

Canterbury College

General further education college

Inspection dates		11–15 November 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory-3
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- Too much teaching and learning require improvement and the proportion of good and better lessons is low.
- Learners only make satisfactory progress relative to their starting point, and too few achieve their full potential on advanced-level courses. Punctuality and attendance remain low on some courses.
- Apprenticeship achievements for those aged 16 to 18 years are low.
- Learners' achievement in functional English and mathematics is inadequate.
- The use of individual targets to support learners' progress towards higher levels of attainment is underdeveloped.
- Leadership and management have not yet secured consistently good quality teaching and learning for all learners at all levels.

This provider has the following strengths:

- A strong focus on supporting learners to gain employment and the good progression of apprentices into full-time jobs on completion of their training.
- Good teaching and learning in; health, care and early years, science, business, accounting and finance, teaching and lecturing.
- Good use of information and learning technology to enhance and extend learning.
- Very high quality accommodation and resources in the majority of the provision.
- Effective leadership of cultural change.
- Very good arrangements for safeguarding learners.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teachers have high expectations of learners and set challenging targets in lessons and progress reviews, and use demanding activities that are appropriate to learners' capabilities. Continue to work with learners to instil in them consistently good professional standards in their approach to learning and study, thereby improving attendance to consistently high rates across the college.
- Resolve the weaknesses in the teaching of functional English and mathematics quickly by supporting teachers to use the results of diagnostic assessment when planning learning. As a matter of urgency, monitor the quality of lessons, assessment and the organisation of classes very closely to ensure learners attend, are well supported in their learning and make good progress in developing their English and mathematical skills .
- Raise the success rates of 16- to 18-year-old apprentices through monitoring their timely progress on their courses closely and by ensuring the planning and teaching of functional English and mathematics are well organised and completed within the time allocated.
- Encourage all teachers to promote learners' development of independent learning skills by ensuring that learners are encouraged to think for themselves and take greater responsibility for their own learning.
- Make assessment more effective in supporting learning and progress by ensuring teachers' checks on learning are fully effective and that all feedback is timely, detailed and constructive.
- Fully implement the comprehensive quality improvement arrangements to ensure consistent improvement of the quality of provision across the college.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Over the past three years, the proportion of learners on long courses who achieve qualifications on completing their studies has required improvement. While success rates improved in 2012/13, and on advanced level courses improved markedly, they are not yet good. Success rates on advanced-level courses are good for learners on vocational courses, but remain low at AS and A level. A large number of learners take short courses and the number of those who gain a qualification has remained average. ▪ Adult apprentices, and those on work-ready programmes, make good progress overall and the proportion who achieve their qualifications has improved and is now high. Learners in the workplace enjoy their learning and the standards of work they achieve are high. Most secure full-time employment on successful completion of their training. While the college has successfully responded to local and national skills requirements, the largest group of learners, those aged 16 to 18, do significantly less well than their older peers. Framework success rates for apprentices aged 16 to 18 are too low. ▪ Although learners make satisfactory progress, too many do not achieve their full potential. The proportion of learners who achieve the grades expected of them relative to their prior attainment is low, as is the proportion of learners achieving high grades. ▪ The college has successfully reduced the achievement gaps between different groups of learners over the past three years and very few remain. Learners identified as requiring extra help with their studies achieve marginally better than their peers. The 169 learners in the care of the local authority do well. 	

- Learners' achievement in functional English and mathematics is inadequate. Many learners do not achieve their qualification or appreciate how these subjects are relevant to their vocational course. High grade achievement of GCSE mathematics is satisfactory, but on GCSE English is low.
- The standard of learners' work is at least satisfactory, and in many areas, for example early years, science, and business, is good. The college successfully develops learners' personal and social skills, and learners contribute well, enhancing their local community through their course work and the wide range of volunteering activities they undertake.
- The behaviour of learners whilst in college is generally good and a culture of mutual respect and tolerance is apparent. Nonetheless, not all learners are fully prepared to focus appropriately on their learning. Punctuality and attendance are low in some subjects and require further improvement, notably in functional English and mathematics, and GCSE classes.
- Learners benefit from high quality, industry-standard resources, and the college offers provision in most areas of learning. Progression to further study, employment and higher education is good. Transition arrangements, both into college from school and on to further study and employment, are highly effective.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is improving, which mirrors the increased success rates in 2012/13. However, not enough teaching is consistently good and assessment practice does not always support learning effectively. Adult apprentices are benefiting from recent improvements to the quality of training, the impact of which is evident in their increased success rates. Teaching of functional skills is inadequate and reflected in the low success rates for these qualifications.
- More teaching is consistently good than at the previous inspection, but too much remains in need of improvement. A few lessons are outstanding where highly skilled teachers use imaginative strategies well and, for example, link theory and practice strongly together or contextualise learning highly effectively. However, a very few lessons are inadequate where teaching is dull, repetitive and boring.
- In too many lessons, teachers' expectations of learners are not high enough and, as a result, they set undemanding work based on minimum assessment criteria rather than extending learners' subject knowledge and understanding. Teachers rarely challenge learners to reach their full potential, often providing too much support for learners to complete work rather than encouraging them to think for themselves, develop their ability to learn or work independently. While teachers use questions frequently, these are not always sufficiently probing or extensive enough to ensure full development of all groups of learners' knowledge and skills.
- Teachers are keen to improve their practice and fully support managers' determined drive for improvement in teaching and learning. This is evident in the way in which they take on new ideas, try out different strategies, and increasingly share good practice. However, teachers' strategies are often not consistently or wholly successful because teachers do not always have the experience or confidence to see them through or match them sufficiently well to learners' capabilities.
- Teachers often use information and learning technology productively in lessons. For example, teachers promote the constructive use of social media to communicate learning points or use video recording of learners' performance to support development of their reflective and self-assessment skills. Teachers use high quality resources well in most subjects to create realistic work environments and often include project work that helps develop learners' understanding of the demands of employment.
- Teachers use assessment adequately to support learning. Increasingly, they assess learners' knowledge and skill development during learning activities, but not always thoroughly enough to be certain of how much progress all groups of learners are making. Teachers do not consistently use assessment information to adapt their strategies in a timely and relevant way to ensure

learners' good progress. Their promotion of peer and self-assessment varies markedly from adequate to some that is insufficient. Marking of work is satisfactory. Some teachers' feedback is of high quality and guides improvement well, but some is too brief to be helpful.

- The teaching of functional skills is disorganised and requires urgent improvement. Teachers fail to use initial and diagnostic assessment information effectively to plan learning. Too many learners have already disengaged with learning, as shown by their low attendance. Vocational teachers mostly integrate the development of English and mathematics within their lessons adequately. While the teaching of GCSEs in English and mathematics is of better quality, learners' attendance remains low.
- Subject-based training for apprentices is mostly good both on- and off-the-job. Staff monitor their progress closely through recently improved systems, and the frequency of assessment has increased. However, weaknesses in younger apprentices' acquisition of functional skills result in apprentices making slow progress, as shown by their below average success rates and the high number who fail to complete their apprenticeships within the allocated time.
- Staff have made a number of good revisions to the provision of guidance and support which underpinned the improvements in retention in 2012/13. For example, staff now identify learners at risk of withdrawal quickly and take action accordingly. Their support for learners to improve their attendance has had more mixed results, particularly in functional skills classes.
- Staff provide thorough initial advice and guidance following substantial revisions to the curriculum and course entry requirements. Tutors have set aspirational target grades for learners for the first time in the current academic year and are focusing on working with learners to set challenging short- and long-term targets through new arrangements for cross-college progress reviews. However, the effectiveness of this currently varies too much and some is ineffective.
- Teachers promote equality and diversity adequately. In a few subjects, learners develop a good understanding because teachers develop discussions about, for example, different cultural viewpoints or equality of opportunity across groups in society. The recently instigated progression weeks include interesting sessions on equality and diversity themes, but it is too soon to see any impact on current learning.

Health and social care

Early years

16-19 study programmes

19+ Learning programmes

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in health, social care and early years is good, which is reflected in the improved outcomes for learners. The majority of learners achieve their qualifications, many with high grades, while gaining valuable employment skills for their chosen vocational area. Learners' progression to further qualifications and employment is good.
- Teachers plan learning carefully and develop a range of beneficial activities, which successfully improve learners' knowledge, skills and confidence. As a result, learners become independent in their learning, whilst also gaining essential team working skills. Good quality accommodation, including a nursery classroom, high quality resources and a range of effective information and learning technologies support the learning process very well.
- Inspirational assignments, such as one based on a public health campaign, inspire and challenge learners, who respond enthusiastically and produce work of a good standard. Learners develop good communication skills and are able to discuss confidently complex matters such as social concepts in health and social care. The virtual learning environment (VLE) provides a highly beneficial communication tool and a safe social network environment that extends learning beyond the classroom.

- Very effective work placements extend learning well. The college makes good use of its relationships with employers, who provide a wide range of high quality work placements, and learners significantly improve their practical skills. Learners’ placement employers offer many learners employment on the successful completion of their course.
- Planning for assessment is good. Learners make good progress towards achieving their qualifications. The assessment process is carefully monitored, ensuring learners are on track to meet their targets throughout their programmes. In early years, the e-portfolio system is very effectively used by learners, tutors and assessors, promoting the early achievement of many targets. Learners actively embrace their own and their group’s targets work hard to achieve them and are proud of their achievements.
- Initial assessment is comprehensive and effective. Learners who have identified additional and learning support needs receive good support enabling them to achieve. Adaptive technology, when required, is very effective and enables full engagement by learners in sessions.
- Learners’ development of functional English and mathematics is improving. Curriculum staff carefully monitor learners’ progress and attendance in dedicated specialist lessons. The promotion of English and mathematics within sessions is good. However, in a minority of cases, teachers do not fully develop learners’ skills.
- Teachers skilfully broaden learners’ understanding of socially diverse and controversial issues related to health, social care and early years. In all lessons observed, equality and diversity matters are very effectively explored and related well to the workplace.
- Pastoral care is very good. Learners highly value the learning support, both in classrooms and by the drop-in support centre. Learners receive good support to complete assignments. Staff make good use of their up-to-date vocational knowledge and experience to provide advice about future career and training opportunities.

Science, mathematics and statistics	
16-19 study programmes 19+ Learning programmes	Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are now consistently good, as reflected in good learner outcomes. The new range of vocational courses that have replaced A-level provision meets the prior attainment needs of learners well, and pathways in forensic, medical or applied science further increase their progression opportunities into the science sector and higher education. Based on their GCSE grades, most learners achieve their expected grades in science and mathematics, with the exception of those studying the subsidiary diploma courses in science where achievement of high grades is low.
- Learners have well-developed practical skills and are confident in using laboratory equipment. Teachers plan practical lessons carefully to minimise learners' unproductive time; for example, in one lesson learners completed theory questions while waiting for a chemical reaction to occur with enzymes. Mathematics teachers develop methods from first principles, which enhance the learners' understanding and enable learners to apply techniques in different situations. However, in a minority of science theory lessons teachers set work too often without sufficient monitoring and questioning from the teacher to extend and check their understanding and attainment.
- Teachers make good use of technology in their presentations and encourage learners to use mobile phones and social media to research topics and communicate their findings. In one lesson, to reinforce learning, learners were required to ‘tweet’ key characteristics they had discovered on genetic disease.
- Assessment of marked work clearly shows where the learner has made mistakes and what additional work they could submit to improve future grades. However, some feedback does not

always give effective advice on how learners might improve the general presentation of their work.

- The promotion of English skills is highly effective. All learners are required to produce written reports to practise and extend their writing skills. Teachers identify spelling and grammatical errors robustly and remind learners of the importance of good English skills to secure employment.
- Teachers work well in designing a lively curriculum that promotes employment within the science sector. Learners undertake off-site visits, and talks by guest speakers help them to understand the application of science in the workplace; for example, in one forensic science lesson, learners were taking and interpreting fingerprints with the help of visiting experts from the Metropolitan Police. Short work placements effectively develop learners' employability skills.
- Learners benefit from, and appreciate, the high levels of support from subject teachers. A new development for this year is the introduction of aspirational target grades, used effectively to motivate learners. However, the effectiveness of some teachers in ensuring their learners attend GCSE mathematics classes is variable and attendance remains low.
- The promotion of equality and diversity requires improvement. In class, support staff work effectively alongside teachers to ensure that those learners with language or anxiety difficulties are able to participate fully and to develop confidence. However, teachers do not use opportunities in all lessons to develop understanding of science related equality and diversity issues.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

16-19 study programmes 19+ Learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment reflect learners' success rates and are not yet good. While success rates have improved over the past three years, they remain only satisfactory and are inadequate in functional skills.
- Attendance across all courses is improving and currently is a little below the college target. Procedures to monitor learners' participation, progress and attendance are now beginning to have a positive effect. Behaviour management strategies deployed in hairdressing have improved attendance.
- Enthusiastic teachers use their subject knowledge well to plan interesting teaching to stretch learners' understanding of their subject. Teachers use a wide range of exciting teaching approaches to enhance learning.
- In the better lessons, learners effectively develop good technical skills, for example creative foil techniques within hairdressing services to develop learners' skills to commercial timings. In beauty therapy lessons, learners develop a deeper understanding of the effects and benefits of body massage through well-planned activities and thorough preparation on the part of teachers.
- In less effective lessons, assessment for learning is limited. A small number of lessons are overly teacher led, and planning to make the most effective use of in-class assistants is underdeveloped. Learners develop a competent knowledge and understanding of health and safety. Learners' knowledge of product ranges, retailing opportunities and after care requires improvement.
- Teachers use technology well in lessons to aid learning and independent study. However, effective support for learning outside the classroom through the VLE, particularly in hairdressing, is underdeveloped and not used effectively to support learners outside of the classroom or to promote research skills sufficiently.
- At intermediate and advanced level, learners benefit from the work experience opportunities available in the college's fully commercial Canterbury Spa and develop valuable employment

skills. Additional qualifications in, for example, spray tanning, barbering and ear piercing further enhance learners’ employment prospects well.

- While progress for many is good, learners on BTEC advanced-level courses make only average progress. Recent management interventions are helping to improve the monitoring of targets; nevertheless, more work is required to accelerate learning and ensure these learners make good progress.
- Detailed feedback on marked work enables advanced-level beauty therapy learners to enhance their grades and improve the accuracy of their spelling and grammar. However, written feedback on assessed work in hairdressing is less effective and requires improvement to better support learners’ application of functional English.
- Initial assessment is robust and the use of adaptive resources is good. Pastoral support for learners is effective and ensures most learners now continue on their course. Progression rates into employment are good and learners are aspirational, finding employment on cruise liners and working abroad.
- Teachers effectively develop learners’ English skills through designing vocationally relevant scenarios and learners use technical language well. At foundation level, helpful support from in-class support staff enables learners to develop their writing and information and technology skills. Support for the development of learners’ mathematical skills is adequate.
- Positive promotion of equality and diversity in lessons, classrooms and in salon sessions, results in learners having a good understanding of how best to meet their individual clients’ needs.

Sports, leisure and recreation
Public services

16-19 study programmes
19+ Learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, as reflected in learners’ outcomes. While the proportion of learners who successfully completed their qualifications improved in 2012/13, and in public services is high, retention remains low in a minority of subjects.
- Teachers do not always pay sufficient attention to the individual learning and development needs of all learners and often focus too much on meeting assessment criteria at the expense of deepening learners’ subject knowledge and understanding. In some lessons, learners all work at the same pace on tasks that are not challenging enough for the most able and are too hard for the less knowledgeable. Sometimes, learners repeat work they have completed earlier in their course. In a minority of lessons, work set is too difficult for any learner to complete; for example, in an anatomy and physiology class, all learners struggled to answer any of the questions posed by the teacher.
- Teachers’ assessment of learners’ knowledge varies too much to assess all learners’ understanding sufficiently well. In the better lessons teachers use questioning skilfully to explore learners’ ideas, develop interaction and check learning, ensuring learners achieve and make the progress of which they are capable. Learners take good notes, and complete worksheets well, demonstrating their understanding and capturing what they have learned. In weaker lessons, teachers’ questions allow the confident learners to answer, but fail to engage others. Some questioning is too broad for any learner to answer and questions are not rephrased.
- The development of learners’ English and mathematics skills is too underdeveloped to enable all learners to reach the standard required of them. While some teachers include opportunities for learners to acquire new technical language, they are not always effective in checking words have been written down and spelled accurately. The relevance of mathematics is not emphasised sufficiently clearly.

- Teachers create positive and purposeful learning environments and reinforce professional standards well. Attendance is good, lessons start promptly; in the better lessons, pace is swift and teachers ensure all learners are active in their learning. In these lessons teachers use peer assessment well, for example to mark each other's work and assess one another's performance.
- Learners benefit from a good range of resources to support their learning. In better lessons teachers make good use of technology to enable learners to capture their work and evaluate their performance. Sports learners make effective use of tablet computers to record trampoline routines and tactics in turbo-touch rugby, analyse their techniques and further improve their practice.
- Teachers provide good support for learners to progress to higher education. Opportunities to visit neighbouring university institutions provide experience of taking part in lectures and seminars, giving a good flavour of university life. Learners on sports courses use the specialist fitness testing equipment to support their advanced level assignments well. Learners are positive about the support they receive in applying for their university places.
- The promotion of equality and diversity in lessons is an area for improvement. Teachers take too few opportunities to discuss and explore how equality and diversity links to the lesson's planned learning outcome. However, in some of the better lessons, teachers identify and plan suitable opportunities to develop learners' understanding of the topic. For example, in one lesson, public service learners developed their understanding of the effects of crime on society very well.

Media and communication

Performing arts

16-19 study programmes

19+ Learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, as reflected in low overall outcomes for learners. Success rates have declined over the past three years because too few learners complete their courses. However, in performing arts, success rates improved in 2012/13 to above the national rate. A-level and vocational music learners do not attain at the level expected, given their starting points, or achieve high grades. Success rates on functional skills courses are low. Punctuality and attendance are poor in many media and music lessons.
- Teachers are knowledgeable and use their commercial experience well to inspire and motivate learners. Good links with employers result in interesting, relevant projects, enabling learners to develop employability skills through fruitful collaborations. The proportion of learners progressing from foundation, intermediate and advanced level is good, and improving.
- In some media and music lessons the standard of learners' work requires improvement, although in performing arts it is good. For example, in a successful dance lesson, learners adjusted their movements quickly following excellent teacher direction.
- In media and music, teachers hold low expectations of the academic standards learners can attain and they often do not either expect or reinforce high professional standards. In some of these lessons teachers do not challenge learners to concentrate or focus on tasks. As a result, learners make only adequate progress.
- In performing arts, planning is good and focuses on the potential impact of teaching on learning. Teaching is purposeful with good pace; learners engage in interesting activities; classroom management is good. Well-written assignments ensure learners know exactly what they must do to achieve high grades. However, in media and music, planning requires improvement and does not focus sufficiently on learning.
- Tutorials support learners well and provide opportunities to discuss and gauge learners' progress. Recently introduced progress review weeks are enabling improved monitoring of learners' progress, with effective targets being set; although it is too early to measure the impact of this new initiative.

- Learners extend their studies effectively through the VLE. Video clips are used well to illustrate key points for learners. In media, learners use blogs well to record their work and progress, and use these digital portfolios when seeking employment or advancing to higher education.
- Initial assessments of learners are thorough, but insufficiently used in planning lessons to support the less able or stretch the more capable learners. In many lessons, teachers do not consolidate learning adequately to ascertain learners' levels of understanding. While functional skills lessons are poorly attended and results are poor, within the main courses, teachers often support effective development of English and mathematics skills. For example, in a music lesson, learners applied mathematical principles well through measuring and analysing decibel levels accurately.
- Initial advice and guidance are improving; entry requirements have been raised, foundation-level courses introduced and earlier identification and intervention enable learners at risk of leaving their course to continue successfully. Additional learning support is good.
- Assignments integrate equality and diversity themes well, for example media learners explored gender stereotyping and racism through producing well-designed book covers. Rapport is very good between staff and learners who value highly the atmosphere of mutual respect engendered in lessons. Learners feel very secure in the college.

Teaching and lecturing

19+ Learning programmes

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment on awarding organisation initial teacher education courses are good, as reflected in the generally high success rates for trainees across the past three years. Retention and success rates were low on the level 2 certificate in supporting teaching and learning courses in 2012/13, but swift and effective action to improve initial advice and guidance and assessment has led to significant improvement in retention for the current course. Trainees' attainment of professional standards is good, and the significant improvements in their confidence and teaching further attest to the effectiveness and quality of training.
- A high level of expectation from their trainers successfully motivates trainees to reflect on their teaching and refine their own practice. In classes and in their day-to-day dealings with trainees, staff promote professional standards and behaviours well. This encourages trainees, from the outset of their training, to instil high standards in, and have high expectations of, their own learners. Relationships between trainers and trainees are very positive and support for trainees is very good; trainees frequently remain in touch with trainers and regard them as a valuable resource and reference point in the college.
- The quality of training is high. Trainers model best practice in their teaching, carefully creating a supportive environment in which trainees can explore new techniques that they will then use with their own learners. Peer-assessment and peer-evaluation activities in classes are particularly effective in allowing trainees to devise and test strategies to meet learners' individual needs.
- Trainers are very successful in relating theoretical elements of lessons to trainees' vocational and professional areas, especially on the diploma in teaching in the lifelong learning sector course. However, a minority of former trainees feel that the preparing to teach in the lifelong learning sector (PTLLS) and the certificate in teaching in the lifelong learning sector (CTLLS) courses could involve a wider range of practical strategies on, for example, formative assessment and teaching to meet the needs of individual learners.
- Current and recent former trainees' teaching is predominantly good, with some clearly outstanding features. In the most successful classes, these trainees demonstrate a high level of awareness of individual needs, good and outstanding strategies to develop understandings of mathematical methods, and exceptionally effective use of information and learning technologies. Individual learning plans are adequate, although targets for trainees on the level 2 certificate in

supporting teaching and learning are generic and ineffective in supporting trainees to improve specific aspects of their performance. Trainees progress well between PTLLS, CTLLS and the diploma courses, and a good proportion has made further progress to a BA degree in teaching and learning at a partner university.

- The college's commitment to improving staff skills in the teaching of English and mathematics through its teaching academy initiative is impressive. Academy trainees have received an exceptionally broad and beneficial induction to college functions and faculties, and they have begun to support work in functional skills across a range of subject areas. It is too early to judge the full effectiveness of academy training on trainees' professional formation, or its impact on standards of English and mathematics teaching and learning.

Preparation for life and work Foundation English

16-19 study programmes 19+ Learning programmes

Inadequate

- Teaching, learning and assessment in foundation English are inadequate. The proportion of learners successfully completing their courses is poor. Learners at entry levels generally complete their programmes, but too few achieve a qualification. The college recognises these weaknesses and has a strategy in place to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in foundation English, but this has not yet had sufficient impact.
- Too few learners attend their lessons. The majority of learners do not find lessons sufficiently interesting and they make slow progress in class. Functional skills lessons are uninspiring and do not encourage learners to engage with the subject.
- College managers have recently employed more teachers. However, too few demonstrate sufficient skills and expertise in planning stimulating lessons that will effectively enthuse and develop learners' interest in English or plan lessons well enough to meet learners' individual needs.
- In well-planned lessons, learners frequently fail to achieve the stated learning outcomes. Teachers do not organise the classroom effectively or manage groups to engage all learners and avoid inappropriate behaviour. Learners do not have sufficient opportunities to participate in a range of interactive and involving learning activities.
- In the better GCSE lessons, teachers use their skills well and challenge learners to examine different texts for formality and other linguistic devices. They encourage learners to explore poetry by discussing and trying out possible words in a gap-fill exercise based on a topical First World War poem.
- The majority of teachers prepare colourful and topical learning materials or laminated task sheets for use in classes. However, they do not always provide learners with the resources to focus closely enough on specific words or linguistic features. Teachers actively engage with information and learning technologies by using video clips or encouraging learners to use dictionaries on their mobile phones to support learning, but they do not always evaluate the quality or relevance.
- The new arrangements for identifying learners' needs at the outset of courses are not yet fully embedded, and too few learners are placed in appropriate functional skills and GCSE classes in a timely manner. Teachers do not always make use of available diagnostic information to plan their lessons or to meet the specific learning needs of individual learners in class. Learners do not always know which level they are working at and they have little understanding of their targets.
- A minority of teachers give learners positive and encouraging verbal feedback in class. However most learners do not receive sufficiently personalised and specific feedback to help them understand what they need to do to improve.

- Lessons promote quality and diversity adequately. For example, in one lesson, learners explored the portrayal of women on First World War posters and, in another, they challenged potentially sexist comments. When learners request support and extra help, they receive this promptly and effectively. However, in lessons, teachers do not give curriculum support assistants sufficient guidance on how best to support specific learners in achieving the planned learning outcomes for the class.

Business

Accounting and finance

16-19 study programmes

19+ Learning programmes

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, although success rates in examination based accounting courses do not yet reflect this. Learners develop good employability skills, such as team working, problem solving and communication skills. For example, business learners are involved in operating the college stationery shop and managing a cross-college project, Fashion Fix, in collaboration with local charities.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and prepare lessons that are interesting, with relevant and varied activities related to current working practices. These motivate learners to progress well in their learning. Teaching combines theory and practical activity particularly effectively, such as in identifying, researching, and presenting learners' own business start-up project ideas for a home butler service or selling vintage clothing online.
- Teachers use questions well to check on and extend learning. While learners make good progress in lessons, they are not always given the opportunity to take full responsibility for their own learning. Close monitoring, particularly of the more able learners, in lessons strays into meddling and gets in the way of independent learning.
- Teachers extend learning well through the VLE, reinforcing learning that has taken place in lessons and enabling learners to develop further practical subject skills, such as calculating and presenting business accounts outside college.
- Improved tracking and monitoring of learners' progress, attendance and punctuality by tutors are having a positive impact on attendance and progress. One-to-one tutorials take place frequently and are highly valued by learners. While teachers agree useful action plans with their learners, and learners know what their overall course targets, they cannot always recall their specific, short-term targets.
- Assessment of learning is good. Feedback on assignments is detailed and constructive and leads to improvement and progress for learners. A range of assessment strategies are now in place to prepare accounting learners better for examinations. These include: frequent timetabled workshops to develop knowledge of difficult concepts and practice skills; revision sessions focusing on examination technique; one-to-one targeted feedback on mock papers; and a rapid resit arrangement so that knowledge and skills are not lost over time.
- Learners develop good English and mathematical skills in lessons. Most classroom activities, assessment and coursework are designed to develop good levels of English and mathematics. Routine correction of spelling and grammar helps learners improve their skills further.
- Pre-entry information and guidance are good in business and support learners well in choosing the right course. Learners who start courses late receive extra support to help them catch up, and so they are now on track. In accounting, information, guidance and the interview process are now more rigorous to ensure that learners are on the course and level that best meets their needs and enhances their chance of success.
- Progress to higher levels of study and on to higher education is good. Learners are well supported and prepared for these transitions.

- Promotion of equality and diversity in lessons is good. Learners feel safe and work well together in a friendly, inclusive environment. Teachers develop resources to raise awareness and promote discussions on equality and diversity. For example, accounting learners worked in small groups to explore the human life cycle and discussed the impact of age on income levels and spending.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, 20 months ago, leaders and managers have made progress in introducing more reliable improvement arrangements, but this is not yet consistently effective across the college. Prompt and sound actions to address many areas for development identified at the last inspection have positioned the college well to make more rapid and consistent progress.
- The governors and senior leadership team successfully drive this change, establishing a culture of putting learners' needs first. Teaching, learning and assessment are improving, but in a significant number of the curriculum areas inspected, the college's improvement activities show insufficient positive impact on the quality of lessons and learning. Similarly, while the college's overall success rate for learners is gradually improving, and many poorer success rates have improved, outcomes for learners still require improvement.
- Able governors set out their high expectations for the college, its managers and staff. They played a key role in securing meaningful college actions following the previous inspection, reviewing their own effectiveness and the quality of information they received. The work of the quality committee is very rigorous. It holds senior managers to account well through detailed analysis of reports and of data; the members have a good understanding of the quality of provision and what is required to improve further
- Quality improvement is not yet securing consistently good provision. Increasingly rigorous performance management, self-assessment and quality improvement activities are now beginning to improve standards of teaching and learning. However, both inspectors and the college's self-assessment identify that strategies to improve provision are inconsistently successful across the curriculum. For example, in health, care and early years and in science, performance management is significantly improving provision. In contrast, in foundation English, planned actions for improvement are agreed, but not fully implemented and provision is inadequate.
- While the thoroughness of the college's scheme for observation of teaching and learning has improved, inspectors found the evidence base of observers for too many observation grades insufficient to support the judgement, and on occasion appeared inflated and over generous.
- The college continues to offer a broad and responsive range of courses, and progression routes are good. The college places significant emphasis on working with business and employers and on the development of its learners' employability skills. Apprenticeships and workplace training have increased substantially since the time of the last inspection and the breadth of the provision available is now good.
- Staff are passionate in their efforts to work with learners to improve life at the college and respond well to learners' views and comments. The learners' union is very successful and its officers are highly engaged across a range of activities led by the Principal and senior management, including, for example, learners' induction, safeguarding and helping to ensure the promotion of equality and diversity.
- Learners work in a positive environment that celebrates diversity. A strong and inclusive infrastructure for securing the understanding and promotion of equality and diversity is in place. A full-time diversity adviser plays a particularly innovative role in working with both learners and staff to help their understanding of equality and diversity on their courses and in career choices. In some lessons, equality and diversity are promoted well; however, in some, teachers miss the opportunity to further develop learners' understanding.

- Safeguarding is very much at the heart of learners' life at the college and has a high profile. Very good arrangements are in place to safeguard learners. The college constantly reviews and improves its procedures and exceeds government and statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. For example, safeguarding officers have now extended their involvement in all parts of the college's operation.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Canterbury College

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Health and social care	2
Early years and playwork	2
Science	2
Mathematics and statistics	2
Hairdressing	3
Beauty Therapy	3
Sport, leisure and recreation	3
Public Services	3
Performing arts	3
Media and communication	3
Teaching and lecturing	2
Foundation English	4
Business management	2
Accounting and finance	2

Provider details

Type of provider	General further education college							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 5,139							
	Part-time: 1,176							
Principal/CEO	Alison Clarke							
Date of previous inspection	January 2012							
Website address	www.cant-col.ac.uk							
Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Full-time	770	98	1,223	221	2,317	727	0	4
Part-time	14	69	60	524	34	312	3	160
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	163	75	120	108	1		4	
Number of learners aged 14-16	N/A							
Full-time	5,139							
Part-time	1,176							
Number of community learners	34							
Number of employability learners	51							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ AMAC ■ Automotive training ■ Benacre 							

Contextual information

The college serves the city of Canterbury, Swale and the regions of the East Kent coastal towns. The minority ethnic population of Kent and Medway is 8%, lower than the college rate of 14%. The proportion of pupils in Kent and Medway schools attaining five GCSE at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, is around the national averages for England, with some considerable variation across the county. The unemployment rate in Canterbury is lower than the south east and the national rate. The 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivations shows the city of Canterbury, Swale and the regions of the East Kent coastal towns to have areas of higher levels of deprivation than other districts of the south east, most notably Swale and the Isle of Sheppey. The college operates in a highly competitive environment and learners attending the college reflect the higher levels of deprivation found in the region.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Julie Steele HMI
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Four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and eight additional inspectors, assisted by the Assistant Principal, performance and review, 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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