, lecturers and community projects support the vocational background to learning. A well-considered range of cultural influences successfully embeds diversity in the curriculum.

English for speakers of other languages

Learning programmes for 14-16

Learning programmes for 16-18

Learning programmes for 19+

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. Whilst success rates for learners are improving, too many are low, especially on longer courses, and overall require improvement. Learners mostly make sufficient or better progress. Their attendance rates show improvement; but, during the inspection, a significant number of adult learners were absent from their sessions.
- Pro-active management action and raised expectations of learners have had a positive impact on improving outcomes. Most recently, around three quarters of young learners and half of adult learners progressed to higher level courses.
- Learners develop a good range of skills and become more independent and confident in using their newly-acquired and improved language skills. For example, younger learners actively worked in small groups to develop their team work skills by negotiating their role in building a bridge, then critically analysed their involvement in the production of this to a set criteria. On successful conclusion of the construction, they were encouraged to reflect, evaluate and record their own and team members' performance.

- Teachers demonstrate appropriate subject knowledge. In better lessons, they swiftly involve learners and learning is well organised. During lessons on conversation, learners develop their questioning and comprehension skills by actively practising and recording each other's views on preferred life choices. They concentrate and listen to each other's views before confirming and recording findings in written form. Learners are encouraged to work together and are fully involved in interesting and well-structured learning activities. Teachers assess learning regularly in lessons and provide ample feedback to learners. Learners' work is carefully checked and corrected with helpful written feedback that increases their understanding of necessary improvements.
- Teachers' success in appropriately planning for learning varies greatly. Too often, detail on how teaching is to be adapted to accommodate the range of skills and ability levels in a class is insufficient. Identified learning objectives are sometimes too general and not achievable by all learners in the given timescale. Organised activities are not always appropriately challenging and do not extend more able learners who complete set tasks quickly.
- Learners are not always aware of the progress they have made. The quality of learning targets set by teachers to further develop and improve learners' language varies too much. Targets are not always specific or measurable, or to an agreed timescale. Teachers' tracking of learners' incremental learning steps and progress is inconsistent, with learning reviews and records of learning not always completed. Teachers miss opportunities to record the new skills learners have acquired since the start of their studies.
- Initial advice, guidance and support for learners are good. Teachers thoroughly analyse learners' English language skills at the start of their courses, assessing their prior attainment and appropriate level of study. Younger learners are provided with good pastoral and academic support in extended group tutorials. Teachers and support staff provide good additional and specialist pastoral care for vulnerable learners. Learners are very positive about the impact of this valuable support on their learning.
- Learners benefit from learning that raises their awareness of equality and diversity topics. Teachers skilfully present and use diverse pictorial images to generate stimulating discussion of differences. In an intermediate English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) lesson, learners confidently discussed gender differences and improved their communication skills, as well as extending their knowledge by considering and debating the size of male and female brains and a Formula 1 driver's perception of a female driver in a male dominated sport.

Foundation mathematics

Learning programmes for 16-18

Learning programmes for 19+

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, as do outcomes for learners. Whilst functional skills mathematics is good at entry level, it is only around national averages at foundation and intermediate levels.
- Learners of foundation mathematics develop appropriate mathematical skills and also employability skills, such as problem solving and the ability to work well with others.
- Learners in the majority of lessons demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts and terminology. For example, essential skills learners are able to construct 'Carroll' diagrams showing the ability to process two sets of data simultaneously. Entry level learners successfully identify the key features of three-dimensional shapes. Foundation learners present data in charts and intermediate learners apply ratios to solve problems.
- Learners have good support in lessons from teachers and learning support assistants and, as a result, they are often able to participate meaningfully and make progress. Teachers provide good English support to ESOL students, ensuring they are able to develop their mathematical

skills and their vocabulary. Teachers are patient, positive and encouraging and all learners respond, many with increased confidence.

- Better lessons are well prepared and well structured, with a variety of learning activities to meet learners' needs, including games, practical activities and information and communication technology (ICT), such as using 'drag and drop' on the interactive whiteboard to create diagrams, and computer games to practice ratios. These lessons engage learners' interest and stimulate discussion and learning. Activities stretch and challenge learners, for example in an area matching task, different units of measurement were well used.
- In the significant number of weaker lessons, an over reliance on standard worksheets is evident or all learners are engaged in the same activity. Although most classes have profiles of learners' attainment and context, there is little evidence of teachers using this information in planning to meet individual needs. Teachers deliver the topic to all learners regardless of their need. Poorer lessons lack sufficient planning, are poorly structured and have too much teacher-led input, with learners passive for substantial periods of time. In many lessons, more able learners are not stretched, and in the weakest lessons they are bored.
- All learners undertake appropriate initial assessment, used to establish their current attainment. However, teachers' use of this and of formative assessments in planning learning is underdeveloped. The continuous enrolment of adult learners allows them to access learning when they are able. During the inspection, new learners were well integrated into a class following advice and guidance the previous week.
- Assessment of learning is good. In the majority of lessons, teachers' questioning is effective and learners' understanding is checked by enabling learners to fully explain their answers. In weaker lessons, checking of learning is underdeveloped and opportunities to assess learners' work in class and give immediate feedback are missed. Tracking of assessments is not consistently sound.
- Teachers' feedback on marked work is of variable quality. In the best cases, teachers give learners clear, in-depth feedback indicating areas to work on. When weaker, marking is limited to what is missing from the answers and does not let learners know how to improve. Target setting is underdeveloped and targets on individual learning plans are too general, with unclear dates. Shorter term targets on what learners need to do to improve, and how, are not routinely used by teachers or learners.
- Lessons are inclusive and teachers manage diverse groups of learners well. Learners support each other and show respect. However, in teaching and learning, there is little overt celebration of diversity and teachers miss opportunities to ensure materials contain a range of cultural examples.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The college has a substantial budget deficit, due to poor financial and resource management and inadequate governance procedures to monitor the college's financial status.
- The newly-appointed Principal, in post for 12 weeks at the time of the inspection, has taken comprehensive action to uncover the full extent of the situation, identify inefficiencies, assess the implications for the college and begin to develop a recovery strategy. She is working closely with a new chair of governors to review governance and audit arrangements and put suitable checks and balances in place to help support recovery. The leadership team is working hard to minimise the impact of the financial situation on the experience of learners.
- Following a recent review of membership of the governing body, current governors possess a broad and relevant range of knowledge and experience. Under the leadership of the new chairs of the corporation and of the audit committee, the board is completing a comprehensive updating to its practice. The corporation is actively supportive of the Principal, and has a high level of confidence in her ability to lead the college through its financial recovery and raise the overall quality of provision. Learners' health and safety are thoroughly managed and reviewed.

- A strong ethos of care for learners is evident across the college. Staff actively promote the 'Get REAL' campaign focusing on 'raising expectations and aspirations of learners'. This campaign underpins the key values and vision of the college. Teachers are particularly good at ensuring that learners have an inclusive and supportive experience at college, where they feel safe and enjoy their courses.
- The quality of accommodation across the college is very good, particularly at the newly-extended Haywards Heath campus. It provides outstanding up-to-date facilities, notably in sports, science, performing and visual arts. Teaching resources in most areas are also good. In a few areas, such as science and ESOL, access to high-quality equipment for learners, such as laptop computers in classrooms, is insufficient. Teachers and other staff are well qualified. Many teachers have relevant industrial experience which adds significant value, particularly to vocational programmes.
- The performance management of staff is satisfactory and suitably links the targets of individuals with the key priorities for the college and for each faculty. The college has a particularly good scheme for capturing learners' perceptions of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Managers utilise the findings from this review and also from the lesson observation process to help inform the performance management of staff. They also use it well to identify and prioritise themes for individual and cross-college staff development.
- The college has as a substantial range of valuable staff development initiatives, many focusing on raising the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This includes an extensive array of 'in-college' training, coaching and mentoring schemes and opportunities to share good practice between faculties. While highly effective in some areas, these have insufficient impact on raising standards across the whole college, particularly when related to the level of investment the college makes in this area. Managers benefit from good access to management development.
- Quality assurance and improvement arrangements are not maintaining, or raising, the quality of provision consistently across the college. The accuracy and objectivity of self-assessment reports vary significantly across subject areas. The college's scheme for judging the quality of teaching, learning and assessment provides sound information on which to base improvement. Some areas, such as visual and performing arts and early years, have succeeded in improving the overall quality of provision. However, since the previous inspection, the grades for overall effectiveness of the college and for outcomes for learners have declined.
- Curriculum management is generally satisfactory overall, and good in the higher-performing areas of the college. Managers design the curriculum well to ensure that there is a broad range of appropriate provision, addressing the educational and training needs of the local community. Managers maintain strong and beneficial links with local community groups, schools and employers.
- Following recent developments to management information systems, managers now have improved access to more accurate and reliable data to support them in monitoring and reviewing the progress of learners. However, the use of different data systems at different campuses detracts from managers' ability to establish a consistent approach to tracking and monitoring learners' progress. Good analysis of learners' performance data and action taken has removed any significant achievement gaps.
- Approaches to raising awareness of, and promoting, equality and diversity and safeguarding across the college are good. Staff and governors have thorough induction and training on these topics. The college meets its statutory requirements for the safeguarding of learners and governors fulfil their responsibilities to review related policies and procedures annually. Learners have good access to counselling and welfare support if required. Opportunities to promote their understanding of equalities and diversity in teaching sessions are inconsistently grasped by teachers. Promotion is good, for example, in performing arts and ESOL, but insufficient in other areas, such as science, mathematics and engineering.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Central Sussex College

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 Learning programmes	16-18 Learning programmes	19+ Learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Other work- based learning	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Outcomes for learners	3	2	3	3	3	3	3
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	2	3	3	3	3	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Early years and playwork	1
Science	3
Mathematics and statistics	3
Engineering	2
Visual Arts	1
Performing arts	1
ESOL	3
Foundation mathematics	3

[illegible]

Additional socio-economic information

The college has six campuses, widely spread across West Sussex, including the largest in Crawley, and the sixth form centre in Haywards Heath, mainly providing advanced-level courses for learners aged 16 to 18. Smaller campuses are in East Grinstead, Burgess Hill and Horsham. The college's locations are central to the 'Gatwick Diamond' area and the college serves communities where the socio-economic context is significantly shaped and influenced by their proximity to Gatwick airport. Crawley's local economy and employment, both stronger than in the rest of West Sussex, have not changed significantly over time. A significant proportion of large businesses provides high employment overall, but youth unemployment is high. The college's diverse community reflects that of its local communities, including learners of minority ethnic heritage.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

David Martin HMI

Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), one Seconded Inspector and six additional inspectors, assisted by the Deputy 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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