

King George V College

Sixth form college

Inspection dates		16-19 September 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Inadequate-4
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Inadequate-4
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Inadequate-4
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Inadequate-4

Summary of key findings for learners

This college is inadequate because:

- the standard of teaching, learning and assessment has deteriorated since the last inspection and too many teachers are not sufficiently skilful at meeting the needs of individual students
- too many students do not make the progress they are capable of, especially on AS courses, which hampers their progression to A level
- the pace of improvement by senior leaders and managers to address weaknesses is too slow, especially the drive to eliminate the culture of low expectations that exists in too many areas
- performance management at all levels across the college is not effective
- course leaders do not always have the skills and expertise to improve their subjects
- the study programme is not successful at developing students' work-related skills, or their mathematical skills
- curriculum planning is significantly influenced by the need to reduce costs and remove underperforming courses and does not meet local needs
- the governing body does not hold senior post holders to account with sufficient rigour.

This college has the following strengths:

- students enjoy attending the college, which has a friendly and supportive ethos
- students on BTEC courses make good progress
- pastoral support and specialist individual support for students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities are both good.

Full report

What does the college need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by targeting staff development much more specifically at individual teachers, identifying effective teaching and using this to spread good practice, enabling teachers to observe each other's practice, and by monitoring carefully whether these actions improve learning.
- Strengthen all aspects of performance management, including systems to monitor teaching, learning and assessment, and the appraisal process. Link this to action plans that have challenging, specific and time-limited targets, monitor the impact regularly and revise plans if outcomes for students are not improving.
- As a matter of urgency, managers should check the evidence for teachers' assessment of students' progress, especially on AS courses. Where students are not making sufficient progress, managers should take effective action so that the current cohort is not disadvantaged in terms of progression opportunities to A level.
- Develop and implement a training programme for course leaders, including opportunities to learn from good practice in the sixth form college sector.
- Review and amend the study programme curriculum and monitor this regularly to ensure that all students develop effective employability skills.
- Develop a strategy to ensure that students' entitlement to maintain and improve their mathematical skills is delivered effectively.
- Review governing body arrangements and introduce a training programme for governors that will enable them to analyse more effectively information they receive and present a robust level of challenge to senior leaders.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Inadequate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All students are enrolled on advanced-level courses and almost all are aged 16 to 18. A large proportion undertakes AS- and A-level examinations as the main component of their study programmes and around one fifth are enrolled on BTEC courses. ▪ The number of students completing their course and achieving the qualification has declined since the last inspection and is low. College data for 2013/14 show good retention on courses and some improvement in pass rates at overall college level, but there are still far too many courses with low pass rates including science, psychology, economics and some mathematics courses. ▪ Many students make inadequate progress on AS courses. Too many fail or get lower grades than expected, which hampers their progression to A level. On AS- and A-level courses the proportion of students gaining higher grades improved in 2013/14 but is still too low. Students taking BTEC courses make good progress. ▪ The development of skills to prepare students for the future is not consistently good across subjects. Many students communicate their ideas clearly on an individual level, but too many lack confidence in teamwork and speaking in groups. The ability to research information independently and present information to others effectively is not consistently good. ▪ The small number of students who take part in a work placement as part of their study programme, gain useful insight into the requirements of specific careers and acquire knowledge and interview practice that benefit them in future job applications. Students also gain useful 	

work-related skills from volunteering schemes and enrichment activities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, but again the numbers engaged in these activities are low.

- The standard of students' work varies far too much across the college. For example, in film studies students are able to carry out a sophisticated analysis of techniques used in different genres. However, in too many cases the level of analysis in students' work is too superficial.
- Students develop their English skills well on most courses but not their mathematical skills. Results for those retaking GCSEs in these subjects at college are not consistently good. In 2013/14 over two thirds gained a C grade or above in English but pass rates in mathematics were low. In the previous year, the mathematics results were much better than those for English.
- Students who progress to A-level programmes and wish to go on to higher education generally succeed in gaining places; about a third of these progress to prestigious universities. A small number of students take up apprenticeships after leaving college. The college does not have sufficient information on the destinations of students who do not progress to university.
- Inequalities in the achievement of students on different courses have not improved. Students have a much better chance of gaining good grades in some subjects than others, particularly at AS level. No significant differences exist in success rates for male and female students and for those from different ethnic groups. Students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good additional, specialist support and generally achieve better than their peers.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Inspectors looked in depth at teaching, learning and assessment in science, English and modern foreign languages, and business and law as a representative sample of the college's curriculum. They found recent improvements in English, but weaknesses that have not been successfully resolved in science, law and modern foreign languages. Inspectors also investigated the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in many other subjects.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has declined since the last inspection to the point where too many students are not making sufficient progress in terms of their potential. Weaknesses exist both within the classroom and in helping students to become independent students who can make the most effective use of study time outside lessons.
- A key issue for the college is that teachers do not have high enough expectations of what students can achieve. Another weakness is that most teachers do not make enough use of initial assessment information on students to plan lessons. They teach to the examination requirements, but too many are not sufficiently skilled at adapting teaching and learning strategies to cater for different needs in the class. Inspectors observed an example of this in a class where all students received the same presentation on using a computer program, without taking into account that some students already knew the program and it was new to others.
- Good practice in teaching and learning is not shared sufficiently amongst staff for example, where teachers are skilled at relating theoretical concepts to practical examples and everyday life. In a sports lesson, students enjoyed the session and learning was effective because of practical demonstrations on how muscles work which helped them to understand and retain specialist terminology. In too many other lessons, teachers explain concepts without the context and relevance that helps students to understand and retain knowledge.
- Staff training is in place to develop teachers' skills but this is not well targeted to the needs of individual staff and teachers do not get enough opportunities to observe each other's practice. In addition, staff training does not focus enough on sharing good practice on how teachers can use information and learning technology to assist learning both inside and outside the classroom. As a result, few students use the college's virtual learning environment to extend their knowledge.
- The effectiveness of assessment strategies in lessons is not consistently good. At best, teachers use a range of different methods in lessons to gauge students' understanding and adapt the

lesson accordingly. Many rely on question and answer as the main way of checking understanding. Good practice exists in using this method for example, in a philosophy lesson students had plenty of time to develop their thoughts, and probing questions helped them to deepen their understanding and extend their knowledge. However, in far too many lessons question and answer is too superficial and the teacher moves on quickly without really knowing what students understand. Sometimes, a small number of students in the class answer most of the questions.

- Teachers assess students’ written work regularly but do not always give sufficient guidance on how they can improve further. This is particularly the case where students receive a good mark and teachers give no indication of what the strengths are and areas that could be developed further.
- Students are very positive about the personal support they receive. The work of the college’s progress coaches has been effective in driving up attendance at lessons, which is now good on most courses. Students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities, such as dyslexia, receive effective support from specialist staff.
- Academic support systems are not effective at ensuring all students make good progress. Study days are timetabled weekly as part of the students’ study programme but not enough students attend them except at revision times leading up to examinations.
- Monitoring of students’ progress is not good enough. A tracking system is in place to record students’ marks on assignments and units of work, but in too many cases, this is not followed by effective action to ensure maximum progress. In addition, no checks take place on the reliability of assessments as these over graded students’ in-year progress last year. Monitoring of students’ progress on BTEC courses is more robust and these students generally make good progress.
- As part of the students’ study programmes, personal development and work-related skills are developed more effectively on some programmes than others for example, they are good in business studies but weak in science. Where teachers relate learning in lessons and enrichment activities to the world of work, this helps students’ motivation and understanding of the relevance of skills they are learning, but this is not yet widespread across the college.
- Too few students, apart from those on BTEC programmes, participate in work placements as part of their study programmes. Where students do participate, the quality of placements is good and planned well to meet students’ specific career plans.
- Guidance to ensure students are on an appropriate programme is now generally effective. Students value the advice they access on careers and higher education, which includes information on apprenticeships.
- Teachers are generally confident and effective in helping students to continue improving their English skills, but not their mathematical skills. Conversely, in science, teachers focus on mathematical skills, but not English.
- Teachers promote a culture of mutual respect, but are less aware of the need to provide sufficient opportunities for students to learn about the diverse cultures and lifestyles that characterise modern Britain.

Science 16-19 study programmes 19+ Learning programmes	Inadequate
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- Weaknesses in the teaching, learning and assessment of science subjects lead to a significant proportion of students not making the expected progress given their attainment when starting college. Many students on AS physics and chemistry courses are unable to progress to A level because of poor examination results. Success rates in science, particularly at AS, have shown a decreasing trend over time.

- Students enjoy lessons and their attendance is good. In the small proportion of better lessons students work collaboratively together to make progress. Teachers make effective use of peer assessment strategies to monitor students' progress. Relationships are very positive and students work with each other harmoniously.
- However, the majority of teaching does not take into account the individual needs of the students. Many students do not make the expected progress in lessons due to a lack of individual learning support from the teacher. Teacher planning does not cater for the more able students and extension work is often unavailable.
- Teachers offer additional support outside the classroom but the impact is negligible because of a lack of understanding of the individual student need. Activities to promote independent learning and employability skills, both within and outside the classroom, are limited. This is exemplified by students who indicate that there is little focus on developing collaborative learning habits, peer network groups and independent research. The study programme does not effectively target students who require additional support from their teachers and the tracking of intervention with students who require it is ineffective.
- Information and learning technology is used well by teachers to enliven presentations for example, the use of animations to demonstrate the impact of reaction times in physics. However, there is a lack of follow up to stimulate discussion or address misconceptions. The college's virtual learning environment is not utilised as a learning resource by teachers and students. Many students do not access the resources for independent study.
- Teachers monitor student learning regularly but this is ineffective in making improvements. The use of assessment in lessons does not generate the required support that would be appropriate to have an impact on student rates of progress. For example, in some physics and biology lessons, incorrect answers on mini whiteboards or no answers at all, are not challenged by the teacher. Teachers' questions elicit superficial responses that lack depth. In a minority of lessons, careful scaffolding of learning ensures that the students can track their own progress against examination criteria.
- Practical lessons develop experimental skills with a strong focus on health and safety. The laboratories are well equipped and modern to facilitate the learning process. Science teachers ensure that students work collaboratively to develop practical skills and the students respond very positively to this teaching strategy. The deployment of support staff in these lessons is effective in developing student skills.
- Teachers do not emphasise and develop students' use of scientific terminology. Too many students have limited specialist vocabulary and a lack of consolidation of new specialist language hampers their progress. Science teachers do not have a strategy to promote the use of English or emphasise the importance of this core skill for learning. Writing tasks do not develop written English skills appropriately. The higher-order skills that students require to succeed in science are not developed, particularly in A-level classes. Students do not have an opportunity to develop lateral or critical thinking skills, independent research or resourcefulness. Students develop their mathematical skills as a result of teacher guidance and support.
- Students are not encouraged to develop their understanding of the context for lesson objectives. Too many students do not recognise the rationale for the lesson content and a lack of context means students cannot relate the content of a lesson to the wider skills they need to acquire. For example, in physics and chemistry lessons, students did not understand the application of the theory presented or how it applies to the real world.
- Teachers in science do not plan activities that help students to explore concepts of equality of opportunity and diverse cultures that would prepare them for their future lives.
- Information, advice and guidance support students well in making informed choices regarding career pathways. Students who undertake work placements value what they learn from them and the experience is very helpful in supporting their applications to study at undergraduate level and beyond.

English and modern foreign languages

16-19 study programmes

19+ Learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are not successful at ensuring that the small number students on modern foreign language courses make good progress. Strategies to improve teaching and learning in English, which enrolls the majority of students led to a marked improvement in outcomes in 2012/13. Many English students make good progress.
- Teachers know their students well and want to help them succeed, but not all have sufficiently high expectations. Where teaching and learning is less effective, there is a lack of active participation by students; they answer teachers' questions willingly, but show little drive or initiative. Learning activities proceed too slowly and timings are open-ended so that some students finish tasks and wait around whilst others make slow progress.
- Teachers on modern foreign language courses are not sufficiently skilful in finding ways for all students to develop confidence in the spoken language, so whole-class discussion is laboured and uninteresting. Standards of students' knowledge vary from good to poor; in English many students give insightful and original views on textual analysis but too many students of modern foreign languages are insecure in their knowledge of grammatical structures.
- Effective examples of teaching, learning and assessment are evident and include the use of probing questions that enable students to explore and develop ideas, rather than giving superficial answers, and directed questioning that ensures all take part. However, good practice is not shared sufficiently amongst teachers.
- Teachers plan lessons to include a variety of activities but in practice students do not have enough opportunities to debate questions in depth. Diligent students and good whole-class teaching mean that learning does take place. However, more able students are not sufficiently challenged in modern foreign language lessons and do not develop higher-level thinking skills as teachers pay insufficient attention to students' individual needs. Paper-based resources are useful and comprehensive but information technology is rarely used to enhance learning.
- Teachers identify and promptly refer students who need additional specialist support; these students generally make good progress. For example, those with dyslexia receive help with specialist strategies on how to cope in class.
- Systems for tracking and monitoring student progress are embedded successfully into working practices in English but are not effective in modern foreign languages. Where they work well, teachers use them to intervene at an early stage to rectify students' under-performance effectively, and monitor the impact of the interventions. Students appreciate the extra study sessions and individual tutorials. In modern foreign languages provision, teachers are not skilful enough at helping students to improve despite initiatives, such as small group grammar lessons.
- A weakness across all the subjects is that there is no formal system for identifying more able students, and it is left to students to pursue opportunities for extension work. Teachers do not plan on a regular basis for work that will ensure the most able develop knowledge and skills well beyond the syllabus requirements.
- Teachers set work regularly and return it promptly with helpful comments. Many courses use cover sheets linking performance to target grades and give detailed advice on how to improve. This good practice is not used in all subjects; where students' work is good there is sometimes little comment from teachers on how to improve even further.
- All teachers promote literacy well, insisting on the accurate use of English and help students consider more sophisticated concepts around language choices. Teachers do not incorporate work in these subjects that helps students to maintain and further develop their mathematical skills.

- Initial advice and guidance are good and students report that they feel well prepared for college. Cooperative working in lessons develops communication and personal skills. Students benefit from excellent enrichment opportunities such as study visits, foreign exchanges and guest speakers that enhance their experience.
- There is a strong emphasis on helping students to understand concepts of equality and diversity. For example, modern foreign language students are able to discuss and challenge racial prejudice sensitively in the target language, and in English literature students show insight and maturity as they consider the portrayal of women in texts.

Business and law

16-19 study programmes

19+ Learning programmes

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good and this leads to a mixture of higher and lower performing courses in terms of numbers retained, pass rates and the proportion of students who gain high grades. The progress of the smaller number of students studying law is poor. Students' progress in business is broadly in line with their prior attainment and is good for those studying vocational business courses.
- Teachers' lesson preparation in law and in a minority of business lessons is weak and students' individual learning needs are not met. These teachers do not use available information from initial assessment in order to challenge and extend the more able students. In these lessons teachers do not keep students engaged, motivated or ensure they reach their full potential. On many occasions, this results in these students having to wait for others to complete work.
- In the majority of business lessons students are eager to learn and teachers stimulate curiosity and capture interest well. Teachers in these lessons use a range of questioning techniques to check, challenge or extend learning effectively. Teachers use a wide range of relevant examples and activities to meet students' interests. For example, when undertaking business analysis in a lesson, the teacher accessed current political news as a way of relating theory to the real world and helping students to understand.
- Business students benefit from a wide range of links with local companies and business entrepreneurs who provide input and context for their learning. For example, guest speakers attend lessons and provide students with information that develops greater understanding of how theory relates to the business world. Law students do not benefit from external speakers and visits to help them contextualise their learning.
- Teachers' assessments of students' work is effective and particularly good on vocational business courses, which helps students to improve their work and gain higher grades. In most cases, students receive written feedback which is helpful in promoting learning. Verbal feedback used during lessons is supportive and encouraging. Students on law courses do not receive sufficient homework to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers effectively develop students' English skills, such as speaking and listening in lessons, through relevant materials and examples. For example, new terminology and words associated with the subject content are well explained and contextualised within the business or law sectors. However, teachers do not use activities to develop mathematical skills when opportunities occur.
- Students receive relevant information to enable them to make informed choices for their career aspirations. They benefit from good pastoral support although they are not always challenged academically to achieve their potential. A few law students have progressed to A-level study without achieving a high enough AS grade.
- Most teachers make good use of opportunities to promote equality and diversity during lessons. In the best examples, teachers plan carefully and use relevant curriculum topics to promote

differences in order to develop students' awareness. For example, a well thought out activity in a business lesson raised students' awareness of differences and discrimination associated with equality legislation.

- Teachers create an inclusive and respectful learning environment, which students respond to very positively. Students work together harmoniously in an atmosphere of mutual respect at the college and within lessons. Students feel safe and value the friendliness of the college staff.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Since the 2012 inspection, governors and managers have made insufficient progress in improving outcomes for students, and inspectors found too much ineffective teaching, learning and assessment. Some aspects of performance improved in 2013/14, mainly students' attendance across the college and outcomes for students on a few courses, including English, geography and computing, but too much provision is poor, especially at AS level.
- Performance management is not effective. Implementation of systems for lesson observations, learning walks and staff appraisal lack rigour. Managers' evaluations are not robust enough because they do not focus adequately on how to improve detailed aspects of teaching. Targets to help individual teachers to improve their teaching and outcomes for their students lack rigour and precision. Appraisal actions are often expressed in terms of improved outcomes for students without saying how this will be achieved through specific actions for teachers. The Principal's appraisal lacks targets and objectives. A lack of clarity about management accountability for standards of teaching and students' performance on specific courses contribute to weaknesses in performance management.
- Managers and course leaders are self-critical but on too many courses self-assessment is not effective in bringing about improvements quickly enough. Most course reports include plenty of detail about teaching and learning and areas for improvement but action plans are not precise enough in setting out what needs to be done to secure improvements. Course leaders do not always have the skills and expertise to bring about improvement. Managers' monitoring of course action plans is weak. The college self-assessment report for 2012/13 overstates strengths about the standard of teaching, though it accurately identifies many issues. The quality improvement plan, linked to the college report, is not adequately monitored.
- The curriculum offers a good range of AS- and A-level subjects and an appropriate range of advanced vocational courses but poor performance on many AS courses means students' A-level choice is limited. Curriculum planning is led by the need to reduce expenditure due to falling student numbers and the removal of some poorly performing courses. Partnerships with external bodies, such as the Chamber of Commerce and other colleges, inform curriculum planning but links with employers are too limited.
- The management of study programmes is located within the senior leadership team and the college is aware that weaknesses exist in the extent to which all students acquire work-related skills and continue to improve their mathematical skills. In addition, managers do not monitor adequately the extent of enrichment activities provided across different curriculum areas, nor the use and impact of study days.
- Governors are not sufficiently rigorous in their oversight of the college. They are well informed about overall outcomes, underperforming courses and the outcomes of lesson observations. However, their challenge of managers is not robust. For example, they do not adequately check that actions, such as 'notices to improve' are effective. They have not set sufficiently clear and challenging objectives for the Principal and senior leadership team. Governors made a strategic decision to reduce enrolments due to financial constraints and the need to raise success rates by implementing recruitment that is more selective. This has led to a modest improvement in outcomes in 2013/14 but enrolments remain well below target.
- The college monitors the performance of different groups of students and whilst no significant differences exist by gender or ethnicity, a major weakness in the promotion of equality is the

disparity in outcomes on different courses. The equality and diversity group has few meetings and the development plan is not monitored actively. Despite this, inspectors found examples of good practice. Students with mental health issues are supported well and have retention rates in line with other students. 'Respect Week' generated many good student projects and displays. Inspectors noted examples of effective promotion of equality themes in lessons, though staff need further training on how to ensure students are prepared for a diverse society.

- Safeguarding arrangements for students are good. The college meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding students. The college is safe and welcoming, as confirmed by feedback from students and parents as well as inspectors' observations. The link governor for safeguarding provides effective oversight of recruitment arrangements. Good external links with the local authority enable the college to support the transition of vulnerable students for example, those leaving care. Designated managers for safeguarding are well trained and show good understanding of all aspects, including risk assessments and promotion of safe practices with students. All staff receive safeguarding training and this is being strengthened by greater opportunities to learn from case studies. Students also complete on-line safeguarding training, which includes e-safety, and know who to go to if they have any concerns. Staff are aware that their approach to possible incidents should be based on listening, recording and reporting. Incidents that require action are managed well, with appropriate referrals to external agencies.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)**King George V College**

<p>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</p> <p>1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate</p>	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	4	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	4	N/A	N/A	N/A
Outcomes for students	4	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	4	N/A	N/A	N/A
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	4	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	4	N/A	N/A	N/A
The effectiveness of leadership and management	4	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	4	N/A	N/A	N/A

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Science	4
English	3
Modern foreign languages	4
Business	3
Law and legal services	4

Provider details

Type of provider	Sixth form college							
Age range of students	16+							
Approximate number of all students over the previous full contract year	1075							
Principal/CEO	Mrs Adele Wills							
Date of previous inspection	March 2012							
Website address	www.kgv.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+
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1049	11	N/A	N/A
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16								
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	N/A							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
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"> ▪ None 							

Contextual information

King George V College is located close to the centre of Southport in the borough of Sefton. Within the local area there are two general further education colleges, one sixth form school and three local schools with sixth forms. The proportion of school leavers achieving five GCSE grades A* to C including English and mathematics is above the national average and students' attainment when starting at the college is generally above average. The area is relatively prosperous with a few pockets of deprivation. The very low proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds reflects the local population.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Sue Harrison HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four 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 students' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, and online questionnaires to gather the views of students and parents. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant 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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