Canterbury College

General further education college

Inspection dates		11–15 May 2015
Overall effectiveness	**This inspection:**	**Requires improvement-3**
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-3
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This college requires improvement because:

- while the majority of learners complete their qualifications successfully, too few make the progress of which they are capable

- attendance is low in too many subjects

- too little teaching, learning and assessment are good or outstanding

- standards of teaching and learning in discrete English and mathematics lessons vary too much; too few learners who enrol with low grades in these subjects achieve their qualifications

- recent strong leadership has raised expectations and promoted greater accountability among staff, but new arrangements have not yet raised standards sufficiently in all areas of the college.

This college has the following strengths:

- teaching, learning and assessment in visual arts are outstanding

- progression to further studies, employment and higher education is very good

- learners at both campuses value the very good support they receive, particularly those who have additional learning needs and/or complex personal problems

- people in the local community who face particularly challenging personal circumstances receive very good support to find employment, gain qualifications and progress to further education

- successful, and often innovative, partnership working with employers brings about a wide range of benefits for learners and ensures that courses and projects respond well to the needs of local and regional businesses

- learners play a significant role in the running of the college and benefit from a student union that promotes their views very effectively to senior leaders and managers

- managers and staff promote the safeguarding of learners outstandingly well.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that attendance is good across all areas of the college by taking firm actions to reinforce with learners the need to attend lessons, particularly in English and mathematics.

- Increase the amount of good and outstanding teaching, learning and assessment through further training for teachers; better sharing of good practice; a greater focus on meeting learners' individual needs in lessons; and setting and monitoring more challenging targets for learners.

- Improve English and mathematics provision across the college by building on the good practice seen during the inspection. Ensure that subject teachers take every opportunity to incorporate English and mathematics into their lessons, and ensure English and mathematics teachers make their lessons more vocationally relevant and interesting for learners.

- Managers at all levels must urgently implement action planning and monitoring in those subjects which perform poorly, so that learners have an equal chance of achieving successfully, and senior leaders' predictions result in improved success rates and higher grades for learners this year.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement

- The college offers a broad curriculum of vocational and academic courses, work-based training and programmes for unemployed people to help them find work. Full-time learners account for approximately 80% of students. The significant majority of learners are aged 16 to 18 and enrol on study programmes, mainly at levels 2 and 3. Most adult learners also enrol on courses at levels 2 and 3. Learners studying A levels account for 5% of the full-time provision. Numbers of both intermediate and advanced apprentices are increasing and currently number more than 400 learners. The highest numbers of enrolments are in construction, hairdressing, beauty therapy, and media. Enrolments on GCSE English and mathematics re-sit courses have increased very significantly over the past two years, numbering more than 6,000 at the time of the inspection.

- A significant proportion of learners face challenging personal circumstances. They come from areas of high deprivation around Canterbury and enrol at the college with few aspirations and a lack of self-belief. Their prior attainment at school is low. Staff work successfully to equip learners with the skills required to improve their self-confidence and to progress to higher-level courses and into employment. However, while the majority of learners overall achieve their qualifications, too few the progress of which they are capable.

- The proportions of learners who achieve their qualifications have improved over the past three years in line with the trend in national rates. However, success rates did not increase in 2013/14 from the previous year and require improvement, both for learners aged 16 to 18 on study programmes at all levels, and for their adult peers. In 2014/15 to date, the proportion of learners retained until the end of their courses has declined slightly from the same point in 2013/14.

- Learners on vocational courses in the majority of subject areas complete their qualifications successfully. Their success is most notable on programmes in science, animal care, engineering, visual arts and for learners on business-related courses. Learners' chances of success are much lower in a significant minority of curriculum areas that have large numbers of full-time enrolments, such as health and social care, motor vehicle, hairdressing and beauty therapy. Almost all of these subject areas remain resistant to the general, and sometimes significant, trend of improvement across the college. Too few learners make the progress of which they are

capable. The proportions of learners who achieve high grades are increasing, particularly on courses at level 3, but still require further improvement.

- Ensuring sufficient learners achieve their A-level qualifications remains a challenge for college managers. Significantly more learners now complete AS- and A-level qualifications successfully than was the case in previous years, but success rates overall still do not compare favourably with those of other colleges. Very few learners on academic programmes achieve their full potential based on their prior attainment, particularly those on AS levels, although senior leaders are confident in their predictions that learners' final grades in 2014/15 will be much better than in previous years.

- The very large rise in the numbers of learners studying GCSE English and mathematics over the past two years has presented managers and staff with significant resourcing problems, most of which they have overcome successfully. However, too few learners aged 16 to 18 achieved grades A* to C in these subjects in 2013/14, particularly in English. By contrast, success rates are much higher for adults, most notably for those studying GCSE mathematics. Although they compare favourably with the low and declining national rates, high grade success rates for older learners still require improvement. Progression rates to higher-level functional skills or to GSCEs are high. Attendance at both English and mathematics lessons has improved significantly in 2014/15, but is still low. The development of learners' English and mathematical skills alongside their main studies is variable and requires improvement.

- Attendance at lessons has increased slightly in 2014/15, but requires further improvement. It is high in subjects such as health and social care, engineering, animal care and visual arts but, by contrast, low on courses in motor vehicle, construction, information and communication technology (ICT), hairdressing and beauty therapy. Learners are generally punctual in arriving for lessons and those who attend regularly enjoy their studies.

- Behaviour is good in lessons and public areas and learners are courteous, treating each other and their teachers with respect. Social areas, such as 'The Street', provide learners with a lively focal point for exhibiting a wide range of high-quality work and the opportunity to participate in cross-college enrichment activities. Learners take part in a wide range of sporting activities to improve their health and well-being and self-confidence.

- Staff are resourceful and imaginative in the ways they expose learners to the world of work and develop their employability skills. Learners develop good sales and communication skills working in a number of the college's retail outlets, such as the floristry and stationery shops. Learners on courses for those with moderate or severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities run a very successful café in the college, offering free breakfasts to all learners. Learners from a wide range of subject areas develop their practical and employability skills well through organising and running successful events together for the local community on college premises. The college's job shop plays an important role in helping a very significant number of learners find part- and full-time employment and in encouraging them to consider apprenticeships as a career route once they complete their studies at college. However, too few learners take part in external work placements in a significant minority of curriculum areas.

- Innovative partnerships with organisations such as a local housing association and a nearby hospital enable learners to take part in a range of interesting and challenging projects that develop their employability skills, whilst at the same time bringing considerable benefits for local residents who have challenging personal circumstances.

- The college takes a very active role in supporting people in the local community to develop the employability skills they need to find work. Staff have helped a significant number of unemployed people to acquire the skills necessary to gain jobs for the first time with prestigious and well-known national companies based in Canterbury, whilst also equipping them with useful and relevant occupational qualifications. A successful partnership with the armed services has supported the achievement of English and mathematics qualifications for serving soldiers, enabling them to gain promotion, while also supporting transition for those who decide to leave the service.

- Senior managers have been largely successful in reducing any gaps in achievement that existed previously between different groups of learners. Male learners succeed as well as their female counterparts on most courses, although on programmes at level 1 their achievement rates are slightly lower than those of female learners. Learners with identified learning needs now achieve better than those without, having previously performed less well. The college does not attract significant numbers of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds, but those who do attend the college generally succeed as well as their White British peers.

- Until recently, the numbers of apprentices completing their training successfully in the workplace has not been high enough, with no consistent trend of improvement. The proportion of apprentices achieving their qualification in the planned timescale is increasing, but requires further improvement. Success rates in 2014/15 show significant improvement from the same period in the previous year and are high, most notably for the large cohort of apprentices aged 16 to 18. Advanced apprentices now achieve as well as their peers on intermediate apprenticeships. However, managers recognise the need to reduce the variations in performance that still exist between apprentices on different apprenticeship programmes.

- Progression to further study, employment and higher education was a strength at the previous inspection and is now very good. The very large majority of learners leaving the college last year had a positive outcome in terms of their recorded destinations, a significant increase on the previous year. Numbers of applications to higher education are increasing and the rate of progression from those applications to higher education is good. The number of learners who progress to higher level courses within the college is high, particularly for learners leaving entry level and level 1 courses.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement

- The college offers a broad range of programmes for learners aged 16 to 18 and adults aiming to gain employment and/or progress to higher education. The nine subject areas inspected and reported on represent a sample of the college's most significant provision. Inspectors evaluated study programmes, apprenticeships in engineering, and English and mathematics, reflecting current government priorities. They also inspected teaching, learning and assessment in most other subject areas.

- Teaching, learning and assessment are not yet sufficiently good to improve outcomes for all learners. Inspectors found wide variations in the standards of teaching across the college ranging from outstanding provision to that which they judged to be inadequate. Too much teaching focuses on the minimum requirements to complete qualifications and, consequently, learners do not make the progress of which they are capable. By contrast, training for the growing number of apprentices in the workplace has improved and is now good.

- Senior leaders have invested heavily in staff development aimed at improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and, as a result, teachers' skills are improving. Observations of learning carried out by college managers are broadly accurate and lead to actions that bring about improvements in classroom practice.

- Teachers assess learners' starting points in English and mathematics accurately and put in place prompt and specific support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teachers communicate well with learning support assistants to ensure they are deployed effectively in the classroom. Consequently, learners receive good support, enabling them to overcome their difficulties with learning and achieve at an equal rate to their peers. Support for learners outside the classroom from staff around the college is equally effective in ensuring that the high proportion of vulnerable learners, such as those who were formerly looked after children or who are in receipt of free meals, receive very timely assistance with problems in areas such as finance and accommodation.

- Teachers' planning of learning pays insufficient attention to ensuring that all learners make the progress of which they are capable. Too many teachers limit their planning to whole-group activities. As a result, more able learners become bored quickly and do not make the progress

expected of them, while those who struggle in lessons do not have sufficient time to deepen their understanding before moving to the next topic. Teachers do not always plan carefully enough which learners should be working together in small groups, to enable good progress for all.

- Teachers' use of regular assessment varies in its impact on learning and requires improvement. A minority of teachers use skilful questioning to probe understanding and check thoroughly that all learners understand key points. However, too many teachers use undirected questions which are answered by the more confident learners in the group; as a result, teachers do not always have a full awareness of what less vocal learners understand about important topics.

- Teachers' monitoring of progress against target grades and setting of short-term targets, although improved since the previous inspection, remain areas for improvement. Managers have recently introduced an electronic system for tracking learners' progress, the use of which they are monitoring on a regular basis. However, too many of the targets set are not specific enough to support learners' rapid development, or to ensure learners will achieve the minimum and aspirational target grades set for them.

- Teachers' development of learners' independent learning skills, using additional study time outside the classroom and homework, requires improvement. On a minority of courses, such as public services, learners receive frequent work in addition to their course assignments. In ICT and visual arts, learners use the virtual learning environment (VLE) well to support their development and understanding. However, in too many subjects, teachers do not routinely plan additional learning activities to extend learning outside the classroom. In their feedback on marked work, teachers do not give learners sufficient information on how to improve their work and achieve higher grades.

- Teachers' skills in incorporating English and mathematics into their vocational teaching vary too much and require improvement. In sports lessons, teachers regularly reinforce the use of the key words and phrases used within the industry; and in business administration, learners calculate profit ratios associated with floor space and product placement correctly. Classroom displays reinforce the importance of the correct use of subject terminology. However, a minority of teachers do not routinely correct learners' spelling and grammar in written work, resulting in learners repeating their mistakes.

- Learning resources are good. Computers and other information technology (IT) resources are widely available across both college sites. Learners often use them very effectively, for example when carrying out research using the internet in lessons. However, a minority of staff do not yet use interactive learning technologies to their full potential, thereby restricting learners' opportunities to experience a wider variety of learning experiences. The IT infrastructure is not always reliable and can slow the pace of learning in lessons.

- The development of employment skills for the majority of learners is good. Managers have developed a comprehensive and appropriate work experience programme that meets the needs of individual learners. For example, learners in visual arts take part in an extensive range of well-designed projects with employers and other organisations that develop their self-confidence and their understanding of customer requirements and professional skills. In construction, managers make good links with industry that enable learners to develop their skills on construction and renovation projects. However, in hairdressing, beauty therapy and bricklaying, staff do not reinforce with learners sufficiently the need to adopt the professional standards expected within their respective industries.

- Information, advice and guidance are good. Highly-qualified and experienced staff provide very good guidance to learners to help them choose the right course to match their interests and abilities. They offer a wide range of effective services to support learners during their time at the college, helping them to progress into employment or further education when they complete their studies.

- Staff promote a culture of respect and tolerance among learners, encouraging them to work well together and to be supportive of their peers. The promotion of equality and diversity themes through college-wide activities and eye-catching displays around both campuses is strong.

Teachers promote these themes well in the majority of lessons. However, not all teachers have the skills to make the most of opportunities to extend further learners' appreciation of diversity and equality matters relevant to their subject.

Public services **16-19 study programmes** **19+ learning programmes**	Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in public services require improvement because:

- too few learners achieve their qualifications or make the progress of which they are capable; success rates on the majority of courses are low, and declining

- teachers do not plan lessons well enough to ensure that all learners achieve to the best of their abilities; the pace of learning is too slow and teachers do not ensure that all learners understand instructions when completing tasks in lessons

- teachers do not routinely make sure that learning is taking place in the classroom; questioning techniques do not allow teachers to check learning in sufficient detail and do not ensure that all learners contribute to lessons that involve group discussions

- while learners enjoy visits to meet the Armed Forces and emergency services, and enjoy the opportunities the visits give to gain an insight into the world of work, only a minority take part in relevant work experience and develop their employability skills

- teachers do not routinely help learners improve their English skills during lessons

- activities to help learners improve their mathematical skills are ineffective; teachers do not ensure that all learners take part in tasks involving the use of mathematics or that they all understand the answers given by their peers before moving on to the next activity

- teachers do not manage the poor behaviour and attitudes of a minority of learners in lessons on level 1 and 2 courses, which disrupt learning for the whole class.

In public services the provider has the following strengths:

- teachers ensure that learners on courses at level 3 receive good personal support, which motivates them to succeed and makes sure they remain focused on learning

- learners on programmes at level 3 make good progress in lessons and develop a good range of vocational skills, such as team leadership, map reading and first aid; teachers are skilled at teaching learners how to improve their physical fitness

- teachers monitor learners' progress carefully and provide detailed feedback on written assignments, which ensures that learners understand the level of progress they are making and what they need to do to improve their work

- teachers use their good vocational experience and knowledge very effectively to link theory learning to vocational practice; in one particularly good lesson, the teacher used their expert knowledge of the Macpherson report to explain the changes in the way police record and investigate racially-motivated crime

- learners gain a good understanding of the importance of considering diversity when working in uniformed public services; the majority develop a detailed knowledge of human rights and the Equalities Act 2010, and can recognise the protected characteristics of people for whom they provide services, and the common misconceptions relating to race and religion that could lead to civil disorder.

Engineering and motor vehicle **16-19 study programmes** **19+ learning programmes** **Apprenticeships**	Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in engineering and motor vehicle require improvement because:

- too few college-based learners and apprentices in motor vehicle achieve their qualifications; the majority of learners on work-based engineering courses are similarly unsuccessful in gaining their apprenticeship

- teachers' strategies for challenging learners' poor punctuality require improvement; learners' poor attendance and lateness for lessons disrupt learning at the start of classes and have a detrimental effect on both their progress and that of their peers who do attend on time

- teachers' written feedback to learners requires improvement on college-based courses in motor vehicle, and on apprenticeships, to help them improve and reach their full potential; learners do not know what progress they are making, or what they need to do improve their practical skills and knowledge

- teachers do not help learners improve their English skills effectively, failing to correct spelling, punctuation and grammar in sufficient detail; for example, teachers did not correct the misspelling of the words 'thermostat' or 'gauge' in assessed work seen during the inspection

- teachers do not set targets for learners that enable them to make the progress required to achieve their full potential; targets set are too general and do not focus sufficiently on the development of learners' individual skills needs and knowledge requirements

- too many lessons fail to motivate learners or stimulate them to become interested in the topic being discussed; lessons do not start effectively, learners do not know what the objectives of the lesson are, and teachers do not link current and prior learning well enough

- in too many lessons, teachers' checking of learners' understanding is ineffective; lessons are often dominated by a small group of learners who answer all the questions, while their peers become bored and distracted.

In engineering and motor vehicle the provider has the following strengths:

- teaching and learning are good in college-based engineering lessons, leading to a high proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications; success rates are high in 2014/15 so far for those apprentices who have completed their training

- the majority of learners' work completed during practical lessons is good; teachers provide detailed individual demonstrations for learners to help them develop their practical skills, for example, learners take great care when measuring, marking out and filing their components in engineering classes

- high levels of mutual respect between learners have a positive impact on helping them to build their self-confidence; during a good engineering lesson, learners presented their findings on recent technological developments confidently to their peer group who listened attentively

- practical workshops are well designed, well equipped and maintained to a high standard, providing learners with a good learning environment

- teachers' particularly strong emphasis on the promotion of health and safety in lessons, and around the construction department, promotes a good work ethos and a very safe environment for learners to work in; teachers discuss the health and safety implications of activities in detail with learners at the start of all practical lessons

- teachers use their industry experience very effectively to stress to learners the importance of having good practical numeracy skills when working in the motor vehicle and engineering sectors, and they are adept at relating the use of mathematics to the working environment; for

example, in a good motor vehicle lesson, learners calculated the costs of the time taken for a garage to undertake repairs to cars and the bonuses they could earn by completing the job within a certain time

- staff provide good specialist support for learners with specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, to complete their qualifications successfully and to make good progress in practical and theory lessons.

Information and communication technology **16-19 study programmes** **19+ learning programmes**	Inadequate

Teaching, learning and assessment in information and communication technology are inadequate because:

- too few learners complete their courses successfully and attain their learning goals
- teachers fail to ensure that learners on courses at level 3 make sufficient progress in developing their technical skills, such as writing scripts to create dynamic web pages
- teaching in lessons is not sufficiently inspirational or interesting to encourage learners to attend lessons; as a result, attendance is low and too many learners choose to complete their work at home
- a lack of stability in the teaching staff restricts the pace of learning; until recently, managers have not been able to recruit enough teachers of sufficient ability to ensure learners receive high-quality teaching, particularly in the technical aspects of ICT courses, and, on occasion, learners have had to teach themselves parts of the curriculum
- problems with the IT infrastructure hamper learning; learners waste time waiting for computers to boot up, Wi-Fi access is unreliable, printers do not work in some classrooms and computers crash when running certain graphics packages
- in a minority of lessons, teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of learners, so that activities take place to suit the pace of the slowest learners and provide insufficient challenge for their more able peers; learners undertaking a spreadsheet exercise in one lesson waited for the whole class to complete initial simple steps, before they were able to continue with the task
- learners do not receive back their assessed work sufficiently quickly; as a result, they are not always clear about what work they have outstanding to complete their courses.

In information and communication technology the provider has the following strengths:

- those learners who attend lessons are polite, attentive and hard working, and support each other well; teachers encourage them to work independently, and they develop good customer service skills through initiatives such as working on the college's IT help desk
- teachers provide good individual coaching support for learners in the better lessons, helping them to develop good skills; learners on courses at level 1 use graphics software skilfully and confidently
- learners receive good advice on how to improve their written English skills; the majority of teachers focus strongly on accurate usage, and spelling of technical terms and carefully correct any errors in assessed work.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy **16-19 study programmes** **19+ learning programmes**	Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in hairdressing and beauty therapy require improvement because:

- in 2013/14, too few learners achieved their qualifications, particularly on courses for adults at level 2

- learners on programmes at level 2 who do not have sufficient clients have to model for each other; this does not provide them with a wide enough range of hair and skin conditions or treatment opportunities to be able to develop their practical skills fully, and they are unable to practise working to commercial timings on a regular basis

- a small minority of learners do not attend lessons regularly, or are late in arriving for classes, which has a detrimental effect on both their learning and the concentration of learners already present in the lesson

- learners do not have sufficient opportunities to develop retail and reception skills required by employers

- in a minority of lessons, teachers do not replicate the professional standards expected in industry; working areas are unhygienic and learners are unsuitably dressed to work in a salon environment

- teachers' expectations of learners are too low; teachers do not set learners timely, or sufficiently challenging, targets for improvement and, as a result, not all learners make the progress of which they are capable

- too few learners progress internally within the college to higher-level hairdressing and beauty therapy courses.

In hairdressing and beauty therapy the provider has the following strengths:

- teachers are adept at helping learners overcome the challenges they face in their everyday lives; learners value teachers' good individual support which has led to a reduction this year in the number of learners who leave their course early

- for those learners who attend lessons regularly, teaching is good; in media make-up classes, teachers monitor learners' progress closely so that learners know what to do to improve; learners develop very good skills in using bald caps and stencil and airbrush skills to create character designs

- learners benefit from good strategies used by teachers to develop their English and mathematical skills; learners preparing for a fashion show accurately calculate the cost of their materials and commercial time

- learners benefit from timely written feedback on their assignment work, particularly on courses at level 3 where learners are clear about what they need to do to improve their skills and gain higher grades.

Visual arts **16-19 study programmes** **19+ learning programmes**	Outstanding

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

- a high proportion of learners achieve their qualifications; they complete practical work to a high standard and develop excellent work-related, professional and reflective skills

- well-qualified and enthusiastic teachers have high expectations of learners and set thought-provoking and lively projects that learners enjoy; teachers update their own professional practice constantly and act as excellent role models for learners wanting to find employment

- learners work confidently in sketchbooks, explore visual language well, experiment with a range of media and evaluate their work thoroughly; they combine traditional and digital approaches very successfully, for example, graphic design learners use printmaking techniques to enhance digitally-generated artefacts

- excellent links with employers result in learners acquiring a wide range of skills that prepare them well for employment or further study; they develop self-confidence with clients, respond well to customer demands and work to professional standards

- learners participate in very productive work experience through exposure to a range of relevant and inspiring live projects; for example, learners' designs have been used to re-brand, and promote the regeneration of a local amusement park in Margate, to much local and national acclaim

- teachers ensure that all learners concentrate fully on their work throughout lessons, so that they work productively and develop very good reflective skills; learners benefit from extremely well-appointed studios populated with stimulating displays and relevant information

- teachers' target setting for learners is highly effective, and teachers monitor learners' achievement assiduously during review weeks to ensure they are making very good progress; they provide detailed commentary on learners' progress in lessons, and clear feedback on what learners have to do to improve their assessed work

- staff provide good support for learners; effective additional learning support ensures less able learners fulfil their potential, while good technical support is readily available for learners who are undertaking challenging projects involving the use of information and learning technology (ILT)

- initial advice and guidance are good; teachers ensure that learners are placed on the most appropriate course to meet their career aspirations, and at the right level, and excellent induction projects enable learners to develop new skills and confirm they have made the right subject choices

- teachers and learners use ILT very effectively in lessons to enhance learning and to develop important industry-related technical skills; teachers use social media in innovative ways to extend learning and to develop learners' independence

- learners receive detailed independent advice that enables them to progress in education or their career; rates of progression by learners to higher-level courses within the college are good, and the majority of learners leaving the college progress to employment or higher education

- teachers develop learners' English and mathematical skills effectively; for example, learners price up products, calculate ratios and make accurate measurements in life drawing lessons, take notes well and use glossary handbooks frequently to look up key art and design phrases and words

- teachers ensure that learners work in a respectful and safe environment; learners' understanding of others' lives and experiences is exemplary, and enables them to discuss sensitive subjects in a mature way, for example, learners confidently explored the portrayal of the female form and considered the work of the transvestite artist Grayson Perry.

Foundation English **16-19 study programmes** **19+ learning programmes**	Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in foundation English require improvement because:

- too few learners studying functional skills in English achieve their qualifications, and the proportion of GCSE learners achieving grades A* to C is similarly low, particularly among those aged 16 to 18. High-grade GCSE achievement is better among adult learners, but still requires improvement

- teachers' diagnostic assessments of learners' English do not lead to the setting of specific and measurable targets for individual learners to improve; as a result, learners do not develop their reading and writing skills sufficiently over time, or apply their learning well to their vocational area

- group profiles do not give sufficiently specific information about the learning needs of individual learners in lessons; as a result, teachers do not plan effectively to meet the needs of, for example, dyslexic learners or those for whom English is their second language

- learners who receive in-class additional assistance from support staff on their vocational courses do not receive the same level of support in their English lessons; consequently, they do not achieve their full potential

- programmes for GCSE learners on both sites do not allow sufficient time in lessons for all learners to study effectively towards their qualification; classes for GCSE learners on the Swale campus are too large; consequently, these learners do not benefit from individual coaching to improve their understanding of English.

In foundation English the provider has the following strengths:

- in a majority of functional skills lessons, learners enjoy a good range of interesting and varied learning activities that improve their confidence in using written and spoken English; for example, learners in one lesson contributed well to a discussion on sign language and differences in signing across the world that extended their understanding of different cultures

- standards of learners' written work are good; learners receive good extended written feedback on assignment work in GCSE English at the Canterbury site; learners' work on GCSE courses demonstrates clear improvement in the development of their examination technique

- learners develop their speaking and listening skills well; teachers use discussions effectively in lessons to identify, for example, elements of non-verbal communication and its importance when attending job interviews

- swift action to improve learners' achievements has led to the introduction of 'drop-in' workshops to provide additional tuition for GCSE learners at the Canterbury site; improved staffing and good monitoring of learners' progress are resulting in better in-year progress for GCSE learners at this campus.

Foundation mathematics **16-19 study programmes** **19+ learning programmes**	Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in foundation mathematics require improvement because:

- a low proportion of learners studying functional skills mathematics at levels 1 and 2 achieve their qualifications, and too few GCSE learners achieve grades A* to C, particularly those aged 16 to 18; success rates are much better for adult learners, but are still not high enough

- despite improvements this year, too many learners do not make sufficient progress from their starting points

- learners' attendance in a significant majority of lessons is low; while teachers have started to take more responsibility for improving attendance, their actions have yet to make a significant impact

- in a minority of lessons, teachers give learners work that is too easy and which prevents them from achieving their full potential; they do not give learners sufficient homework to reinforce and extend their learning or to help them develop their independent study skills

- teachers do not consistently provide written feedback for functional skills learners in their assessed work that is sufficiently helpful in identifying what they need to do to improve; as a result, learners do not understand how to correct and improve their work and, consequently, make slow progress

- teachers do not correct spelling consistently in learners' work and do not help learners sufficiently to develop an understanding of mathematics vocabulary in lessons; consequently, learners are not able to see how they can improve their spelling and do not understand the meaning of mathematics terms and how they can be applied to real-life situations

- teachers do not make sufficient use of relevant occupational examples to help learners understand the importance of mathematics in their subject area, or for their future careers.

In foundation mathematics the provider has the following strengths:

- teachers support learners well in lessons; they break down mathematical concepts about, for example, ratios and algebra in ways that are easy to understand, and provide learners with extra tuition and personal support where required

- learners' behaviour in lessons is good; learners are respectful of the difficulties faced by their peers in overcoming their fear of mathematics, and support each other and their teachers well in lessons

- in the majority of lessons, teachers plan learning activities that meet learners' needs well; carefully planned tasks motivate learners to participate productively and to build on their prior knowledge

- teachers assess learning effectively in the majority of lessons; they use good questioning techniques to probe learners' understanding of important topics fully, and are assiduous in asking learners to explain to their peers how they arrive at their answers when, for example, solving equations and expanding brackets

- teachers monitor learners' progress well; they check learners' progress over time through planned assessments and give learners individual targets to help them improve based on their results and, consequently, learners are able to focus precisely on what they need to do to develop their skills further

- teachers' accurate initial assessment of learners' skills ensures that learners study at the correct level to meet their individual needs; staff encourage learners successfully to progress to higher-level functional skills and GCSE courses in mathematics once they have completed their studies.

The effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement

- Leadership and management have improved since the previous inspection, but still require further improvement. Governors, senior leaders and managers have not yet ensured that all learners receive consistently good teaching, achieve their qualifications or make the progress of which they are capable. Recent changes in senior management and teaching staff, combined

with initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning and learners' outcomes, are starting to have a positive effect, but they have not yet had sufficient time to have enough impact on all learners.

- Senior leaders, managers and governors have high aspirations for learners and are committed to, and passionate about, improving the provision to achieve high standards. The actions for improvement they have taken have been carefully considered and have received clear support from teachers. Governors now receive frequent and comprehensive information on the performance of learners. As a result of recent improvements to this information and training in how to interpret it, they are able to ask challenging questions and hold senior leaders to account. Governors have confidence that the recently appointed senior managers, under the leadership of the Principal, will bring about the required improvement to the quality of provision and learners' outcomes.

- The Principal and governors have worked very successfully to ensure the financial stability of the college. They have created a modern and well-resourced environment for learning, including high-quality workshops and commercial outlets. The information technology (IT) infrastructure, which is not always reliable, is due for renewal in the near future.

- Senior managers have made changes to the procedures for performance management of teachers and managers to ensure that standards of teaching and learning improve more rapidly. Where teachers are underperforming, they have received support and training that have enabled them to improve; in a significant minority of cases, they no longer work at the college. Staff meet twice a year with managers to review formally their performance and agree actions for improvement. They use relevant evidence from lesson observations and learners' feedback well to set relevant actions for improvement. However, a small number of the actions agreed between managers and teachers are not sufficiently precise to allow teachers to grasp the ways they need to improve their teaching skills.

- Managers review the curriculum annually using feedback from employers, learners and local business groups. They have established good relationships with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and ensure that the curriculum reflects local and regional skills shortages, as well as the needs of the preponderance of small businesses in the area.

- Managers have worked effectively to ensure that study programmes for learners aged 16 to 18 are relevant and that learners have sufficient opportunities to improve their skills in English and mathematics. However, further improvement in the quality of English and mathematics teaching is required and a small minority of learners do not yet have sufficient access to high-quality work placements to help them develop their employability and practical skills.

- The management of work-based learning is good. Managers have been very successful in enrolling young people aged 16 to 18 on to apprenticeship programmes, reflecting current government priorities. They have carried out a detailed analysis of the problems affecting poorer performing subjects, and put in place more stringent procedures to ensure they recruit learners on to the right apprenticeship to best meet their needs and to help learners achieve their functional skills.

- Managers' and teachers' self-assessment of the provision is broadly accurate and uses a wide range of information and data to make judgements about the college's effectiveness. The improvement plan developed by managers as a result of self-assessment accurately identifies the themes required to improve the provision, but the actions are not always precise enough. Quality improvement arrangements for subcontracted courses are effective in contributing to learners' successful outcomes. Managers and governors use feedback from learners and the student union very effectively to keep abreast of what learners think about the way the college operates. Governors meet frequently with student union officers to help them understand better what it is like to be a learner at the college and what actions are required to improve the experience for all learners.

- Managers and teachers have established an environment in which they do not tolerate bullying; as a result, the incidence of bullying is very low. Where incidents do occur, managers deal with these swiftly and decisively. Learners know to whom they should report bullying incidents, and

are confident managers will deal with them appropriately. Learners do not yet have sufficient equality of opportunity, as their chances of successfully completing qualifications vary too much between different subjects. Teachers prepare learners well for living in modern Britain, but do not help all learners, especially those in the service industries, to improve their knowledge of how to deal with clients from different backgrounds and with different beliefs or those with disabilities.

- Safeguarding of learners is outstanding. Managers, teachers and support staff work assiduously to ensure that all learners, including those who have been in care, are safe and receive excellent support. They investigate all child protection, other safeguarding and welfare concerns thoroughly and make timely referrals to relevant external agencies where necessary. Managers review safeguarding arrangements frequently to ensure that procedures remain thorough and relevant. Teachers and managers complete relevant safeguarding training, including training relating to the prevention of extremism and radicalisation. As a result, they are very vigilant regarding incidents that may require further investigation or referral. Learners know how to keep themselves safe in, and out of, college and online. They view the college as a safe and secure place to learn and know to whom they should report any concerns. College managers and security staff are very visible on all college premises. Learners are diligent in wearing their identity badges and fully recognise the importance of not allowing strangers to gain access to either campus. Staff involved in the recruitment of new staff receive very good training in safer recruitment and implement best practice consistently.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Canterbury College

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

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Public services	**3**
Engineering	**3**
Motor vehicle	**3**
ICT for practitioners	**4**
ICT for users	**4**
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	**3**
Visual arts	**1**
Foundation English	**3**
Foundation mathematics	**3**

Provider details

Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	8,560
Principal/CEO	Alison Clarke
Date of previous inspection	November 2013
Website address	www.cant-col.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	**Level 1 or below**		**Level 2**		**Level 3**		**Level 4 and above**	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	774	281	1,279	889	1,913	821	3	37
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	**Intermediate**		**Advanced**		**Higher**			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18		19+	
	155	98	46	108	-		-	
Number of traineeships	**16-19**		**19+**		**Total**			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14-16	-							
Full-time	-							
Part-time	-							
Number of community learners	214							
Number of employability learners	122							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	▪ AMAC Sports Ltd ▪ Automotive Training Ltd ▪ Skillnet Group Community Interest Company ▪ Sue Phillips ▪ Tribal Education Ltd							

Contextual information

Canterbury College is a large general further education college with a main campus in Canterbury and a smaller site on the Isle of Sheppey. The college serves the city of Canterbury, Swale and the regions of the East Kent coastal towns. Canterbury is well known as a prosperous city and tourist destination. However, residents in many of the areas served by the college face challenging personal circumstances, most notably in Swale and on the Isle of Sheppey. The number of pupils at schools in Kent achieving five GCSEs, including English and mathematics, has declined since 2012/13, but remains well above the national average. However, many of the schools from which the college recruits learners have low levels of pupil attainment. Just under half of the residents in employment in Canterbury have jobs in the public administration, education and health sectors. Most of the remainder are employed in business, retail and finance, often in small businesses with six or fewer employees. The proportion of people of working age in Canterbury who are qualified to level 3 or above is below both the regional and national average. By contrast, average earnings exceed those of employees in the south east and the country as a whole.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Richard Moore HMI

Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and eight additional inspectors, assisted by the deputy principal further education curriculum and quality 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 past 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

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To find out more go to www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk

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