

# King Edward VI College Nuneaton

## Sixth form college

<b>Inspection dates</b>		<b>28 April–1 May 2015</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good-2</b>
	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:

- teaching, learning and assessment are good, most students make the progress expected of them and their attendance at lessons is very good
- teachers use a wide range of strategies to maintain students' interest during lessons, check their learning and ensure that the needs of individual students are met
- a high proportion of A-level and vocational students successfully complete their qualifications
- staff carefully monitor the progress of students and provide quick support to keep them on track
- students receive good advice to enrol them on the right programme and to plan their next steps after college; students' progression to higher education and employment is very good
- managers' evaluation of teaching and learning is accurate and they have implemented improvement plans effectively to raise standards in most areas
- students make very good use of the virtual learning environment (VLE) and optional workshops to continue learning outside lessons
- students develop very good personal and social skills through their participation in charity and sporting events, and as ambassadors and peer mentors
- managers have carefully extended the range of vocational subjects the college offers, which has broadened students' future career and study options, while maintaining a focus on advanced-level education.

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

- too few students achieve A\* to C grades in GCSEs in English and mathematics
- too few staff make enough use of work placements and visits to employers to give students a sufficient knowledge of the work place
- in a small minority of teaching and learning, tasks are not challenging enough for the more able students
- in a small minority of subjects, managers have not been successful in raising standards.

## Full report

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

- Continue the improvement in teaching, learning and assessment so that more is outstanding by ensuring all staff have high aspirations for students, they set challenging tasks and provide feedback consistently on marked work so that more students achieve or exceed their target grades.
- Maintain the improvements made in the teaching of English and mathematics so that a higher proportion of students achieve A\* to C grades in GCSEs in these subjects.
- Increase the use of work placements and visits to employers to give students a better understanding of the workplace. Increase the availability of activities outside the classroom to broaden students' interest in, and understanding of their subjects.
- Strengthen further the skills and capacity of all managers in order to raise standards in the few remaining areas of underperformance.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- Almost all students at King Edward VI College are aged 16 to 18 and all are full-time on study programmes at level 3. Approximately one third of students take A-level qualifications and just under two thirds take AS-level qualifications. Nearly half of the students combine academic subjects with vocational qualifications. A very small number of students also complete GCSEs in English or mathematics. The subjects with the highest number of enrolments are science, English, business, psychology and sociology.
- Most students on A-level courses successfully complete their qualifications. At AS-level, the proportion of students who successfully complete their courses has risen sharply since the previous inspection and is now around the rate for similar colleges. The majority of students achieve the grades expected of them given their prior attainment. Teachers monitor students' performance assiduously, and in the current year students are making good progress in most subjects. Students' attendance in lessons is very good; they arrive on time and ready to work.
- A high proportion of students successfully complete qualifications in the recently introduced vocational courses, especially in applied science, business studies and sport where students' achievement and their attainment of high grades are very good.
- A very small number of students enrol on GCSE English and mathematics courses and pass rates in these subjects are too low. New management arrangements and the recruitment of new staff have improved provision and current students make good progress.
- The large majority of teachers have a strong focus on improving students' skills in English and mathematics. Consequently, students write accurately and are effective oral communicators. They use mathematics skills well, for example within science subjects, and teachers ensure they can undertake tasks such as statistical analysis in subjects including sociology and psychology.
- Managers carefully monitor the performance of different groups of students and few performance gaps exist. Staff's actions to raise the achievement rates for males are proving successful, and include approaches such as ensuring that male students make better use of library resources. No significant gaps exist in the performance of students from different backgrounds. Students who need extra help with their studies receive effective support and they achieve as well as their peers.

- Most students produce work of a high standard. Their well-written essays show they have a good command of the subjects they are studying. For those studying practical subjects, such as art, they underpin their coursework by thorough research and creatively present their findings as online 'blogs'. In science, mathematics and information technology, teachers make effective use of regional and national competitions to raise students' aspirations and standard of work.
- Students have a strong commitment to the local community and a large number volunteer for organisations including a local hospice. Students develop their responsibility for others as student ambassadors, and in science, mathematics and the arts subjects a large number of second year students act as mentors for those in the first year.
- In business, a minority of students undertake excellent internships at a range of employers. Teachers in a majority of subjects successfully use their good partnerships with employers to raise students' awareness of job opportunities, for example in professional photography and motorcycle engineering. However, staff do not arrange work placements and other direct experiences of work consistently for all students, and this requires improvement.
- Most students are successful in gaining places at university or going directly into jobs when they leave college. A small but growing number also go on to advanced and higher apprenticeships.

<b>The quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	Good
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- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved since the previous inspection, and are now good. Consequently, most students successfully complete their qualifications and make good progress in most subjects. Staff have high expectations of students, who respond well and work diligently in lessons and in their own time. Teachers' frequent and thorough assessment of students' progress in achieving aspirational target grades motivates them to achieve high standards.
- Most teachers make good use of information about students' prior attainment to plan lessons which meet their individual needs. They use a range of strategies well to check students' understanding, and then to plan the next stage of learning. Teachers ensure that students have a good knowledge of the criteria for assessment in examinations. Students use this well to plan their revision and to set their own targets to ensure they meet these criteria.
- Since the previous inspection, teachers have improved markedly their monitoring of students' progress, which they do very effectively. Teachers and tutors have a thorough overview of the performance of all students, and students know how well they are doing in relation to their target grades. The large majority of tutors provide swift and helpful guidance to ensure that students who fall behind catch up.
- Teachers confidently use a variety of interactive tasks, such as peer assessment, group and pair work, through which students maintain their motivation and interest in lessons and learn well collaboratively. Students have good communication skills, apply their analytical thinking well and know how to solve problems.
- Students make extensive use of the VLE to continue learning outside lessons. For example, in geography, students make good use of revision seminars on the web. In most subjects, students' attendance at optional workshops that teachers run in lunch breaks and at the end of the day improves their progress further.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not set tasks that are challenging enough for the most able students. In a few cases, teachers do not check students' understanding sufficiently, particularly for the less able, thereby limiting their progress.
- Students receive good support from college staff, both within and outside the classroom. Students make very good use of the library, where the staff provide highly effective support to help students develop their study skills. Staff identify quickly those students who need extra

help to achieve their qualifications. These students receive effective in-class and one-to-one support and achieve well.

- Teachers' written feedback on assessed work has improved since the previous inspection and it is now good. Most teachers give very detailed comments to students on their marked work and indicate mistakes in spelling and grammar. In most cases, students understand what they need to do to improve their work. A few teachers still provide feedback which has insufficient detail to guide students to improve.
- Managers have implemented a strategy to bring about improvements in the teaching of GCSEs in English and mathematics, and new teachers are having a positive impact. In both subjects, students in the current year make good progress, their attendance at lessons is high and they achieve well in the frequent assessments.
- Most teachers of academic and vocational subjects help students to improve their English and mathematics skills. Students use subject-specific terminology accurately, know how to write well-structured essays, and confidently use mathematical skills, such as setting out and calculating equations in chemistry. A small minority of teachers do not identify errors in students' spelling and grammar, resulting in a few students making repeated errors.
- Students receive good advice to help them select the combination of subjects which best suit their needs, and consequently most students stay to the end of their course. Transition arrangements from school to college for vulnerable students are good and as a result, they settle into the college well and are successful. Staff provide good advice on higher education and careers options, and have a strong focus on alerting students to apprenticeship opportunities.
- The college is an inclusive and supportive environment and staff promote diversity well. Teachers confidently manage discussions that broaden students' understanding of social issues. For example, archaeology students explore the ethics of displaying human remains in museums and consider how religious and cultural views may affect the acceptability of this practice. Through weekly tutorials students gain a secure understanding of wider themes such as staying safe, e-safety and avoiding extremism.

## Science

### 16-19 study programmes

Good

#### Teaching, learning and assessment in science are good because:

- the proportion of students who successfully complete AS- and A-level qualifications is high in most subjects; and where it has been low, for example in AS psychology, it is rising rapidly
- nearly all students on the newly introduced vocational qualification in applied science pass the qualification, around half with high grades
- teachers use their good subject knowledge well to plan lessons and use a range of effective learning activities that interest students and develop their self-motivation, leading to most making good progress; for example, in biology teachers use a range of activities so that students understand the relation between limb movements and brain function
- students have good practical skills and are competent in the safe use of laboratory equipment; vocational students in applied science work well together to carry out experiments in filtration and chromatography
- teachers are skilled at using strategies to check students' understanding of concepts learned, and use questions well so that students develop on each other's answers; for example, physics students extend their knowledge of the range of practical applications for the use of capacitors

- teachers assess students' knowledge carefully and plan lessons to ensure that any gaps in their understanding are covered in subsequent lessons to prepare them well for examinations; for example, chemistry students confidently answer questions on acid equations following a revision lesson
- teachers know the students well and use this information to provide challenging work for students of all abilities; they match students well during group and paired work so that students learn at a pace that is suited to them
- most students receive good feedback on their marked work that helps them to make progress and students have a good knowledge of the criteria for assessment so they know what they need to do to achieve high grades
- students' participation in regional and national competitions, such as the biology and chemistry Olympiads, raises their interest in, and knowledge of science.

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

- while the majority of students on AS- and A-level subjects achieve the grades expected of them in relation to their prior attainment, too few exceed their targets or achieve high grades
- a small minority of teachers do not take sufficient account of students' different abilities and do not provide a sufficient challenge to the more able, resulting in a slow pace to lessons in which students lose interest
- not all teachers provide sufficiently detailed feedback to students to help them improve their work.

<b>English</b>	
<b>16-19 study programmes</b>	Good

### Teaching, learning and assessment in English are good because:

- most students successfully complete their AS-and A-level subjects; pass rates have risen and are now very high for all subjects at level 3
- teaching, learning and assessment have improved since the previous inspection, and consequently current students make good progress relative to their prior attainment
- teachers share their passion for English with students, which is summed up in their mantra 'it's not about literature; it's about life', and students enjoy their lessons
- teachers know and support their students very well and are ambitious for them to be successful, which motivates students to make additional effort; for example, attendance rates at optional workshops are high
- teachers make good use of strategies to check and further extend students' knowledge; for example, through the use of probing questions students develop on their early responses and gain a sophisticated understanding of linguistic and literary features with accurate use of technical terminology
- teachers give students the confidence to express their own opinions, to argue a case with appropriate justification and link their study of English to other subjects; for example, students connect themes within their study of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* to aspects of religious studies
- students make very good use of the large amount of resources that teachers place on the VLE to help them with the preparation for examinations

- teachers' comments on AS- and A-level marked work help students to understand what they need to do to improve and make good reference to examination board criteria so that students know how to achieve high grades
- teachers explore equality and diversity issues well in lessons; for example, students understand the impact of the use of politically correct language when considering gender stereotypes.

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

- of the very small number of students who study GCSE English, too few achieve A\*-C grades; while improvements are taking place in the current year, teaching of this subject is an area for further development
- teachers make limited use of activities outside the classroom to further motivate and inspire students, such as cultural visits or offering opportunities for creative writing and debating
- in a few lessons, activities are rushed and teachers do not adequately check students' progress in order to plan the next stage of learning
- in a small minority of cases, teachers do not set challenging enough tasks or targets for the more able students to help them achieve the highest grades.

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

Good

- Since the previous inspection, governors, senior leaders and staff have implemented well-considered actions to raise students' aspirations and improve their experience at the college. Governors' and senior leaders' strategic priorities focus sharply on enabling students to make the best progress possible.
- Governors bring a wide range of suitable expertise to the college. They have high levels of commitment and know the college's strengths and areas for improvement well through their link-governor roles and their participation in curriculum reviews. Recent streamlining of the corporation committee structure has strengthened governors' ability to check performance, and they offer sustained and effective challenge and support to senior managers. Governors and managers have managed the college's finances well in order to bring about steady improvements in accommodation and learning resources, which are good.
- Managers implement effectively the performance management and appraisal of staff. Senior managers have taken decisive action to improve teaching, learning and assessment. They have strengthened the coaching and staff development of teachers and where necessary, they use rigorous procedures to tackle under-performance. They have provided coaching to middle managers to improve their management of subject areas. These actions have led to marked improvement in the large majority of subjects. Managers recognise that work still needs to take place to resolve remaining aspects of less effective management and where students' achievements are lower in a few subjects.
- Managers use the scheme for observing teaching, learning and assessment well to support teachers' professional development. This forms part of a comprehensive process of annual health checks carried out in each faculty, resulting in evaluative reports and focused action plans. Teachers appreciate and make good use of the opportunities available to develop their expertise further and to share good practice, including working in collaboration with other sixth form colleges and school sixth forms.
- Managers' evaluation of the quality of provision is robust and accurate. They base their judgements on a wide range of evidence, including good use of feedback from students. Governors provide effective scrutiny and validation of the self-assessment report and managers'

judgements about the college. Managers at all levels make good use of action plans resulting from self-assessment in order to plan and monitor improvements.

- Managers liaise closely with other education providers, the local authority and the LEP to ensure that study programmes meet the needs of students and employers. They have carefully extended the range of vocational subjects the college offers, which has broadened students' future career and study options, while maintaining a focus on advanced-level education. Through strong partnerships with employers, staff have established a successful business academy which enables business students to undertake internships in local companies. This aspect of study programmes is under-developed in other subjects.
- The college is an inclusive environment characterised by high levels of respect between staff and students. Students appreciate the strong action by staff to deal swiftly and effectively with the few incidents of bullying that occur. Staff's actions to reduce the performance gaps for different groups of students identified at the previous inspection have mostly been successful. Staff support vulnerable students well and monitor their welfare and academic progress carefully.
- Arrangements for the safeguarding of students are good. Managers place a strong emphasis on promoting awareness of safeguarding matters and on ensuring that students feel safe. The college meets its statutory duties for safeguarding students and staff liaise well with external organisations including Local Safeguarding Children Boards. All staff and governors receive regular training in safeguarding, and staff and students complete an annual online training module for this area. All staff and students have a good awareness of issues related to radicalisation and extremism.



## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### King Edward VI College Nuneaton

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					
Outcomes for learners	2			2					
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2			2					
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2			2					

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>Science</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>2</b>



## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	Sixth form college							
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16-18							
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	1,072							
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Dr Esther Maughan							
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	December 2013							
<b>Website address</b>	www.kecnuneaton.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+
	0	0	0	0	1,036	8	0	0
<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+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	N/A							
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A							
<b>Part-time</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	N/A							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	N/A							

## Contextual information

King Edward VI College is the only sixth form college in Warwickshire. Most students come from Nuneaton and surrounding towns in north Warwickshire and west Leicestershire. The region has large electronics, engineering and distribution industries. Unemployment in Nuneaton is around the regional and national average. The proportion of young people in Nuneaton who achieve five or more A\*-C grades in GCSE examinations, including English and mathematics, is slightly lower than the regional and England averages. The proportion of adults without qualifications is well above the national average.

## Information about this inspection

<b>Lead inspector</b>	Rieks Drijver HMI
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One 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 learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all 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](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012)

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