

# South Leicestershire College

## General further education college

Inspection dates		24 – 28 November 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-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 college is good because:

- success rates on most courses including apprenticeships and work-based provision are high and increasing and the outcomes of pupils aged 14 to 16 are good
- teachers successfully promote the improvement of students' English and mathematics skills which has increased the success rates for functional skills and the proportion of students achieving grade A\*- C GCSE has dramatically improved since the previous inspection and is now good
- teaching, learning and assessment are good and well-qualified and vocationally-experienced teachers have high expectations of their students and support them well
- students make good progress in most lessons
- governors, leaders and managers have made significant and sustained improvement since the previous inspection
- strategic priorities for the college are clear and match well the priorities of the locality and region.

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

- not enough teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding
- not enough teachers take sufficient account of early assessment outcomes when planning learning to meet individual needs and in a minority of lessons, students do not have sufficiently challenging work
- too few students on courses at level 3 achieve high grades or make the progress expected of them, given their previous level of attainment
- too few full-time students aged 16 to 19 on vocational courses currently have work experience as an integral part of their study programme
- too few teachers develop students' understanding of equality and diversity successfully in learning sessions.

## Full report

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

- Accurately identify improvements in professional practice for teachers and assessors to enable best practice to be shared to improve further the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Use early assessment outcomes of students' skills more effectively to plan and provide learning and support that takes better account of individual needs.
- Increase the proportion of students who pass with high grades on college-based courses by ensuring that all teachers set and review appropriately challenging targets with students so that they reach their full potential.
- Swiftly increase the number of opportunities for all students on study programmes to access work placements so that they receive relevant and valuable work experience related to their subject area.
- Support teachers to develop the confidence and skills to promote equality and diversity in lessons to extend students' understanding and knowledge.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- The college has around 2,500 students studying on a range of courses from pre-entry level through to level 3 and above including apprenticeships and workplace learning. Just over half of these are students aged 16 to 18, the large majority of whom are following study programmes; a small minority are undertaking apprenticeship programmes. Adults mainly study a range of full- and part-time classroom-based courses at level 1 and level 2.
- Since the previous inspection, the proportion of students on college-based programmes who successfully achieve their qualifications has rapidly increased and is now good. The improvement in outcomes is particularly high for students aged 16 to 18 at all levels. Outcomes for adults have also improved and compare broadly to those aged 16 to 18, with the exception of adults on courses at levels 1 and 3 where achievement is only around the national rate. Success rates on short courses, the large majority of which adults undertake, are high. Pupils aged 14 to 16 studying at the college achieve well.
- Outcomes for both intermediate and advanced apprentices and for students on workplace learning courses, provided by the college and sub-contractors, are good, as is the proportion that completes their qualifications with the planned timescales.
- For most classroom-based learning, students make secure and improving progress. Progress and success rates for a small proportion of students in a few subject areas show a recent decline and require improvement. Destinations for the large majority of students are high and internal progression is much improved, as is the proportion of students on courses at level 3 progressing to higher education. Attendance and punctuality are high.
- Success rates for functional skills are good. The very large majority of students now successfully achieve their functional skills qualifications at an appropriate level and at the first attempt. The proportion of students achieving GCSEs in English and mathematics at grades A\*- C has also rapidly increased and is now high. Teachers promote the importance of high standards of English and mathematics well to all students, particularly how these will improve future employment prospects.

- Too few students on vocational courses at level 3 achieve high grades or receive sufficient challenge to make better progress than might reasonably be expected given their starting points.
- Students benefit from good access to a range of specialist resources both in the college and in the workplace that helps them confidently develop and extend their work-related skills. For example in media studies, students run the college's own radio station 'Wiggle FM' and contribute to the young peoples' online magazine 'The Jitty'. In engineering, students benefit from good access to industry standard computer numerical control software that replicates resources typically used in the workplace.
- Students benefit from the college's strong relationship with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the good range of vocational partnerships with the wider business community. These include increased participation in industrial-based learning projects and assignments that improve students' understanding of industry and commerce. Managers and staff are good at encouraging students to enter regional and national skills competitions, with a few achieving major awards. The provision of external work experience is underdeveloped across the college.
- Few gaps exist in the achievements of different groups of students with the exception of female students aged 19 and over, and students of African, Indian and Pakistani heritage who achieve less well than the main student population. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as their counterparts.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and this reflects outcomes for students, which are also good. Well qualified, motivated and vocationally experienced staff set high expectations for students. A large majority of staff are good role models. Recently appointed progress coaches are already having a positive impact on the well-being and retention of students across the college. Staff create a positive, respectful and professional environment for learning which also mirrors the workplace.
- Teachers and assessors have good industry expertise and effectively link lessons and assessment to industry standards of skills and practices. Students develop good vocational skills quickly. For example in a hairdressing lesson, teachers expect students to pace their work in line with commercial salon timings. Clinical health apprentices make rapid development in their understanding of medical procedures that they implement at work.
- Staff provide a comprehensive network of support for students. Good internal links exist between support staff in college and with external agencies. Staff support looked-after children well.
- Students benefit from the strong focus on employability skills embedded in all study programmes across the college; this ensures students understand the relevance of work related tasks and activities in lessons. Staff manage the work placements of social care and early years' students well, which help them rapidly gain in confidence and skills. Construction students undertake valuable projects in the community that help them quickly develop a wide range of employability skills such as teamwork and project management. However, not all students on study programmes receive sufficient work experience with external employers.
- Resources to support learning are excellent and students have access to industry standard equipment to develop relevant vocational skills. Tablet computers and laptops are available for students to use outside the classroom and students frequently use these to learn independently. Most students use the resources on virtual learning environment (VLE) well. However, not all students are aware of the full range of available online resources. Few engineering apprentices make use of the VLE to consolidate their learning.

- Staff provide good, effective information, advice and guidance to students to ensure that they are embarking on the right course and level. Teachers and assessors provide ongoing advice and guidance effectively to students so that they can make appropriate decisions on progression and employment. Good progression opportunities exist across most programmes.
- All students undergo effective early assessment of their prior learning. However, it is not always clear how staff use results of the assessment to plan and provide learning which takes account of the needs of individual students. Staff mark students' work effectively so that students know what to do to improve. They use a wide range of assessment techniques to explore and confirm students' knowledge and understanding of their subject. Assessors visit apprentices frequently in the work place and liaise well with employers.
- Teachers, assessors and progress coaches develop students' English skills effectively in most lessons. Students on study programmes understand why they need to develop improved skills in English. In the better lessons, teachers use glossaries well to develop students' understanding of technical vocabulary and spelling. However, not all teachers routinely correct poor English so that, for instance, engineering apprentices have not yet developed sufficient technical report writing skills.
- Specialist teachers develop the mathematical skills of students well. Vocational teachers, particularly in engineering and creative media, are very skilled at embedding mathematical concepts into their lessons, so that students understand how mathematical techniques relate to everyday situations. However, a small minority of vocational staff do not routinely develop students' mathematical skills and understanding consistently across all subjects.
- In creative media and games design courses, teachers make very effective use of ILT to develop students' technical skills. Students use software programmes well to design computer games with embedded mathematical puzzles. However, not all staff use ILT confidently to ensure that lessons are made more interesting and varied for students.
- While staff encourage students to set their own targets, these are often not sufficiently challenging or specific and they do not always check them effectively. Progress reviews are perfunctory and focus on tasks rather than challenging students to develop their skills beyond initial target grades. New systems to record and monitor targets for all students and apprentices more effectively are too immature to have had any significant impact.
- In better lessons, staff use learning activities skilfully to explore equality and diversity with students. Despite the diverse nature of the college population, not all students have a full understanding of the importance of the promotion of equality and the understanding of diversity in modern Britain, because too frequently staff do not cover these topics effectively in their lessons.

## Health, social care and early years

**16-19 study programmes**  
**19+ Learning programmes**

Good

- Teaching learning and assessment are good as reflected in the very high progression to further study or relevant employment. Students enjoy their studies and make good progress. A significant majority gain high grades.
- Enthusiastic and well-qualified teachers regularly return to the sector to update their knowledge and skills using this very well to improve the learning students receive. Teachers motivate students to aim high, grow in confidence, develop good research skills and communicate effectively within teams. Childcare students produce good creative displays, an essential skill for this area.

- Students further develop their wide range of skills essential for employment in the sector. One health and social care student reached the final round of the United Kingdom heat of the World Skills Championships.
- Students at all levels benefit from and enjoy well-planned work experience. They develop appropriate attitudes and learn the importance of respect and providing choice to promote independence of a child or adult in their care. They have a good understanding of how their actions will improve the welfare of adults and children. For example, students on health and social care course at level 3 contributed to a lively debate on the importance of continuous professional development to improve workplace practices.
- Teachers encourage students to develop good personal learning and thinking skills in a variety of ways through well-planned and paced lessons. For example, a group of students spent an afternoon enthusiastically planning and participating in activities to identify the benefits of 'Forest Schools' to improve children's learning in a natural outdoor setting.
- Teachers' creative use of ILT motivates and engages students well. In one instance, students enthusiastically participated in an activity using tablet computers to send answers to the interactive white board for later storage on the VLE. Others explored how creative software on tablet computers can support learning for babies. However, opportunities are limited for childcare students to gain confidence and competence in the use of interactive whiteboards, an essential employability skill.
- Assessment of learning is timely and accurate. Teachers mark and return work within two weeks, providing rich and detailed written feedback enabling students to reflect on and improve their work. Students' written work is good and includes references and a bibliography demonstrating wider reading and understanding. In better lessons, teachers plan the membership of groups to encourage effective peer support. However, in a few lessons teachers use questions which do not challenge and extend individual learning.
- The development of English in lessons is good. All students work towards an appropriate level of functional skill or GCSE. Teachers routinely highlight spelling or grammatical errors and they encourage students to proof read and correct their own work. However, too many teachers miss opportunities to promote the development of students' mathematics skills. In a few better lessons, students use mathematics well to convert temperature from Fahrenheit to Centigrade or work out the ratio of staff to children.
- Progress tutors work well with individual students to ensure they are on the correct programme, negotiate and monitor personal and academic targets and prepare individuals to explore thoroughly career options. However, not all teachers use all this information to plan individual learning and assessment in lessons.
- Placement tutors and assessors work closely with the teaching team to regularly monitor progress and identify any students at risk of falling behind. Good liaison between staff, parents, employers and additional support staff ensure students stay on programme and achieve.
- Students feel safe and adopt safe working practices. Students on childcare courses at level 3 have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities to safeguard the children in their care. They demonstrate sensitivity when exploring their response to a child who discloses abuse, identify and justify proposed actions and explain the significance of accurate documentation. Students have a good understanding of the rights of individuals and the need to respect individual differences in a diverse society.

**Engineering and manufacturing technologies****Apprenticeships**

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good as is the high proportion of apprentices who complete their courses within the allocated time.
- Assessors are knowledgeable and highly experienced in their engineering specialisms, and they use their up-to-date industry knowledge very well to motivate and encourage apprentices to make good progress in their studies. Apprentices benefit from flexible on-demand assessments from assessors who in turn provide good pastoral assistance and support to develop vocational skills. Apprentices speak highly of how this support helps motivate them to succeed.
- Apprentices benefit from access to a range of modern industry-standard equipment in college and the workplace that quickly enables them to acquire and demonstrate their engineering skills. Assessors have strong working relationships with employers who provide a good breadth of on-the-job learning opportunities for their employees and they have a well-developed understanding of their apprentices' progress.
- Most apprentices develop good technical skills that improve their usefulness in the workplace, including producing engineered components for the highly regulated aviation, military and electrical industries, often requiring them to work to exacting engineering and safety critical specifications. Employers value highly the rapid development of apprentices' confidence, self-reliance and ability to work with gradually reduced supervision over time.
- Apprentices confidently and safely use a range of tools and specialist equipment to produce work to a commercial standard, strictly adhering to safe working practices. Most employers move their apprentices onto more complex and commercial engineering work early in their apprenticeship. For example, one apprentice was machining engine castings for an important client, reflecting the employer's confidence in his skills.
- Most assessors have high expectations of apprentices and set tasks that help them learn and develop new skills quickly. However, assessors do not routinely direct apprentices towards using interactive learning materials available on the college VLE to encourage learning between planned visits to the workplace. This prevents a few apprentices from progressing at the rate they are capable of making.
- Apprentices benefit from the provision of a well-structured learning programme that meets their needs and interests very well. The planning and organisation of the majority of practical and classroom-based learning is good, resulting in apprentices having a well-developed understanding of modern production methods. This prepares apprentices well for productive work in their respective workplaces.
- Information, advice and guidance, and early assessment are good. Apprentices receive detailed information prior to the start of their programme and have a comprehensive induction into their programme supported by good learning materials. Employers are fully involved in induction. Almost all apprentices move into sustained employment on completion of the programme and a few progress into supervisory roles early in their careers.
- Support for learning is good. Apprentices with identified support needs receive close and detailed assistance from assessors and other college staff to help overcome any obstacles and barriers in their everyday lives. As a result, they make secure progress and achieve as well as their counterparts.
- Apprentices develop good mathematics skills. Most quickly improve their confidence in the application of their numeracy skills to everyday work. They routinely interpret engineering drawings, working to exacting tolerances. For example, one apprentice services and repairs



camera systems to very high degrees of accuracy for an Oscar-winning manufacturer of cinematography lenses.

- Assessment is accurate and fair. Assessors visit apprentices in the workplace frequently, providing good oral and written feedback following the completion of practical tasks to inform progress. However, they do not always use information from early assessment effectively to determine individual starting points and to match training plans closely to the needs of both the apprentice and the workplace. The targets set during reviews particularly for the more able apprentices are not sufficiently demanding to ensure they reach their full potential.
- Assessors do not develop apprentices' English skills to a consistently high standard. They routinely encourage apprentices to extend their technical vocabulary appropriately using subject-based glossaries. However, assessors do not regularly correct apprentices' spelling, punctuation and grammar errors and they provide insufficient guidance on how apprentices can improve, particularly in developing accurate and coherent engineering reports. Assessors do not work sufficiently closely with specialist English teachers in setting tasks that would improve written skills of apprentices.
- Apprentices benefit from a welcoming and inclusive environment. The promotion of an understanding of diversity takes place effectively at induction, but staff and apprentices do not routinely discuss this topic during lessons or subsequent workplace progress reviews. As a result, most apprentices have only a limited understanding of diversity in communities and the workplace.

## Building and Construction

**16-19 study programmes**  
**19+ Learning programmes**

Good

- Teaching learning and assessment are good resulting in the majority of students making strong progress and achieving well. Success rates on most courses are high. Attendance and punctuality in lessons are good.
- Teachers are well qualified and all have appropriate industry experience. They use their construction knowledge very effectively to plan learning that engages and motivates students. Teaching and learning in practical lessons are particularly strong and students develop good practical skills. Teachers are very skilled at ensuring that students develop good health and safety practices during all workshop and site-based learning activities, reflecting the standards expected in industry.
- In practical lessons, teachers require students to identify and set their own progress target for the lesson, but a minority of these targets lack sufficient detail and challenge and result in a few students not progressing at the rate they are capable of achieving.
- Most classroom teaching is good, well planned and builds on students' previous knowledge. Students develop a good understanding of their particular construction trade. They contribute well in lessons and show a genuine interest in their learning. The good links between classroom and workshop-based learning activities enable students to develop a thorough understanding of their trade. Teachers make good use of practical examples from the workplace to engage students in their learning.
- Resources to support teaching and learning are good. Technical resources in workshop and practical areas are of industry standard allowing students to develop their trade-specific skills and use a range of appropriate trade tools and equipment. Teachers use ILT effectively to improve students' learning. For example, in classrooms teachers regularly use digital projection resources to enliven learning. In practical areas, teachers regularly play video clips of best

practice relating to the subject they are covering to reinforce the promotion of high vocational standards.

- Thorough initial advice and guidance, including taster programmes, ensures that students are able to make an informed choice as to their course and trade specialism. Early assessment is good and provides an accurate diagnosis of students' starting points. In a few lessons, teachers do not make enough use of the early assessment information in the group profiles, to plan learning that meets the needs of individual students. As a result, not all receive sufficient challenge to reach their full potential.
- Support for students is good. Specialist staff monitor students' vocational and pastoral progress closely. Students speak highly of the support they receive from staff to help them overcome any barriers to their learning and skills development.
- Students including those on study programmes gain from the excellent opportunities to develop site and trade skills through a range of external projects, many involving the refurbishment of community venues and modernisation work to local residents' homes. Students across all construction trades benefit by experiencing real on-the-job work and the associated site conditions that are not available in the college environment.
- Students benefit from good enrichment activities, such as visits to brick manufacturers, paint demonstrations and skills shows. Guest speakers visit the college to give useful presentations on trade-related topics. Some students enter national construction skills competitions and achieve recognition of their practical ability. Progression into employment and further education are good.
- Assessment is good. It is frequent, fair and effective. Staff require students to assess their own work as part of the assessment. Teachers mark students' work promptly and provide constructive feedback on areas for improvement. Assessment of practical work includes much good questioning to confirm students' knowledge and understanding related to vocational tasks and competencies.
- Success rates in functional skills tests are high. However, not all teachers promote the importance of English and mathematics to a consistently high standard. As a result, a few students lack understanding of how these vital skills support wider personal and employability prospects.
- Students and staff have respect for one another and working relationships between them are good. Students' behaviour both in and out of lessons is very good. However, in both theory and practical lessons, teachers often miss opportunities to develop students' knowledge and understanding of wider equality and diversity matters.

## Foundation English

**16-19 study programmes**  
**19+ Learning programmes**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good which reflects the high students' outcomes. Success rates increased in 2013/14 and were high both for functional skills and GCSE at A\*- C. Progress within lessons and on to higher levels of study is also good. Attendance from the beginning of the academic year is close to the college target, but was low during the inspection.
- Experienced and well-qualified teachers work effectively to highlight the benefits of improving English skills. Students, many of whom were unsuccessful when studying English previously, now enjoy their learning and see the relevance of these skills to their everyday lives and future employment opportunities. Teachers provide stimulating activities that motivate students well, such as analysing advertisements to gain a better understanding of emotive and persuasive language and the effects it can have on spending patterns.



- Teachers know their students well and support them sensitively to succeed. They use a variety of useful techniques, such as giving a learner with autistic spectrum disorder sufficient space and time to reflect. A dedicated study area, known as 'The Hub' and additional revision classes provide students with good support to develop their skills in English and mathematics. In a very few cases teachers do not plan well enough to ensure each learner's needs are fully met, particularly in mixed ability classes. They do not always direct learning support assistants sufficiently to maximise their support.
- Managers and teachers have raised the profile of English across the college significantly. Links to vocational teachers have improved greatly over the past year. Vocational and English teachers communicate more frequently and usefully share information on students' needs. Close monitoring of individual progress and a strong focus on examination preparation is contributing well to students' success. Newly introduced vocational glossaries are supporting subject specific language well in a few vocational areas, but not all staff use them effectively throughout the college.
- Feedback on written work is mostly good. Teachers provide suitable guidance as to what students need to do to improve. An on-line system of highlighting errors in written work is very effective in encouraging students to correct mistakes for themselves. Managers and staff responded swiftly to students' request for an on-line system to check for plagiarism in submitted work. This system provides an additional effective tool to check the quality and authenticity of submitted written work. In a few instances, teachers do not correct mistakes in spelling and grammar adequately.
- Full-time students on entry-level programmes improve their English well through a wide variety of stimulating activities including college enterprises, external visits and work experience. For example, they visited a local travel agent's shop to collect travel brochures and learn about work in the industry; they then used these brochures as a learning resource in a highly effective lesson on the use of adjectives.
- Teacher use ILT well in most lessons., For example, in one lesson, the teacher skilfully used a video clip to bring a GCSE set text to life, followed by internet research by students on key characters from the book along with the use of mobile phone dictionaries for clarification of vocabulary.
- Early assessments of students' skills and abilities, although providing a relatively clear starting point for future study, do not always fully capture students' specific developmental needs. Although teachers know students well, managers recognise they need to do further work to ensure a more consistent use of early assessment outcomes to inform target setting across the study programme. In too many cases, targets are too broad to offer students enough information as to what exactly they need to do to improve.
- Good guidance ensures that students follow the particular study route that best meets their needs. For example, courses with units that take a short amount of time benefit those who have confidence issues or who find the prospect of sitting a formal examination daunting. Teachers sensitively direct them onto higher and more demanding levels of study when they have successfully gained sufficient self-belief and the skills necessary to progress.
- English teachers promote mathematics well in lessons. They ensure they take every opportunity to extend the development of students' understanding, for instance through a discussion on different salary scales along with a calculation exercise based on the minimum wage. Students can see the relevance of such work to their daily lives and often improve their skills without realising they are studying mathematics.
- Students work co-operatively and supportively together, often in mixed ability groups. Managers and staff promote and ensure a culture of respect and students state they feel safe. In most lessons, teachers use innovative and stimulating ideas to promote students' understanding of equality and diversity, for example comparing magazines aimed at different genders, raising awareness of the differences between phonetic and non-phonetic languages and highlighting the origin of commonly used words.

**Foundation mathematics****16-19 study programmes****19+ Learning programmes**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good as reflected in the high proportion of students who achieve qualifications in functional skills and obtain high grades in GCSE mathematics. Students make good progress in their lessons. Most students work above the standard expected for their level of programme and are successfully developing the mathematical skills that they need for both their vocational areas and their daily lives. Students' attendance and punctuality in the vast majority of lessons is very high.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and motivate students successfully. They provide good care and support for students during both individual and group work and create a positive learning environment that fosters a culture of mutual respect. Students rapidly improve their confidence in mathematics due to the good support that they receive. Students enjoy learning and feel confident that they can get the help and encouragement they need from their teachers to accelerate their mathematical skills development.
- Teachers use their skills and expertise well to plan imaginative and varied activities that build upon students' strengths and interests helping develop their understanding of key topics in both GCSE and functional skills mathematics lessons. For example, in one lesson a teacher skilfully used play dough and colourings to extend students' understanding of how to use ratios effectively in a practical context. This activity was very successful in visually reinforcing the consequences of getting a ratio wrong.
- Although assessments of skills and abilities take place for all students at the start of their studies, teachers do not routinely use them well to ensure that each individual student maximises their learning in lessons.
- Most teachers are very thorough in preparing students for their examinations. They often relate mathematical concepts to real-life or vocational situations. As a result, students see the relevance of mathematics and understand quite complex concepts more easily.
- The use of ILT in most lessons is good. Teachers use it successfully to improve students' understanding of key learning topics. For example, for students studying construction, teachers used ILT to clarify and extend work on perimeters by the use of images of famous walls from around the globe such as the Great Wall of China, Hadrian's Wall and the Berlin Wall. This actively engaged students in animated discussion and added an element of fun to the students' calculations.
- Verbal and written feedback is good. Teachers give clear oral feedback and use questions and answers effectively to help students understand and explore key topics. Written feedback effectively highlights strengths and helps students understand what they need to do to improve. Teachers encourage students well to access relevant mathematics resources on the VLE that extends their learning outside the classroom. Students also benefit from 'The Hub' where they can access additional help from teachers to improve their mathematical skills outside planned lessons.
- Students receive effective initial advice and guidance. Following early and diagnostic assessment, staff place students on an appropriate functional skill or GCSE course and provide them with timely information to support their progress.
- Teachers promote equality and diversity well. They often use ILT to introduce equality and diversity into lessons through careful selection of images. In a lesson on area, the teacher used ILT particularly effectively to promote well the understanding of diversity. The teacher employed different images from various cultures to demonstrate the mathematical concept of area and personal space, including a very powerful image of a train in India where passengers were

travelling in huge numbers on the outside of the train to make the journey and raised the issue of overcrowding.

## Accounting, finance and business management

### 16-19 study programmes

### 19+ Learning programmes

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. The overall proportion of students who successfully complete courses has increased over the past three years and is high on the large majority of vocational courses. Progression to further study and employment is high.
- Most students develop good personal, social and employability skills such as confidence, communication and teamwork. Students aged 16 to 18 on the study programme make good use of relevant industrial and enterprise projects that enables them to quickly improve their confidence in using key financial and business techniques to solve a range of business challenges. For example, students have established a number of enterprises to extend their employability skills. These activities accelerate students' learning as they link a range of business and financial concepts from the classroom to real-life situations. Most students' work is good and they make effective use of wider reading and research. However, too few students undertake external work experience to enrich their vocational learning.
- Teachers are well qualified and share their knowledge and experience with students to extend their understanding. They encourage students to reflect and identify implications for their professional practice. In an accounting lesson, a teacher successfully extended students' understanding through encouraging them to critically review and evaluate how they could improve different debt notification methods within their places of work.
- In the best lessons, expectations of students are high. They enjoy and benefit from well-planned activities which promote lively discussions between them and that draw effectively from students' own workplace experiences. Teachers have productive working relations with students, who value their expertise. Teachers use very good questioning to challenge and extend students' understanding of key business concepts and ensure learning takes place briskly. Students develop sound analytical skills and discuss business concepts in depth, evaluate each other's work and learn well through confident presentations.
- In the small minority of less effective lessons, teachers do not plan effectively to meet the full ability range of all students. For example, although teachers have good information on the prior attainment of students, some activities taking place in lessons do not cater sufficiently for the more able in the class.
- Support for students is good. The support students receive enables them to gain confidence, contribute more effectively in lessons and complete assignments to the standard required. This is reflected in the high number of students achieving above their minimum target grade for the qualifications they are taking.
- Assessment is frequent, thorough and detailed. Teachers use written reports, presentations, group work and one-to-one professional discussions to assess accurately students' performance. Students receive comprehensive written feedback on assessed work that helps them to build on and improve their grades. The monitoring of students' progress is thorough and effective. Targets are set regularly to support and encourage students to improve their performance.
- Students make good use of the VLE to access learning materials. Outside the classroom, students can book laptops so that they can complete mock examinations and access relevant learning materials at home, as well as come to lessons fully prepared for learning.
- Students' development of English and mathematics is good. Teachers develop students' literacy well, they focus on ensuring they understand key definitions and are able to spell commonly

used financial and business words correctly using student produced individual dictionaries. Teachers thoroughly correct spelling, punctuation and grammar in marked written work. They successfully develop students' mathematics skills and reinforce the application of these skills to the workplace through activities such as calculating cash flow forecasts and comparing profit and breakeven outcomes.

- The information and guidance given to students is good, reflected in current high retention rates across the majority of college-based courses. Students have an accurate and realistic picture of what to expect from their courses. Teachers expect students to achieve high grades and students say that they find this challenge motivating. Personal tutors track progress well and students know what grades they are aspiring to achieve. Students enjoy their courses, feel safe and benefit from the support given by teachers and tutors.
- Teachers do not develop students' understanding of diversity well enough in lessons. For example, in a lesson on employment practices, the teacher introduced students to the Equalities Act. However, during a teacher-led discussion on the legislation related to sexual orientation and its application to the workplace, few students understood the differences between employees who stated they were transsexual and those who were transgender.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Good

- Strategic and operational management changes have brought about significant improvements throughout the college. The Principal and the senior leadership team, supported by governors, have set clear ambitions and expectations for all. Their determined focus on providing the best outcomes and teaching, learning and assessment motivates staff particularly well to achieve these for students.
- Comprehensive planning and good communication provides a very thorough approach to improvement that is raising standards and improving students' outcomes. Staff across the college have a thorough understanding that they need to improve provision against a background of challenging financial constraints.
- Governance is strong, dynamic and effective in supporting improvement and strengthening accountability at all levels. Governors support the college well by providing challenge to leaders to improve performance and through their link roles into all areas of the college.
- Strategies to improve teaching, learning and assessment are particularly effective. Managers have revised the college observation process to ensure a comprehensive range of evidence is available to plan improvements. Formal and informal observations and the use of students' views help managers to identify areas needing further improvement. In a minority of observations, the summaries the observer records do not fully inform the development plans for teachers. In these observations, the actions to be taken are unclear and targets are too broad to inform teachers as to precisely what needs to improve and how.
- Curriculum planning is particularly effective and the current provision meets the needs of students well. Leaders and managers have good strategic links to the LEP and make effective use of the analysis of local economic needs to inform the curriculum planning process. They use the good relationships with local and regional employers to support the college's longer-term strategy including meeting the needs of future students and those who are at risk of not being in employment.
- Leaders have successfully implemented the 16-19 study programme. Performance in English and mathematics for all students including apprentices and adults has improved significantly. Managers ensure that lessons reinforce students' understanding of employability skills through a range of innovative work-related projects. However, the opportunity for students to benefit from work experience requires improvement.

- Leaders have established effective management of staff performance that tackles underperformance and leads to improvement. Staff development is effective and supported by individual coaching and mentoring. The recent introduction of roles to support teachers is improving provision further. Opportunities to share good practice, within the college and across the federation with North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, have improved efficiency and performance.
- Self-assessment is comprehensive and accurate, including governance. Leaders know the college well. Managers and staff are self-critical of their own performance and use the views of partners, employers and students to identify areas of underperformance. Improvements in the availability and use of data enable a more accurate analysis of areas where performance is at risk of declining so that staff can take remedial action. A few of the strengths in the draft self-assessment report for 2013/14 are overstated, particularly where recently introduced strategies have yet to achieve their desired impact.
- Managers oversee the small number of students in subcontracted provision well. They have taken action to identify and eliminate poor performance and ensure that students receive a high-quality learning experience that improves their job prospects and employability.
- The embedding of equality and diversity at college level is good. Support and access for disadvantaged students is effective. Managers have identified gaps in performance and successfully narrowed or closed them. Students are courteous and respectful. However, in lessons, too many teachers do not promote equality and diversity themes consistently. Although areas of good practice exist across the college, too many teachers lack confidence to use circumstances that occur in lessons to challenge students and reinforce their knowledge and understanding of diversity.
- Safeguarding is good. Students feel safe at college and have a good awareness of health and safety in the college and at work. The college meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding students. Staff are well trained and qualified and understand their roles well. The single central register of recruitment and vetting checks is accurate and up to date. Checks on new staff and where students are on work placements are thorough. Managers report the type of incidents and the trends emerging in order to continually monitor and improve their arrangements, including the risk of radicalisation and extremism. A range of appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place for students using the internet and social media.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### South Leicestershire College

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	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	2			2		2	2		
Outcomes for learners	2			2		2	2		
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2			2		2	2		
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2			2		2	2		

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Health and Social Care	2
Early Years and Playwork	2
Engineering	2
Manufacturing Technologies	2
Building and Construction	2
Foundation English	2
Foundation mathematics	2
Accounting and Finance	2
Business Management	2



<b>Type of provider</b>	General further education college								
<b>Age range of learners</b>	14+								
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	6,885								
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Mrs Marion Plant OBE								
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	June 2013								
<b>Website address</b>	www.slcollege.ac.uk								
<b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>									
<b>Main course or learning programme level</b>	<b>Level 1 or below</b>		<b>Level 2</b>		<b>Level 3</b>		<b>Level 4 and above</b>		
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	
	183	421	310	290	394	77	5	19	
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18		19+		
	104	153	154	179	1		39		
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total				
	N/A		N/A		N/A				
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	61								
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A								
<b>Part-time</b>	61								
<b>Number of community learners</b>	N/A								
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	98								
<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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Apple Construction Training</li> <li>■ Leicestershire Fire &amp; Rescue Service</li> <li>■ NCC Skills</li> <li>■ Pinpoint Training</li> <li>■ The Teaching and Learning Group</li> <li>■ University Hospitals Leicestershire NHS Trust</li> <li>■ Whitewaters Training</li> <li>■ Whitwick Community Enterprises</li> <li>■ Wing Training.</li> </ul>								

## Contextual information

South Leicestershire College is a medium-sized general further education college that serves the south of Leicester and the Harborough district. The college operates from a modern purpose-built site located in South Wigston. The percentage of pupils who gain more than five grade A\*-C passes at GCSE including English and mathematics is lower than the regional and national rates. The proportion of residents in the East Midlands qualified at levels 1, 2 and 3 including apprenticeships is higher than the national rate, while at level 4 it is below the rate. The number of local residents that are unemployed and in receipt of benefits is slightly lower than the regional rate. In February 2013, South Leicestershire College federated with North Warwickshire and Hinckley College; the institutions have separate governance arrangements, but a single Principal and a shared senior leadership team operate across both colleges.

## Information about this inspection

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

## What inspection judgements mean

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

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

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

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