

City of Stoke-on-Trent

Sixth form college

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| Inspection dates | | 21–24 April 2015 |
| 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 provider is good because:

- the college makes a substantial difference to the lives of students of all ages within the community; students make good progress, they leave college with a wide range of skills that enhance their work readiness and almost all progress into higher education, training or employment
- the proportion of students who complete their qualifications is high for level 2 and level 3 vocational students; the majority of level 3 vocational students achieve high grades
- students develop good English skills; the proportion of students successfully achieving GCSE grade C or better in English is high
- much good teaching, learning and assessment reflect significant progress made in removing the inconsistencies in quality identified at the previous inspection; staff provide excellent care and support for students
- the rigorous programme for the observation of teaching, learning and assessment has led to improvements and the effective sharing of good practice between teachers
- leaders and managers are successfully driving significant improvements in teaching, learning and assessment as a result of effective self-assessment and initiatives introduced since the previous inspection
- the well-planned curriculum is highly responsive to the needs of students, the community and the regional priorities of the local enterprise partnership.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- too little teaching, learning and assessment provide consistently high levels of challenge to extend all students
- in 2013/14, a minority of students aged 16 to 18 on AS-level courses left the college early without completing their qualifications; not enough A-level students achieve high grades in their studies and a minority of A-level students do not participate in external work experience
- progress monitoring does not always sufficiently judge the impact of actions taken by staff, to improve outcomes for students.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the good teaching and learning in the college this year result in improved success rates, most importantly for AS-level students; ensure that a higher proportion of A-level students achieve high grades, making the progress of which they are capable.
- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching and learning by ensuring teachers use their good understanding of students' abilities and needs to provide sufficiently interesting and high levels of challenging activities, so that all students' knowledge is extended fully and they make good progress.
- Ensure that all A-level students have the opportunity to engage in purposeful external work experience, so that they develop further, career-related work skills and to enhance their already varied learning experiences at college.
- Ensure that leaders' and managers' progress monitoring of action plans from self-assessment, consistently judges the impact of actions taken, in order to improve outcomes for students.

Inspection judgements

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| Outcomes for learners | Good |
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- The college provides study programmes for students aged 16 to 18 at levels 2 and 3. These make up most of the college's offer. A very few adult students are on level 3 programmes. The proportion of students studying A levels accounts for just over half of the provision; around one third of students study on level 3 vocational programmes and a small minority study at level 2. A small but increasing number of students take GCSE English and mathematics resit programmes. A few students aged 14 to 16 attend college on a full-time basis.
- The college makes a substantial difference to the lives of students of all ages within its local community. Two in every five students progress from local schools judged by Ofsted to be inadequate, and many begin their studies from a low starting point. However, staff work well with partners to ensure that students leave the college with a wide range of skills that enhance their personal lives and work-readiness. For example, the local Rotary Club members work closely with the college to provide up to 70 students with support, coaching and constructive feedback when applying for and interviewing for mock-job vacancies.
- A high proportion of students progress to higher-level courses within the college or to employment. The proportion of level 3 students progressing to higher education has increased over the past three years and is above the national trend. The large majority of level 3 students who progress to employment gain jobs in the sectors that are a regional priority, for example, business, administration and law, and engineering and manufacturing technologies.
- In 2013/14, the proportion of students completing their college-based courses and achieving their qualifications was broadly at the same rate as at the previous inspection. The very large majority of students achieved their level 2 and level 3 vocational qualifications; the proportion of students successfully achieving high grades at level 3 was high. Most A-level students achieved their qualification; however, too few achieved high grades. A small minority of AS-level students left the college without completing their qualifications.
- During this current academic year, staff have been successful in ensuring that students stay on to complete their courses. Improved advice and guidance have led to a significant reduction in the number of students changing course. As a result, college data show that the proportion of students who complete their course has increased across all subject areas and is now high. Students make good progress in lessons. Teachers provide students with helpful feedback on their written work. To determine the progress that students make while at college, based on

their prior achievement at Key Stage 4, managers make good use of the nationally published and verified 'value-added' data to track the progress of each learner. These data show that students studying at levels 2 and 3 on the very large majority of courses are on track to achieve their qualifications and the large majority of the more able students are on target to exceed the grades expected of them.

- Senior managers and staff have developed a culture of high expectations and continuous improvement. Many students arrive at college early to take advantage of the self-study facilities that are open from 7am. During the inspection, students spoke positively about the important focus by staff on independent learning, study and research skills, and how well these would prepare them for employment or further study.
- Staff monitor students' attendance, punctuality and progress more precisely than at the previous inspection. As a result, students' attendance has improved in each subject area, and is now good. Punctuality to lessons is good.
- Students' skills development is good. In visual arts, BTEC year 1 graphics students demonstrate very good desktop design skills; they develop relevant numeracy skills by calculating dimension and ratios when designing business cards. BTEC law, A-level English and A-level religious studies students develop strong debating skills; they confidently present their arguments and listen carefully to their opponents' views before responding articulately in lessons.
- College leaders have effectively implemented study programmes. All of the students on study programmes who did not achieve a GCSE at grade C in English and/or mathematics at school study the qualification, including those with low achievements before starting college. The proportion of students successfully achieving grade C or better in 2013/14 was very high in English and high in mathematics compared to students in similar colleges. Staff work effectively in partnership with the local further education college and local employers to provide most students with work experience outside of the college and realistic client briefs. However, a small minority of A-level students do not undertake external work experience.
- In the previous academic year, the college has been successful in reducing the gaps in achievement for some, but not all, of the diverse groups of students. Students with learning difficulties, particularly the large cohort of dyslexic students, perform very well. This is as a result of successful help and support by staff and the careful monitoring of performance by managers. However, White British students and students with a disability do not perform quite as well as their counterparts at college.

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| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
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- As part of this inspection, inspectors sampled and graded a proportion of the college's provision in the subject areas of English; visual arts; history, theology and religious studies; and business and law. They also sampled, but did not grade, a substantial proportion of the college's other provision.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are predominantly good. They have improved significantly since the previous inspection, enabling an increasing proportion of students to progress and achieve successfully. The college's own robust scheme of lesson observation and the work of inspectors identify that there is still too little outstanding teaching and learning; the small minority that requires improvement is much reduced and very little is inadequate.
- Teachers, many of whom are new to the college since the previous inspection, successfully promote the college's improvement strategy, 'Teaching, learning and assessment the Stoke 6th Way'. This particularly emphasises learning, students' progress, high expectations of students and suitable challenge for students in lessons. They have been very well supported to do this by the college's enhanced commitment to the leadership of teaching, learning and assessment, by the work of lead practitioners and through the significant increase in the sharing of good teaching and learning practice.
- Teachers work well to get the best from their students, many of whom come to the college after demotivating experiences at school. A much improved and rigorous, externally moderated

assessment of students' work and progress, together with good target-setting for their improvement, helps motivate students to achieve high standards. Teachers' feedback to students on marked work is much improved since the previous inspection and students mostly understand what they need to do to improve their work.

- Teachers mostly have a good understanding of their students' abilities and needs and often plan, and execute lessons, which meet students' varying needs well. In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not use this information fully to provide sufficiently interesting and challenging activities for all students, leading to slower progress.
- On the many occasions where teachers clearly set the scene for their lesson and make clear their high expectations of students, students make the best progress, and learn well. They are used to the high standards set by their teachers and respond well to the wide variety of tasks planned by them, developing their problem-solving skills, independent learning and team working. More teaching and learning would be outstanding if all teachers fully extended all their students through challenging tasks. Where lessons still require improvement, teachers are often content to accept students' perceptions that 'just achieving' is good enough.
- Many teachers make excellent use of the college's good information and learning technology (ILT) resources to improve the quality of their lessons. They are often skilled in using interactive technologies, such as digital whiteboards, to enhance learning. In the best lessons, teachers plan successfully for students to use ILT as a matter of course.
- Teachers know their students well. The care and support of students are excellent, precede their arrival at college and extend beyond their leaving. Students often identify this as the most positive aspect of their life at college. Teachers provide good support, set within the context of building students' independence and resilience, equipping them well for further study and employment. Staff quickly take action to meet any particular support needs identified for students.
- Staff provide good initial advice and guidance; as a result, students join the most appropriate course, not only for their immediate needs but also for their longer-term ambitions. Transition arrangements for pupils joining the college and links with schools are very good and help students settle quickly and make good progress.
- Managers introduced weekly group tutorials and individual tutorials, to remedy the inconsistent application of the pastoral system noted at the previous inspection. These, and the work of the new progress coaches, have not been entirely successful. Managers responded promptly to students' identification of the damaging inconsistencies in the quality of tutorials and well-devised improvement plans are well advanced.
- Staff assess students' skills in literacy and numeracy at the start of their courses; they use the results well to ensure that each receives a tailored teaching programme to help them gain or improve their GCSE grades. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics have improved, as part of the college's overall strategy for improvement, but also because of sound actions taken by managers in these two subject areas. However, teaching and learning are not consistently successful in sufficiently improving students' skills across all courses, especially in mathematics. Specialist teachers are working more closely with subject teachers to help them develop better students' English and mathematics.
- Student services staff provide appropriate and effective independent careers guidance. Advice for students for either higher education progression or for employment is good, contributing well to the college's high progression rates. Work experience opportunities for students are appropriate, but managers want to increase the percentage of A-level students taking up the opportunities. This will be associated with a more robust overall college scheme for employability training.
- Teachers often promote themes of equality and diversity well within the curriculum, but this is more evident in some subject areas than in others. Students study in an inclusive and supportive environment and are respectful of each other and of their teachers and other staff.

English**16-19 study programmes**

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in English are good because:

- AS- and A-level achievement is consistently high and high-grade achievement at GCSE is well above average; inspection evidence shows that most students are making good progress and significant progress has been made in tackling the inconsistencies in teaching and learning identified at the previous inspection
- a very high proportion of A-level students progress to higher education and where they progress to employment, most progress to sectors that are a regional priority; progression from GCSE to AS-level and from AS-level to A-level is also very high
- learning is well planned and meets the individual needs of students well; it is well sequenced and supports the development of good reading, writing and speaking skills
- in the majority of lessons, teachers encourage high aspirations and expectations of students, who enjoy their lessons and work effectively with their peers and independently
- in A-level year 2 lessons, most students show a good grasp of language and of literature concepts and methods; they demonstrate high-level thinking skills and competently apply critical theory and research evidence to their discussions and written answers; for example, students make sophisticated comments, linking issues explored in literary texts to contemporary examples when evaluating gender roles
- the innovative use of reading periods at the beginning of GCSE English language lessons is working well to develop better reading and comprehension skills; students also widen their vocabulary and make further progress by completing individualised reading tests; they improve their standards of reading and their writing skills
- assessment feedback is comprehensive and provides students with clear guidance and encouragement on how to improve and achieve higher grades; students talk positively about the high quality of assessment feedback, which helps to build their confidence and their literacy skills
- in the majority of lessons, teachers use highly effective questioning, to challenge, probe, check and extend learning; they regularly and successfully encourage students to use technical language, to apply literary methods and to develop good research and study skills
- teachers encourage good relationships between students and create a respectful and inclusive environment; carefully chosen small groups of students and group tasks are used well as part of collaborative learning activities, which promote peer interaction, cooperation and the development of good communication and presentation skills
- GCSE students speak very positively about the support they receive from the college careers team, which helps them to make effective decisions about future choices; students speak positively about the beneficial impact of the individual guidance, subject support and achievement monitoring they receive from accelerated learning coaches and progress coaches.

Teaching, learning and assessment in English are not yet outstanding because:

- in a small minority of lessons, teachers do not provide sufficiently interesting and challenging activities and fail to meet the needs of all students, leading to slower progress for a few
- in a few instances, teachers' written feedback on marked work contains occasional punctuation errors; in addition, a small minority of students' written errors are not highlighted by teachers and corrective practice is not always taking place

- occasionally, teachers use simple and creative activities to develop numeracy skills well, but overall, teachers insufficiently incorporate numeracy into English lessons.

Visual arts

16-19 study programmes

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in visual arts are good because:

- students are consistently successful in achieving their main qualifications and the current cohort is making good progress; most students progress to higher education or employment
- the well-maintained, well-respected accommodation and specialist resources provide a stimulating environment for teaching and learning to flourish and to support very good skill acquisition and development
- teachers, who are well qualified and display good subject knowledge, have high expectations and motivate their students well; teachers give much of their own time in encouraging and supporting students to realise their potential
- teachers' use of specific, time-constrained targets is effective in lessons, and students respond well to pressure; standards and target grades are measured only against the higher assessment criteria, resulting in high levels of challenge for students
- assignments are challenging and, wherever possible, vocationally based, enabling students to understand better the world of employment; for example, graphics students are working with a local employer in designing the website and brand identity for her children's clothing company
- teachers and students use ILT, the virtual learning environment (VLE) and portable technologies very well to enhance teaching and further understanding; the teachers' confident grasp of whiteboard technology enables students to identify clearly the key features for learning and to increase achievement levels in lessons; students are also accomplished in applying these and numeracy skills to their design work
- students display good skill acquisition; sketchbooks reflect the boldness of their thinking and the execution of some exciting publicly displayed figurative work indicates their depth of research
- teachers' assessment of students' work and progress is exhaustive in its detail and they identify clear actions for improvement; students know precisely how well they are achieving and what further action is required to improve; they critically and sensitively check each other's work
- students and teachers are mutually polite and respectful towards each other; teachers celebrate equality and diversity well; for example, in an art lesson students had to attempt to draw by holding the pencil in their mouths, toes or in their 'opposite' hand with the teacher subsequently highlighting practitioners with disabilities who have successful careers.

Teaching, learning and assessment in visual arts are not yet outstanding because:

- although students are making good progress, a small minority are not yet achieving to their full potential with regard to high grades
- the full promotion of students' assured and sophisticated presentational skills is currently underdeveloped
- teachers are insufficiently rigorous in their non-negotiable insistence on the correct use of English in displays, assignments and annotations; in a few cases, teachers' written feedback to students includes spelling errors.

History, theology and religious studies**16-19 study programmes**

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in history and religious studies are good because:

- outcomes for the current cohort of students are good which reflect their skills, standards and progress
- in history and religious studies students make good progress against their initial target grades; students have high standards of work and are developing good personal and social skills; progression to further study at higher levels is high
- information, advice and guidance are good leading to high numbers of students completing their course; students enjoy their studies in history and religious studies and make good progress in lessons
- in history and religious studies, students develop skills that are useful in gaining employment; for example, debating, reasoning and analytical skills are consistently good
- the standard of students' work is good, assessment of work is frequent, and feedback is helpful in supporting students to improve their learning; in religious studies, students talk confidently about how well they have progressed as a result of good-quality feedback from teachers
- in history, teachers make good use of external moderators to provide a rigorous challenge to their marking; as a result, assessment practices are robust and judgements secure
- students receive good support from teachers; in one religious studies lesson, the teacher sensitively dealt with questions about war and faith, successfully allowing expression of ideas before challenging students' thinking
- good use is made of accelerated learning coaches to support students' achievement and aspiration; for example, in history, they effectively support one student to follow her love of the subject, while also studying subjects to enable progress to higher education to study mechanical engineering. Progress coaches have been used to good effect by managers, and as a result, students' attendance and performance have improved
- staff use their good links with a range of external organisations to develop further students' awareness of the workplace and further study opportunities; for example, students attended the local university to explore health care and ethics and staff effectively used the visit to link their subject to wider employment opportunities
- students develop good levels of English skills; they competently use a wide vocabulary and demonstrate a good understanding of subject-specific terminology; in history, students confidently discussed 'appeasement' and considered the complexities of international diplomacy in 1938
- in both history and religious studies, teachers consistently reinforce correct spelling, punctuation and grammar; students have well-developed listening and discussion skills.

History and theology and religious studies is not yet outstanding because

- in history and religious studies, a small minority of students are not able to apply mathematical concepts, nor do they understand the relevance of developing this skill in their subject area
- in a small minority of teaching and learning, teachers do not plan well enough for the range of students' achievement before starting college and they do not always encourage students to make the progress they are capable of
- students have insufficient opportunities to engage in a wide range of external work placements.

Business management, law and legal services**16-19 study programmes**

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in business management and law and legal services are good because:

- the large majority of current students are making good progress, although this is not yet fully reflected in the historic performance data
- students value highly the good support they receive from their teachers and support staff both in lessons and outside; they benefit from one-to-one consultations, grade-booster classes, catch-up workshops and access to a dedicated accelerated learning coach, which help them to improve their grades
- teachers assess students' work regularly, using a rigorous assessment process and they provide detailed feedback on how to develop their skills and knowledge to remedy any shortfall; for example, business students are given specific targets to improve their analytical and evaluative written responses so that they can score higher marks in exams
- teachers track and monitor students' progress extremely well; students are fully aware of their current progress and understand what they need to do to improve
- students make effective use of ILT to enhance their learning outside of lessons; vocational students submit their assignments electronically and receive timely, critical feedback from teachers; academic students use the well-resourced VLE to develop further their examination skills
- information, advice and guidance are good; all students have a detailed consultation with course leaders during enrolment to ensure that they join the right course; the vast majority progress to higher education or into employment after completing their qualifications
- students benefit from a stimulating range of business and law visits and speakers; for example, level 2 business students attend enterprise days at the Michelin factory and law students participate in mock-courtroom events organised by the University of Derby; the majority of students spend a week on external work placements during the summer term
- the development of students' literacy in lessons is good; for example in a law lesson, students confidently prepared for and engaged in a lively debate about the sentences given by the courts to famous football players
- business students demonstrate good numeracy skills in their work.

Teaching, learning and assessment in business management and law and legal services are not yet outstanding because:

- a small minority of teachers do not offer students sufficiently challenging activities and do not set sufficiently high expectations for all students
- a few teachers do not check all students' understanding in lessons thoroughly enough as a result of asking too many undirected questions
- a small minority of current students do not meet their learning targets, which are based on their achievement before starting college.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, a staff restructure has led to a new senior leadership team, and new staff have replaced one fifth of teachers. Leaders and managers have developed a culture

of high expectations and continual improvement. They have clearly articulated the new expectations for teachers and support staff and have successfully implemented a number of new teaching and learning initiatives. As a result, teaching, learning and assessment have improved significantly, the number of students who stay on to complete their course has increased and students are making good progress. A small minority of staff do not yet fully understand their role in achieving the college's ambitions but managers swiftly and supportively tackle this.

- Managers and staff share the responsibilities for improvements at all levels in the college. For example, the Principal leads the moderation of the regular, college-wide assessment of students' work, and external moderators help to ensure that the process is sufficiently rigorous. Most teachers use the new course- and student-based management information well in the planning of teaching and assessment, although not all teachers use this to the same high standard.
- Well-informed governors take a very active role in improving outcomes for students. They provide a good level of scrutiny and challenge to senior managers, particularly regarding the impact of actions taken. Governors are very clear about the current and future position of the college in relation to its educational contribution to the City of Stoke. The new strategic plan and the curriculum offer are very well designed and incorporate the local enterprise partnership skills priorities; as a result, most learners progress to higher-level courses or to employment.
- Leaders and managers have taken effective improvement actions that have had a significant impact; they successfully support the improvement of the very few staff whose performance is below the expected standard. They adopt a firm but supportive approach when coaching the students who are most at risk of not achieving, in order to help them to achieve their educational goals. The induction of new staff into the college is thorough, the performance management process is rigorous and comprehensive; the sharing of good practice in lessons and in the support of students is effective. As a result, teaching, students' attendance and their punctuality have improved, and are now good; the in-year achievement data show that students are making good progress.
- Very effective and realistic evaluation of what the college offers students is driving improvements. The new quality improvement measures have helped to ensure that staff at all levels are accountable for the performance of students. The self-assessment report is accurate and evaluative, and inspectors agree with the college about the few areas where the rate of improvement has been too slow, for example, the inconsistent impact of the progress coach on a minority of students' progress.
- Quality improvement action plans are detailed. Leaders and managers closely track the progress against the actions. However, sometimes the progress monitoring describes the activity taken rather than measuring the impact on improving students' outcomes. As a result, there is variation in the rate of progress made by a minority of students and a minority of teaching is inconsistently challenging, both of which points managers recognise.
- Managers have successfully introduced all aspects of the study programmes so that the levels and range of courses provide students with relevant and clear progression routes to employment, training or higher education. The curriculum offer is carefully mapped to the local enterprise partnership's skills priorities; students often study both vocational and academic courses and maximise their progression opportunities. Most students undertake work experience outside of the college and/or work on realistic briefs set by local employers. Managers recognise that the development of students' English and mathematics skills is essential when supporting them to succeed. A new reading improvement scheme is in operation and this is beginning to have a positive impact on students' skills.
- Staff manage courses very well; learning resources and specialist equipment are good. Accommodation is of a very high standard, is well maintained and students respect it. The financial health of the college is strong. Managers' projections of income accurately inform reports to the governing body, so that possible future risks to financial viability are fully considered and corrective action identified and taken.
- Managers' strong partnership working results in an improved experience for students. Managers are involved in a city enrichment programme, which includes a project to develop the oracy

skills of the pupils in local schools. They work hard to ensure the strategic coherence of post-16 provision and progression opportunities in Stoke, as part of a collaborative network of providers. Managers work with the local further education college, resulting in the sharing of good teaching practice, of teaching and support staff, of learning resources and of work-experience placements.

- Through the publication of an equality scheme, the college meets its statutory duty. Managers take positive action to involve a diverse community, and the social cohesion within the college community is strong. Staff have successfully reduced the gaps in achievement for most but not all of the diverse groups of students. However, a minority of students do not perform as well as their counterparts. The promotion of equality and diversity in teaching and learning is mostly good.
- The management of safeguarding is good; the college's safeguarding of all students is good. Appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and the college provides students with a safe and welcoming environment. Strong practice exists in supporting looked-after children and students aged 14 to 16. Staff ensure that no safeguarding concerns go undetected and that the documentation regarding the small number of incidents is detailed and correctly referred to appropriate agencies. Leaders and managers take a proactive approach to the 'Prevent' agenda. Good arrangements are in place to teach students about the dangers of radicalisation. Staff work closely with relevant local agencies, they are well trained and as a result, staff confidently and competently handle potentially extremist views from a very few students.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

| Provider name | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 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 | N/A | 2 | 2 | N/A | 2 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Outcomes for learners | 2 | N/A | 2 | 2 | N/A | 2 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment | 2 | N/A | 2 | 2 | N/A | 2 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management | 2 | N/A | 2 | 2 | N/A | 2 | N/A | N/A | N/A |

| Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Grade |
|---|-------|
| English | 2 |
| Visual arts | 2 |
| Theology and religious studies | 2 |
| History | 2 |
| Business management | 2 |
| Law and legal services | 2 |

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|--|--------------------------------|-----|----------|-----|---------|-----|-------------------|-----|--|
| Type of provider | Sixth form college | | | | | | | | |
| Age range of learners | 14+ | | | | | | | | |
| Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year | 1,600 | | | | | | | | |
| Principal/CEO | Paul Mangnall | | | | | | | | |
| Date of previous inspection | January 2014 | | | | | | | | |
| Website address | www.stokesfc.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 | 97 | N/A | 1,479 | 25 | 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 | 7 | | | | | | | | |
| Full-time | 7 | | | | | | | | |
| Part-time | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Number of community learners | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Number of employability learners | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Funding received from | Education Funding Agency (EFA) | | | | | | | | |
| At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors: | None | | | | | | | | |

Contextual information

The City of Stoke-On-Trent Sixth Form College is a medium-sized college. It relocated to a new building near to the city centre and railway station in August 2010 as part of the city's University Quarter regeneration scheme. The Science Centre, shared with the university, opened in September 2012. The college serves an area of considerable deprivation. The proportion of the local population with no qualifications is higher than the national average and the proportion holding intermediate-level qualifications or above is lower than that nationally. The unemployment rate in the city is higher than that of Staffordshire and that of the West Midlands. Nearly 7% of young people in the city are not in education, employment or training which is higher than the regional or national average. The proportion of pupils aged 16 in Stoke-on-Trent who achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics in 2014, is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Denise Olander HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the deputy principal as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners; 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 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:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012

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