

# The Sixth Form College, Solihull

## Sixth form college

<b>Inspection dates</b>		<b>24–27 September 2013</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good-2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
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 provider is good because:

- The drive to secure improvement has developed a harmonious learning culture and there is a strong emphasis on high expectations and aspirations.
- Well planned and coherent strategies have improved outcomes for students and staff have responded positively to these initiatives.
- Governors provide effective challenge and support to managers and the college as a whole.
- Many students progress to higher education each year.
- Students' attendance and behaviour is very good.
- AS success rates have improved and in a substantial number of A-level programmes all the students passed.
- A high proportion of students on advanced programmes achieve A\*-B grades.

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

- Students' achievements at A and AS have improved, but they are not yet consistently above national averages in all subject areas.
- Achievement gaps, although closing, still exist, especially for male students of Pakistani heritage.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good with some outstanding features.
- Some college initiatives to secure improvement in teaching, learning and assessment have yet to be fully implemented.

## Full report

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

- In order to enable all students to achieve to their full potential, ensure that teachers consistently:
  - plan and deliver interesting and challenging learning activities which are matched to students' individual needs, and inspire them to become independent learners
  - use the full range of student information, including initial assessment of literacy and numeracy, to plan learning activities, set challenging targets and monitor progress.
- Further develop the learning culture for staff by ensuring:
  - the feedback to all staff following lesson observations is sufficiently clear and detailed to enable them to understand how to secure improvement
  - develop electronic learning materials to enable staff to work independently to improve their practice
  - build on and share the existing good practice that exists within the college.
- Strengthen the strategies for closing the achievement gap that exists for some groups of students.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- Outcomes for students have improved over the past three years and are now good. The proportion of students successfully completing their studies in 2012/13 was above the recent average for sixth form colleges. In particular, outcomes for students taking AS programmes improved over the past two years and are now just above this average.
- The vast majority of students complete their courses and pass successfully on to the second year of their advanced studies. Students' attendance is very good, as is punctuality. Teachers and managers create a culture of high expectations and commitment to study right from the start of each year.
- Pass rates for A level are high, and in 2012/13, all the students in modern foreign languages, English and performing arts, for example, secured A\* – E grade passes. AS level pass rates improved in 2012/13 and over a quarter of the subjects recorded 100% pass rates. Those taking advanced vocational subjects also showed good pass rates, especially on BTEC extended programmes.
- A small minority of subjects have lower success and pass rates and managers acknowledge that there is still work to be done to improve outcomes for students in these areas. In 2012/13 a very small number of subjects with low pass rates were discontinued.
- As a result of hard work, commitment and the culture of scholarship in the college nearly half of the students who took A levels in 2012/13 were awarded A\* - B grade passes. The proportion for AS subjects was less than this but also reflected the enthusiasm and commitment of both staff and students.
- The progress made by A level students, as measured by value-added calculations, was broadly at expected levels. However, the progress made by students on AS levels improved in 2012/13 and was just above that expected from their prior attainment. Teaching and support staff have worked hard to support students to make good progress and improving students' outcomes at AS level has been a key focus over the past three years.

- A very high proportion of students progress on to higher education, further training or employment each year. In 2012/13 over 800 students made applications through UCAS and 90% went on to undergraduate study. Many go to prestigious universities to study, for example engineering, medicine, veterinary science, literature or economics. Those who choose not to go to university find employment or go on to apprenticeships.
- The achievements for students from minority ethnic backgrounds, especially males of Pakistani heritage, have improved. Although these students do not achieve as well as their peers, the achievement gap has narrowed significantly over the past two years. Attainment rates for male students were slightly lower than those for females. Students who receive additional learning support and those who identify themselves as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities attain at similar rates to their peers.
- Students enjoy their studies. They speak enthusiastically about their progress and work conscientiously on their own in private study or in groups in lessons. In addition, they develop good personal and employability skills through work experience placements, internships and a range of other enrichment activities, especially those with progression and careers foci.
- A high number of students take part in competitive and recreational sporting activities. Some current students, and those of the very recent past have achieved the highest levels in sports and have won international recognition. Students and staff also work successfully together on a range of health related projects, community work and fund raising for charities.
- Students feel safe in the college and report that they appreciate the calm and harmonious atmosphere. In addition, inspectors observed safe working practices in the laboratories, workshops and studios across the college.

<b>The quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	Good
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- Teaching, learning and assessment are good which is reflected in the good outcomes. A purposeful learning culture is evident in the college. All staff have high expectations of, and set high standards for their students. Teachers are enthusiastic, well qualified and expert in their subjects. They recognise the importance of giving praise wherever possible and they motivate students to learn. Students respond positively and work hard to succeed, both in and beyond lessons. Their attendance, punctuality and behaviour are very good and they have realistic careers aspirations.
- The 'Aspire' strategy that puts great emphasis on celebrating students' achievements, encouraging high aspirations, expectations and standards and developing of independent learning skills was initiated in September 2012. This focus is understood and respected by all throughout the college and is bringing about improvements and greater consistency across all departments.
- The quality of lessons is good and improving and students make good progress. An increasing proportion of lessons are judged to be good or better. Teachers are skilled in using a wide range of strategies to support learning. Most assess learning effectively, use questions expertly to probe and deepen learning and provide a wide range of activities to capture and maintain students' interest.
- In the best lessons teachers engage and stimulate students and encourage independent learning and analytical skills so that they all achieve to their potential. This is the result of careful identification and planning for each student's learning needs, regular and probing checks on learning and interesting activities that engage and motivate. However, in a minority of lessons too much whole class teaching and poor planning to challenge all students results in some students not achieving as much as they could.
- Managers recognise that in a decreasing minority of lessons the work is not sufficiently challenging for some and they are supporting all teachers to improve further. Since the last

inspection managers have focused successfully on the importance of planning for the individual learning needs of students. Most teachers use a wide range of information about students to enable them all to achieve their potential. However the literacy and numeracy needs of students are not always planned for, or met, by staff in their lesson plans.

- Assessment is robust and feedback is rapid and informative, helping students to improve. A common marking notation has been introduced recently in response to student suggestions. Teams collaborate routinely to identify the skills that students need to succeed. Schemes of work and lesson plans are coherent and cover the needs of the syllabuses well. The requirements of examination boards are addressed meticulously in lessons; students are well prepared and confident in external examinations
- Students receive good initial assessment, advice and guidance. They are introduced to college life and the rigours, potential and excitement of their subjects through well planned induction programmes. For instance all students undertake summer assignments before they embark on their course, encouraging them to complete research and develop a work ethic.
- Teachers set students challenging targets which are reviewed regularly and robustly. They monitor students' progress closely and are alert to their needs and circumstances. They intervene and support at a very early stage to help each student to succeed. Students value this support. Parents have good access to progress information.
- Students' specific support needs are identified at the start of each course and specialist support is put into place rapidly. Students appreciate the helpful individual support provided by additional learning support staff. Teachers and academic coaches provide effective academic and pastoral support.
- Each year an extensive programme of support benefits students who have the potential to achieve very high grades and who wish to progress to prestigious universities. The summer school, close tracking and links to parents are particularly strong features. Preparation for Oxbridge applications is thorough, as is the specialist support in highly selective subjects such as medicine and veterinary.
- The broader curriculum is very strong including a range of academies to develop subject specialisms. Students have good opportunities to volunteer in the community and to undertake relevant work experience. Many such activities are led by the students themselves and reflect their enthusiasm for additional experiences to help them succeed and progress.
- College managers have taken action to embed core skills in all subject areas, but acknowledge that there is still work to be done to ensure more consistency. Since the last inspection, the literacy and numeracy skills of all students are assessed on entry. Support is put in place where needed and relevant learning resources are available electronically. The focus on developing literacy through use of glossaries, key words and through marked work is increasing.
- The college environment is harmonious. The diversity of the student population is celebrated, for example through displays of student progression information. Teachers foster positive working relations between students in their classes. Some, but not all, are confident in promoting discussion of equality and diversity issues by seizing naturally occurring opportunities as they arise.

**Science****16-19 study programmes**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good which is reflected in the achievements of the students in 2012/13. Where students make the most progress, for example in chemistry, teachers actively encourage the students to discuss their ideas and to take full responsibility for their progress. Teachers ask probing questions to enable students to clarify their thinking and to promote deeper learning.
- Students also make good progress in biology and in applied science where teachers carefully plan the learning activities to meet the range of students' needs and to put learning in relevant vocational contexts. Students' progress in physics has recently improved and managers and teachers are working hard to sustain improvements.
- Science teachers are well qualified and confident in their subject knowledge. They have high expectations of the students and regularly consult them on what might be done to improve the provision. A well-planned induction allows students to settle in quickly and to understand the standards that will be expected of them.
- In the best lessons students work well and make rapid and sustained progress. For example, in an AS chemistry lesson, students safely used hazardous chemicals and moved easily from qualitative analysis to working both with quantity and yield of reaction, successfully using the mole concept. In addition, second year chemistry students used their understanding of equilibria well while studying applied industrial processes that involve cost and efficiency compromises.
- Students make good progress when they are actively involved in group work or activities specifically aimed at developing specific skills. For example, in a biology lesson students made good progress when they worked in small groups diagrammatically illustrating cell membrane structure and function. In physics, students enjoyed using electronic simulations to investigate variables and some students are helped to progress by taking use of mathematics programmes.
- In a small minority of lessons the teachers did not plan for the students to carry out practical work themselves and, as a result, the students made slower progress.
- Teachers take care to emphasise language and terminology in lessons and the students respond well by discussing key concepts confidently and accurately using appropriate scientific terminology. Stepped difficulty examples and extension exercises help the students to develop confidence in calculations and in their understanding of quantitative analyses. Students regularly access the useful materials on the virtual learning environment well to complement their studies.
- Teachers share good practice across the sciences and lessons observed displayed common features such as prompt starts, relevant starter exercises that introduced or continued learning and brisk pace. The atmosphere in lessons is challenging but supportive, and the students feel confident to seek help. Teachers readily intervene to add a teaching point, create an interim discussion or to share a comment made by a learner more widely.
- Assessment of students' work is good. Teachers across the science departments regularly set assignments and quickly return marked work with helpful and encouraging comments on how students can improve. They track and monitor students' progress highly effectively, and also provide students with good examination preparation. In addition, students are prepared successfully for employment or the next step into higher education.
- Teachers know their students well and often arrange pairings and groups in lessons using this knowledge to maximise learning progress. Teachers monitor learning effectively in the majority of science lessons through a wide range of methods, including direct questioning, true-false quizzes and the use of mini-whiteboards. This allows teachers to gauge accurately the progress made by each student.

- Students' behaviour is consistently good. Students of differing backgrounds work well together. Teachers promote equality and support diversity well. They use data on students to ensure that gaps in achievement close rapidly by supporting better learning or using additional or alternative resources. Curriculum teams have good links with major universities and local industry to benefit students.

## Mathematics and statistics

### 16-19 study programmes

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, which is reflected in the high proportion of students who achieve their qualifications and develop good mathematical skills. Teachers have high expectations of their students and punctuality and attendance are exemplary. Many students make progress well above expected levels, but the majority progress as expected.
- Teachers plan well and devise interesting and engaging learning activities. For example in a mathematics lesson on quadratics, students were required to demonstrate methods of factorisation. Most students demonstrated the basic method of finding factors of the constant that produced the linear coefficient and then factorising the quadratic term. One student demonstrated a much more elegant solution based on algebraic distribution. The class then discussed both methods and related them to the quadratic formula. The discussion ended with students considering a relevant and interesting extension exercise.
- In the best lessons teachers use a variety of learning activities to meet the individual needs of students. Teachers make good use of collaborative learning which adds interest and develops broader skills such as teamwork and communications. In these lessons teachers provide a high level of challenge and make effective checks on how well students are learning.
- In a small minority of lessons, a few students lose focus and become distracted which slows progress. In the majority of classes, most of the learning comes from interaction with teachers. Students in these classes would benefit from a broader range of learning activities, differentiated to suit various levels of ability and differing learning preferences.
- Students develop good independent learning skills. They make good use of the excellent library facilities and interactive computer-based learning materials to complete assignments, carry out research and develop their mathematical skills and understanding. However the layout of classrooms is not always conducive to students working in groups, studying together, discussing their learning or reviewing each other's work.
- Teachers are well-qualified and have excellent subject knowledge that they use to explain concepts clearly to students. They work well in teams and the curriculum area is very well-managed. Learning resources are very good with relevant textbooks in every classroom, supplemented by very good workbooks produced by the teachers. Computer-based resources are good and well used by the students.
- The assessment of students' work is good. Assessments are fair, accurate and reliable. A useful series of regular short assignments and the key assignment carried out in the autumn half-term combine to provide a very good early overview of students' progress. The feedback given to students by teachers on their regular short assignment work is good and helps students to learn. Teachers often identify key learning points from assessments and reinforce them in class. Feedback to students on their performance in the half-term key assessments is detailed, thorough and helpful.
- Teachers and students work well together to set challenging targets. Teachers monitor students' progress accurately using the college electronic system. This system is also open to students

and to parents. Students are required to log on to the system daily, which encourages them to assume some responsibility for their own learning and progress. Students benefit from the way staff encourage parents to be directly involved in their progress and achievement.

- Teachers provide good advice and guidance to students prior to, and during their courses. Students clearly understand college requirements and expectations and what they can expect from the college. Learning support staff and teachers work well together to identify students' additional learning needs and provide them with good academic and pastoral support.
- Many students participate in a variety of enrichment activities that give them a broader view and a deeper understanding of mathematics. These include participation in local, regional and national competitions in mathematics, in which the college has a good record of success. Close and productive links with universities benefit students. For example they visit the University of Birmingham for a problem-solving day. Visiting speakers give mathematics inspiration lectures.

## Visual arts

### Performing arts

#### 16-19 study programmes

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good and leads to good outcomes overall. The percentage of high grades for A level media, music and theatre studies and for AS dance and theatre studies is high. Students in performing arts and media make good progress in light of their prior attainment, but in visual arts students do not make as much progress as expected.
- Well qualified teachers have high expectations for their students. Attendance is high and students make good progress in the mixed ability classes. Exceptional progress is made in AS dance with a high standard of performance skills and peer evaluation at this early stage in the year. Similarly, AS film students understand clearly deconstruction theory and leitmotif. In one lesson, visual and aural elements of Hitchcock's 'Psycho' were linked effectively to the key scenes of the film.
- Good teaching and effective planning ensure that students develop both practical and theoretical skills. Students collaborate well in small groups and teachers expect that all students will contribute to discussion and feedback. In a music technology lesson, students manipulated pre-recorded sounds successfully and assessed the impact of differing effects on the harmonics. From this they learnt not only the relevant techniques of equalisation, but also the creative possibilities of the effects.
- Art and design students develop personal themes successfully using drawing, printmaking and digital images. For example, one student combined summer holiday photographs of Greece with thought provoking images of recent political unrest. Theatre studies students discussed moral and ethical issues with respect and sensitivity when improvising scenes from 'Our Country's Good'.
- Students develop their literacy skills and use appropriate technical vocabulary. Dictionaries are often used to check spelling and specific meanings. In a media lesson, a music student referred to pizzicato rhythm and, intrigued by the word, the other students first guessed the meaning and then used the dictionary to check.
- In a minority of visual arts and media lessons students make less progress. Students continue with project work rather than being challenged with new tasks. The pace is too slow with little sense of discovery or excitement and often insufficient contributions from students. Poor questioning techniques fail to engage the entire group and to promote confidence in discussion.
- Specialist resources are good. The well equipped art and design studios, dance studio, rehearsal rooms, music and computer suites ensure students develop their practical skills. The virtual

learning environment provides a range of high-quality resources that students use well for revision and independent study.

- Individual support is good. Induction activities in art are based on the summer research project undertaken by students. Students receive timely and effective additional learning support. Students' learning is enhanced by the individual discussions in lessons and the opportunity to work in the studios outside lessons. Progression from AS to A level is low in some areas but progression to higher education is high. A small number of students find apprenticeships and employment.
- Assessment is good with clear written feedback. Students know what they need to do to achieve higher grades. Performing arts and media students use peer assessment well to develop reflective skills and to monitor personal progress. Plenary critiques are used effectively in some lessons to check learning but in a few cases these are too teacher led.
- Enrichment activities are well attended. They include the college dance group, theatre group, orchestra and visits to museums, exhibitions and performances. Participation in regional and national competitions, additional qualifications and community projects enable students to develop important vocational skills. Lessons promote equality and diversity effectively. Classroom displays and lesson content celebrate diversity and teachers are careful to ensure that sensitive issues are carefully discussed.

## English Modern foreign languages

### 16-19 study programmes

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good which is reflected in high success rates for students. However, most students achieve outcomes broadly in line with that predicted by their prior attainment. Teachers and students work together with passion and enthusiasm.
- Lessons are interesting, fun and help students to understand examination requirements. Through skilful questioning and well-managed group activities, teachers encourage students both to learn from one another and to work things out for themselves. In addition to gaining subject skills, they develop good teamwork, independence and confidence.
- Students apply the skills they learn in English to other areas of their life and study confidently. For example, they become more confident in approaching large written assignments after learning how to identify tasks and sections for analyses through their English studies. Language students learn how to learn, and some are teaching themselves further languages.
- Students acquire a good grasp of languages and the skills they need to speak and write accurately and clearly. In English, they enjoy mastering the correct terminology to describe new concepts. In an A-level literature class, they worked together to tease out and name a range of features in a Thomas Hardy poem, then applied their new knowledge to a poem by W.H. Auden. A-level French students extracted arguments from a text on nuclear energy in order to discuss the issues before completing an assignment.
- The best English lessons have a high level of challenge and the students take a very active role. In an AS English language class, the students had to be both creative, and technically accurate, as they used games and quizzes to learn new grammatical concepts. In less effective lessons, students have fewer opportunities to work independently and their contributions are less confident.
- In the best modern foreign language lessons, teachers plan work skilfully to match the wide range of individual needs, and progress is rapid. Most beginners in Russian and Italian reach A level standards in two years. However, not all language lessons challenge the most able linguists sufficiently.



- Language students are well supported and a weekly, 30 minute session with a native speaker develops their oral fluency. In class, however, teachers do not always provide enough opportunities to speak spontaneously, and at times too much English is spoken. Students use the language laboratory regularly to practise listening, but would benefit from a wider range of strategies to improve their skills.
- Resources and support for learning are good. Students have good access to computers and make daily use of helpful on-line resources. Course booklets and revision guides are of excellent quality. A-level language students develop a good understanding of contemporary issues through extra study sessions on foreign language news bulletins that staff record and edit for them each week.
- Assessment is good. Teachers use a range of effective strategies to check learning. They return marked work promptly with detailed and helpful comments and targets for improvement which are carefully followed up. English teachers assess coursework accurately and moderators’ reports are very positive. Language students’ excellent pronunciation is linked to the detailed feedback they receive on the recordings they make in the language laboratory.
- Enrichment opportunities are good. Students benefit from university links, theatre visits, lectures, master classes and workshops as well as trips and work placement opportunities abroad. Beginners’ Spanish is a popular non-examination class enabling many students to gain practical speaking skills.
- Good links with schools and lively, but thorough, induction programmes help the transition from Year 11 to college and from AS to A level. Language students benefit from an interesting programme based around foreign language films after the AS examinations. Students receive good help and advice with their next steps.
- Teachers promote equality and diversity well. Classrooms are very welcoming. The curriculum covers a wide range of cultural, social and ethical issues and students are sensitive to equality of opportunity. Teachers make very good use of data with detailed systems to follow and review students’ progress, identifying and supporting those at risk of underachieving.

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management</b>	Good
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- Since the last inspection, the principal and the senior management team have worked successfully to transform the culture of the college and to improve the college’s performance. This is reflected in a very welcoming and harmonious college environment, where students feel happy and very safe. Across the college, meeting the needs of all students takes priority and the large majority of students achieve their qualifications.
- The principal and governors have developed an ambitious vision of excellence for the college, together with a well thought-out strategic plan, which are underpinned by the identification of clear milestones to monitor progress and to support continuous improvement. The governing body has a good range of expertise and governors offer sound advice, challenge and effective support for managers. In particular, they are fully involved in defining the college’s current priorities and future development, and have oversight of the extensive programme to refurbish the accommodation and the minority of subject areas which are under-performing.
- Strong and highly effective leadership by the principal and senior managers ensures that all staff understand fully the high expectations the college has of them. Staff respond well to the pace and challenge of change and development. The clear focus on improving teaching, learning and assessment results in the implementation of a number of well-planned and coherent strategies. For example, initiatives such as meeting students’ individual needs, planning and assessment for learning and the development of students’ English, mathematical and employability skills lead to significant improvements for students. However the college recognises that implementation of improvements in these significant areas is not yet consistently strong.

- Staff development at all levels is well planned and effective, although the use of learning resources on the virtual learning environment to support staff development is currently underdeveloped. Managers monitor the quality of the students' experience closely through generally accurate observations of teaching, learning and assessment. Most observations contain sufficiently detailed feedback to enable teachers to be clear about their strengths and areas for improvement and how they can move towards and sustain excellence. A minority of observation reports do not contain sufficiently detailed information in order to support the grades awarded and to enable teachers to be clear about how they can secure further improvements.
- Procedures for tackling staff underperformance are appropriate and effective. As part of the college's drive towards excellence, a newly developed Professional Development and Review Scheme is part-way through being introduced, but will not be fully completed until December 2013. Learning resources are good and the college is carrying out a programme of building works, with the refurbishment of the college theatre and toilets already completed and work to improve classrooms and the learning environment in the main college building currently underway.
- Quality assurance and arrangements for self-assessment are comprehensive and appropriately self-critical, although some of the curriculum self-assessment reports are unduly lengthy. Plans to improve the quality of the provision are well-thought-out and sharply focused on securing targeted improvements. Managers praise where improvements are secured and closely scrutinise and support areas that require further improvement. Managers hold curriculum leaders to account for the development and achievement of each student in their subject areas. The collection and use of students' views have been strengthened and managers' responses to these are good.
- The college provides a wide range of AS and A level subjects, as well as vocational courses, that meets the needs and interests of students from the immediate locality and from the wider community as well. Students are able to select combinations of subjects that maximise their progression opportunities into higher levels of study and employment. Well developed partnerships with the local authority, employers, a large number of higher education institutions and with external organisations such as The UK Career Academy Foundation support the development of students' personal, social and employability skills, and their progression, very effectively.
- Students benefit from the diverse mix of learners at the college, the culture where diversity is welcomed and the support structures that are in place that help to maintain harmony. Training for staff in relation to equality and diversity is appropriate. The achievement gap between male students of Pakistani heritage and their peers is narrowing. Strategies are in place to secure improvements, but work still remains to be done to secure further improvements.
- The college provides a safe environment for students and gives their safety and security a high priority. It meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding students, who greatly benefit from the skills and considerable expertise of both the senior managers and the governors with regard to safeguarding and health and safety. The policies for safeguarding students are wide-ranging and include e-safety and the use of social media by staff and students.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### The Sixth Form College, Solihull

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>Science</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Mathematics and statistics</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Visual Arts</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Performing Arts</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Modern foreign languages</b>	<b>2</b>

## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	Sixth form college
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16–18
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	Full-time: 2,140
	Part-time: 0
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Paul Ashdown
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	October 2011
<b>Website address</b>	<a href="http://www.solihullsfc.ac.uk">www.solihullsfc.ac.uk</a>

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+
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>								
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,335	7	N/A	N/A
<b>Part-time</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	N/A	N/A
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	0							
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A							
<b>Part-time</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	N/A							

## Contextual information

The Sixth Form College, Solihull is a large college with around 2,300 students enrolled on mainly AS- and A-level courses. Most students take courses in science and mathematics and English and modern foreign languages. Although many of the students live locally, around half travel from across the Birmingham area to attend this college. The gender balance of the students has changed over the past few years, and currently half of the students are female. The ethnic mix of the students reflects that of the Birmingham area rather than that of Solihull. Around 43% of the students are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds; in particular around a third of the students are from Asian or Asian /British heritage. Although Solihull is an area of relative affluence, many of the students from south Birmingham live where there are areas of high social, economic and educational deprivation. The proportion of young people achieving five or more GCSE A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, in Solihull is above national average. This, however, is not the case in some areas of south Birmingham.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Alex Falconer HMI

Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the vice principal as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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