

Oldham College

General further education college

Inspection dates		11-15 May 2015
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding-1
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 provider requires improvement because:

- too few apprentices successfully completed their framework in the planned time in 2013/14
- the poor attendance and punctuality of a significant minority of students has an adverse impact on the learning of many
- not all learners sufficiently develop their English and mathematic skills
- weak target-setting and insufficiently detailed written feedback from tutors does not help learners identify the actions that they need to progress
- meaningful external work experience is not available for all learners on the study programme
- too much teaching requires improvement; managers have been slow to recognise and take rapid enough action to improve this, in particular, they do not set sufficiently detailed targets in their appraisal of tutors, to hold them to account for the quality of their teaching and the outcomes of their students.

This provider has the following strengths:

- the proportion of learners who successfully complete their level 3 programme has improved and is now high
- good information, advice and guidance and independent careers advice
- leaders and managers use their very good links with employers and extensive partnerships to develop a curriculum that aligns to the employment needs of Oldham and Greater Manchester
- the college community is diverse and inclusive; leaders, managers and staff have created a safe and harmonious environment where students respect cultural, social and lifestyle choice and differences well.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of assessment in apprentices' files to include detailed annotated feedback and tighten the procedures for tracking and monitoring apprentice progress in reviews so that apprentices achieve in a timely manner.
- Ensure that all learners receive precise, detailed written feedback from tutors and targets so that they have a good understanding of their progress and what they need to do to improve.
- Ensure that all tutors set the highest expectations for learners' attendance and punctuality to lessons. Implement more rigorous procedures for recording, monitoring and improving attendance at lessons.
- Ensure that English and mathematics are effectively meeting the needs of all learners by making sure that classes do not have students with such a wide range of levels and that tutors are able to use individual targets to challenge more able students to accelerate their learning and support the less able to maximise their potential.
- Ensure that managers make best use of college links with employers to make sure that all learners on the study programme are able to receive meaningful external work experience that will prepare them for work
- Enhance the overall standard of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that managers use the information from the observation process to identify detailed targets for improvement and that they use the appraisal of staff to closely monitor and evaluate the impact.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The large majority of courses at the college are for learners aged 16 to 18 on full-time study programmes. Nearly a third of students are adults undertaking full- and part-time programmes. Large numbers of students of all ages study English and mathematics qualifications at level 2 and below. Work-based learning provision accounts for 12% of the college's total income. ▪ Around half of learners aged 16 to 18 on study programmes are studying at level 3. The proportion of those who successfully complete their programme at level 3 has improved steadily over the last three years and is high. However, too many students do not achieve in line with expectations given their prior qualifications on entry to the college. In a few subjects, such as creative media and health and social care, learners make better than expected progress. In some large subject areas such as art and design and information technology and business studies, students make poor progress. Students aged 16 to 18 succeed well on level 1 programmes but less well at level 2. ▪ The proportion of adults who successfully complete their programme improved in the last year and is in line with national rates at all levels. The proportion of students successfully completing functional skills qualifications has improved and is in line with national rates. GCSE English and mathematics results, including high grades are above national rates especially for mathematics. ▪ Outcomes for apprentices were inadequate in 2013/14. The proportion of apprentices who successfully complete their programme overall, and in the planned timescale is low. Apprentices aged 16 to 18 generally succeed well, as do those studying hairdressing, beauty therapy and sport. Apprentices in business administration and management, and health and social care do not succeed well. The performance of learners on workplace learning has declined recently and is slightly below the national rate. 	

- Managers monitor the performance of different groups well. Male and female learners perform similarly across the college. However, adult learners have consistently performed slightly better than learners aged 16 to 18. The performance of White British learners and minority ethnic learners has been similar over the last three years. However, learners with difficulty/disability including significant numbers with behavioural difficulties, succeed less well than other learners. In 2013/14, looked after children succeeded slightly less well than other students.
- A high proportion of students progress from entry level programmes to level 1 programmes and the vast majority of those who leave after completing level 2 and level 3 programmes have positive destinations. The proportion of level 3 students who progress to higher education or employment has increased over the last three years with a third of students progressing to higher education and a quarter progressing to employment.
- Students who attend regularly develop some good social, personal and employability skills. In hairdressing and beauty therapy, students develop good social skills in salons and tutors make strong links between their development of practical skills and industry standards. Learners undertaking mathematics develop confidence in their ability to do mathematics. Performing Arts students develop good employment skills; through their studies they fully understand the language and conventions of the industry, which prepares them well for work.
- The provision of work experience on the study programme requires improvement. All learners have some kind of exposure to the world of work, through educational visits to employers, voluntary work and listening to guest speakers. However, less than half of students undertake meaningful external work experience that is relevant to their vocational course. This is particularly weak for level 1 students.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
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- The six areas graded during this inspection cover a good range of vocational subjects, apprenticeships and foundation English and mathematics. Inspectors also sampled teaching, learning and assessment in most other subjects offered by the college.
- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because there is not enough good or better teaching which challenges all students to make good progress.
- Most tutors have excellent subject knowledge that they use well to plan teaching, learning and assessment. They often use the knowledge they have gained in industry to help students understand the relevance of their studies to the workplace. However, tutors do not always provide enough challenge for all students and as a result, many students, especially the more able, do not progress in lessons as rapidly as they might. A very small number of tutors do not have a firm grasp of their subject and consequently plan and deliver weak lessons.
- Tutors and managers do not tackle effectively the low levels of attendance and poor punctuality of a minority of students. This often slows the start of many lessons and limits the ability of students to work collaboratively on activities that span more than a single session. Tutors do not support effectively the attendance of their students with specific targets and where managers use disciplinary processes, they seldom follow these up rigorously.
- Tutors do not set targets that are sufficiently specific to help students and apprentices make rapid progress. Although they review students' progress against their targets, little action is taken to support students if they fail to achieve these in the agreed timescale.
- The quality of feedback provided to students and apprentices too often lacks the clarity or detail required to help students make improvements. For example, in one business lesson, the written feedback was too complex for students to understand and as a result, the students struggled to make improvements. However, in a few subjects, tutors provide comprehensive oral and written feedback that helps students understand how they can develop their skills further.
- Most tutors make very effective use of resources, including salons, workshops and information and learning technology (ILT) to plan lessons that are imaginative and stimulating. In many

cases, they use the virtual learning environment (VLE) to extend learning beyond the classroom and students enjoy this form of study. A few part-time students find the VLE difficult to access.

- All 16-18-year-old students undertake initial diagnostic assessment at the beginning of their programme. This information is shared with mathematics, English and vocational tutors. However, specialist mathematics and English tutors do not use this information to plan learning and GCSE and functional skills students follow a standard programme of work, regardless of their personal needs.
- Vocational tutors in most areas support their students well to improve their English skills. Specialist English tutors help them to do this by providing advice and guidance and giving vocational tutors weekly updates on the progress of students in English lessons. Most vocational tutors correct students' spelling and use a range of methods to develop students' subject vocabulary. For example, in plumbing, students compile a glossary of technical terms.
- Most vocational tutors do not do enough to help their students develop their mathematics skills. Too few lessons include activities to develop these skills even when opportunities to do so present themselves. However, a few tutors are more effective. In one information technology lesson, for example, the tutor provided students with an exercise to calculate the labour costs of installing a range of computer equipment in an office. In a public services lesson, the tutor used his own passion and humour to generate enthusiasm for mathematics among his students.
- In most cases, students receive good information before they join the college that allows them to select a course that will help them progress to the career of their choice. Tutors continue to provide students with helpful advice during their studies that helps them take appropriate next steps in their learning or employment. Tutors refer students to the college's specialist careers advisors when necessary to help them explore career options outside the tutor's area of expertise and staff liaise well with the college's Job Shop to provide learners with good access to local apprenticeship opportunities.
- Managers have established highly effective processes to identify students' additional learning needs before or at the start of their courses. They ensure that those students who require additional help with their studies receive this from a very early point in their programme.
- Members of the diverse student population behave well and treat each other with respect. The college is highly inclusive and has a welcoming and supportive atmosphere in which students feel happy and secure.
- A wide programme of non-traditional enrichment across the college leads to greater participation by female learners and those of Black and minority ethnic heritages. For example, female learners of different ethnic heritages regularly play girl's football as part of their enrichment to keep fit and for enjoyment. However, tutors do not sufficiently explore equality and diversity themes that will help prepare students for life and work in the diverse society of modern Britain. In too many cases, tutors provide only superficial information and do not take advantage of openings to stimulate useful discussion.

Health and social care

16-19 study programmes
19+ learning programmes
Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in health and social care require improvement because:

- in 2013/14, the success rates of apprentices and students studying on college courses at level 1 were inadequate and the success rates of students on college courses at level 2 required improvement

- too many students fail to attend their lessons which limits the progress they make; tutors have been unsuccessful in ensuring students understand the vital importance of good and reliable attendance as an essential requirement for working in health and social care
- systems for tracking and monitoring students' progress focus insufficiently on students' weaknesses and students do not have clear targets to inform them how they might improve in the short and medium term
- tutors do not check learning well enough in a significant minority of lessons; tutors rely too much on volunteers to demonstrate their knowledge and answer questions, and as a result, quieter and less motivated students are making less progress than they could
- equality and diversity are not given sufficient emphasis to ensure all students develop sufficient understanding of discrimination, prejudice and equal opportunities in health and social care settings.

In health and social care the provider has the following strengths:

- high success rates and progression to higher education by the relatively small level 3 multi-professional cadet scheme and a highly effective traineeship programme recently introduced to enable unemployed young people to become apprentices
- tutors use their vocational expertise and experience well to link theory to work in a range of health and social care settings; for example, a teacher used her own experience of recording a safeguarding issue to emphasise the importance of following correct procedures
- in a few lessons inspirational teaching very effectively develops students' realistic belief in their potential; for example, a level 1 group of adults visited the university centre and followed this with a taster session in quite advanced psychology which they really enjoyed
- on-line submission and marking of students' assignments prepare students well for higher education and tutors use the system to give helpful guidance to students on how they can improve their work in the future; tutors and assessors stress well the importance of good English.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy
16-19 study programmes
19+ learning programmes
Apprenticeships

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in hairdressing and beauty therapy are good because:

- a high proportion of students successfully achieve their qualifications and the very large majority of apprentices complete their programmes on time
- tutors use their very good current industrial expertise in lessons to ensure that students develop practical skills and knowledge that prepare them well for employment
- tutors use extremely well high-quality salons and resources to extend learning, and apprentices benefit from work placements in well-equipped salons; apprentices and classroom-based students use the college's training salon extensively where they make very good progress in a busy salon environment
- a well-organised and comprehensive process is used to initially assess students and place them on the right study programme or apprenticeship framework in order to meet their needs
- tutors track very closely the progress of students and apprentices using the college's electronic system and support them well to make progress; both students, apprentices and tutors value this interactive system as it keeps them up to date with students' theory and practical targets
- feedback on practical work is meaningful and enables students and apprentices to know how to improve; feedback also makes good links between theory, practice and industry expectations

- tutors take full advantage of practical opportunities to embed mathematics and English into lessons and reviews; for example, students calculate the number of outstanding assessments they have left from percentages, and the spelling of technical words is reinforced in lessons
- students receive good information, advice and guidance that helps them make appropriate decisions about their next steps; students and apprentices value their progress reviews in which they can explore employment options and next steps in education
- students who cannot attend mainstream classes are supported well by individualised timetables that extend beyond the college working week that include, for example, opportunities to attend classes on Saturdays; students also benefit from a wide range of resources and work experience options that enable them all to progress on their study programme.

Teaching, learning and assessment in hairdressing and beauty therapy are not yet outstanding because:

- in practical lessons where students complete tasks early, tutors do not use extension activities to develop students' knowledge or skills to improve the depth of their learning
- in a small minority of lessons, tutors do not use teaching strategies that challenge students sufficiently; as a result, a few students make slow progress.

**Performing arts and media and communications
16-19 study programmes
19+ learning programmes**

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in performing arts and media and communications are good because:

- a very high proportion of students achieve their qualifications
- tutors are well-qualified, display excellent subject knowledge and have high expectations; the ethos of a 'play as cast' ensemble is established and students are required to attain the necessary skills and behaviour to be considered trainee professionals
- teaching and learning in dance are very good, standards pertaining to correct attire and preparation for lessons are exact, non-negotiable and students acquire the necessary skills to lead their peers; the regular support in lessons from the artistic director of a professional dance company is highly beneficial for students who can see immediately the demands of the profession
- tutors use ILT and other technologies very well in lessons and for extra learning at home; for example, a tutor videoed a run-through rehearsal of Macbeth, uploaded it onto the VLE enabling students to assess both their own performance and those of their peers
- students are mostly on-task, engaged and enjoy their studies and their relationships with their peers and tutors; they are acquiring the necessary skills to progress within the college, to higher education, often to prestigious conservatoires, and to eventual employment in related industries
- assignments are work-related and relevant to the demands of the industries, students have many opportunities to experience the world of work through public performances, tours and gigs; the programme of visiting speakers, current practitioners and higher education institutions enhance students' understanding
- assessment is clear, accurate and detailed; students know how well they are progressing and how they can improve; scrupulous attention is paid to correct spelling, punctuation and grammar
- the application of numeracy occurs naturally in all subjects; for example, in order to focus the minds of students for a forthcoming production students had to work out how many weeks were left in rehearsals, calculate the number of hours each week and then allocate appropriate time to remaining tasks

- tutors make extensive efforts to ensure that all students have the appropriate support in order to make good progress, the provision is highly inclusive and gives all students the opportunity to succeed; they state that their college experience matches or exceeds their initial expectations
- the new media resources are of industry standard enabling students to explore exciting projects and, at the same time, prepare them well for eventual employment; the dance studios, with the barres and mirrored walls, also allow specialist students to develop good skills.

Teaching, learning and assessment in performing arts and media and communications are not yet outstanding because:

- in a minority of lessons poor attendance adversely impacts on collaborative learning; in separate rehearsals the absence of key actors impeded achievement in these sessions
- in most music lessons, student punctuality, behaviour and attitudes towards their peers, tutors and work require improvement
- the current stage management provision does not support the programme of performances and does not reflect industry practice, which limits students' options of future employment.

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

Requires improvement

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

- overall outcomes require improvement and in particularly poor attendance in lessons slows students' progress and limits their achievement; for example, in a GCSE class with particularly low attendance, too many students miss their controlled assessments which negatively affects their ability to achieve their target grades
- tutors do not use targets in their lessons to effectively challenge individual students to achieve their full potential; for example, each student has agreed targets to develop specific skills but tutors do not refer to these to accelerate learning in classroom activities
- too many tutors do not adequately meet the diverse range of students' needs; for example, in classes where there is a very wide range of abilities, tutors do not always challenge the more able students to extend their learning and do not sufficiently support the less able students which limits their progress
- tutors' written feedback on students' work is not consistently specific or detailed enough to help students achieve a higher standard; for example, tutors' comments are often brief and do not give the students sufficient guidance on how they can improve
- tutors do not routinely help students extend their understanding of diversity in order to prepare them for life in modern Britain; for example, in a discussion on homelessness, the students raise diversity issues but the tutor does not exploit this opportunity to provide a deeper appreciation of the topic.

In foundation English the provider has the following strengths:

- students make good progress in the development of their personal and social skills which equips them well for life beyond college
- tutors support students to overcome barriers to learning; for example, in a low-level entry class the tutor effectively uses motivating strategies to build students' confidence in their ability to successfully use synonyms
- tutors use ILT adeptly to extend and enliven learning; for example, a tutor uses carefully chosen video clips to powerfully reinforce the use of language devices and initiates a rich discussion which consequently informs a creative writing task

- tutors make good use of a range of carefully crafted activities that are relevant to students' everyday interests to engage and reinforce their understanding; for example, in a level 1 class the tutor uses creative activities related to child crime to successfully build students' understanding of stereotypes in language
- tutors give students good oral feedback which is clear, informative and encourages them to improve their answers and enhance their skills development; for example, in a lesson on persuasive techniques, the tutor uses carefully targeted questions to extend and improve the content of the students' written text.

Foundation mathematics
16-19 study programmes
19+ learning programmes

Requires improvement

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

- too few students successfully achieve functional skills qualifications at levels 1 and 2; attendance at classes is low and for those students with poor attendance there is not a clear process of how they will catch up on missed work
- in too many teaching sessions the diverse range of students' needs are not met adequately by tutors; students assessed as working at all foundation levels are taught as one group with the same activities; more able students are often unoccupied and less able students find the work too difficult and disengage from the task
- individual target-setting is ineffective and does not challenge students and help them accelerate their progress; targets are mainly expressed in mathematical topics and do not reflect the individual learning barriers stopping students from achieving; targets are not used in the classroom to check learning and make sure students know how well they are progressing
- feedback to students on their written work is not consistently detailed enough to ensure students know why they are making mistakes and how to improve; tutors do not use opportunities to improve students' written English; tutors do not use any common errors by students to set targets for improvement
- students are not sufficiently well informed about the differences between functional mathematics and GCSE mathematics; students do not always appreciate what to expect in terms of course content and are not prepared for the different skills that they need for the qualifications
- tutors do not plan sufficiently well to promote students' understanding of equality and diversity; tutors do not use classroom activities that would easily lend themselves to discussion and further exploration of topics such as stereotyping and discrimination; when calculating the percentage of racial or offensive messages on social media there is no further discussion on the unacceptability of this practice.

In foundation mathematics the provider has the following strengths:

- adult students are very successful in achieving higher grade GCSE and the achievement of all students on entry level qualifications are high
- tutors use interactive technology very well to enhance their sessions and engage and motivate students; tutors present information and explanations in an attractive and easily understood format that students engage with; students use their mobile phones to take part in competitive classroom quizzes
- tutors plan their teaching well with a creative mix of activities that stimulates good peer learning and encourages an informal and fun learning environment; students enjoy activities such as solving the code for a safe which is derived from the answers of a range of mathematical problems

- tutors use probing questioning techniques effectively that stimulate and develop students' thinking and problem-solving skills while promoting the diverse ways to tackle problems
- students have good individual tutor support in the classroom to help them overcome the difficulties they have when applying their previous learning to new tasks.

Business administration Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in business administration require improvement because:

- In 2013/14, too many apprentices on intermediate and advanced customer service apprenticeship, as well as those on advanced business administration apprenticeships, did not achieve their qualifications
- assessors do not track or monitor apprentices' progress well enough; although managers have introduced measures to improve the management of progress, these have not yet had the impact expected; newly introduced meetings between the manager and assessors do not always ensure that previous meeting actions points have been completed
- progress for the majority of apprentices in training is slow; as a result, too many are continuing beyond their planned end dates and, in some cases, apprentices have needed to have their employment contracts extended to support their completion
- assessment practices require improvement; target-setting largely focuses on tasks to complete in the short term, annotation and assessors' comments within marked work often lacks clarity and does not enable apprentices to improve their practice through formative feedback
- initial advice and guidance have weaknesses that, although improving, impact on the ability of apprentices to successfully complete their frameworks; due to the inappropriate use of proxy certificates, a third of apprentices with 2015/16 planned end dates have already withdrawn from their frameworks without success.

In business administration the provider has the following strengths:

- the majority of apprentices on intermediate business administration frameworks achieve their intended outcomes and performance on this framework is broadly in line with the national average; the standard of work produced by most apprentices on this framework is of a good standard and demonstrates good skills being developed
- significant in-year improvements and progress of customer service apprentices
- the college has good relationships with local employers and offers a wide range of apprenticeships to meet their needs.

Business management Apprenticeships

Inadequate

Teaching, learning and assessment in business management are inadequate because:

- the large majority of apprentices on all levels of management apprenticeship frameworks do not achieve their qualifications
- despite a reduction in numbers in the current year, more than a quarter of apprentices who have end dates in 2015/16 have already withdrawn from their framework without success
- managers have not monitored the quality of subcontracted provision well and actions to address poor training and performance have been too slow, leading to a large number of unsuccessful apprentices in 2013/14 and 2014/15

- planning of apprentices' frameworks are, too often, generic and lack an individualised approach; too many apprentices are unable to achieve their framework mainly due to the poor assessment of functional skills
- in a majority of cases, apprentices extend their learning beyond their planned end date and too few eventually achieve their intended outcome
- internal quality assurance is ineffective at raising standards of assessment; in a minority of cases, there is a failure to ensure actions identified are completed in a timely manner
- employers are, in the main, less than satisfied with the apprenticeship offer and believe that this does not meet their needs
- information, advice and guidance to employers and apprentices is weak; resulting in many being unclear around the elements of the framework that need to be completed.

In business management the provider has the following strengths:

- no key strengths.

The effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Senior leaders and governors have implemented a clear strategy to position the college as a provider of a vocational education and training, aligning the curriculum well to the local economy and employment needs of Oldham and Greater Manchester. The Principal plays an active and valued role representing further education and skills providers in Greater Manchester as the city considers its skills action plan in readiness for devolution. ▪ Leaders have instigated well-considered changes to the college faculty structure to align these to vocational areas. They have successfully achieved joint priorities of improving the relevance and appropriateness of the curriculum while improving the college estate and facilities. With the support of governors, leaders have achieved these while carefully managing budgets and resources to minimise disruption to students. ▪ Governors have recently strengthened their range of expertise. They are committed to and ambitious for the college and have a strong sense of its role and purpose in Oldham and Greater Manchester. Governors receive detailed information about the college's performance but do not sufficiently challenge aspects of this in relation to the quality of teaching. ▪ Leaders and managers focus well on strategies such as property renewal and shaping the curriculum. However, they have been less successful in ensuring sufficiently high standards are delivered and maintained in all aspects of the college's work. Too much teaching requires improvement. Despite a range of actions taken to improve inadequate leadership and management of apprenticeship delivery, weaknesses in key subject areas such as business administration and management remain. ▪ Senior leaders and governors apply performance management procedures well to take action to address instances of underperformance of college managers. This has resulted in a few leaving the college. Performance management for teaching staff through the staff self-assessment and appraisal process requires improvement. Tutors' appraisals consider performance across a broad range of relevant areas, including student outcomes and the results from internal observations of lessons, but this rarely leads to tutors being set clear targets for improvement. As a result, managers do not hold tutors to account sufficiently for improving their practice or for the outcomes of students. Appraisal targets do not identify specific professional development to help tutors improve. ▪ Managers have strengthened procedures for engaging with and managing the performance of subcontractors. These are now good. The college has reduced its reliance on subcontractors to deliver aspects of provision, particularly apprenticeships and workplace learning where much of it was weak. 	

- The 2013/14 self-assessment overestimated the quality of teaching and learning. Revised quality assurance arrangements implemented for 2014/15 are comprehensive and incorporate an improved self-assessment and improvement planning process. They consider the views of students, employers and parents and carers well. Heads of faculty and tutors use these well on the majority of courses to review student progress and identify improvement priorities. Managers recognise that it is too early to judge the full impact of these new processes to improve the quality of provision.
- Leaders and managers use their excellent links with employers and extensive partnerships to develop a curriculum that aligns to local employment needs. Leaders and managers work very effectively with employers, other training providers, the combined local authority and Local Enterprise Partnership to shape the further education and skills plan for the region. Employers are increasingly involved in curriculum planning, providing valuable advice on curriculum design, for example in digital communications. Employers from the textiles industry value the college's proactive response to develop a sewing academy, delivering training for apprentices and future employees and providing local people with a route to employment in a growth sector.
- The college provides a good range of study programmes in subjects and at levels that meet students' interests and level of prior attainment well. Arrangements for students to improve their skills in English and mathematics through their study programme are not managed sufficiently well. Although managers ensure all students benefit from a good range of work-related activities and events to prepare them for employment, too few access work experience with employers.
- The college community is diverse and inclusive. Leaders, managers and staff have created a safe and harmonious environment. Students respect cultural, social and lifestyle choice differences well. Managers use data well to identify differences in achievement between groups of students and take appropriate action where necessary.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good. The central register of staff cleared to work with young people and vulnerable adults is comprehensive and up-to-date. The college maintains very strong links with the local authority and relevant community groups to develop robust policies and practices to safeguard learners. The college's response to the Prevent agenda has been good. The college acts as a local centre for hate crime reporting. Staff and governors have completed training on recognising and preventing radicalisation and extremism. Good communication between college personnel and external agencies actively promotes community cohesion.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Oldham 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	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	3	3	N/A	N/A
Outcomes for learners	3	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	3	4	N/A	N/A
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	3	3	N/A	N/A
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	3	3	N/A	N/A

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Health and social care	3
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	2
Performing arts	2
Media and communication	2
Foundation English	3
Foundation mathematics	3
Administration	3
Business management	4

Provider details

Type of provider	General further education college							
Age range of learners	14+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	7454							
Principal/CEO	Mr Alun Francis							
Date of previous inspection	December 2007							
Website address	www.oldham.co.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+
	483	934	800	586	1073	371	3	18
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	212	238	120	378	2	35		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16	11							
Full-time	N/A							
Part-time	11							
Number of community learners	N/A							
Number of employability learners	N/A							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kashmir Youth Project ■ Brighter Beginnings Day Nursery Limited ■ Provident Training Limited ■ Back 2 Work Complete Training Limited ■ Harrow International Business School ■ DKFS Training Limited ■ Mantra Learning 							

Contextual information

The Oldham College is a medium-sized general further education college, operating from a main site in the town centre. The college specialises in vocational training provision offering a broad range of vocational courses from pre-entry to advanced level and apprenticeship programmes. Oldham is one of the most deprived local authorities in England. The proportion of school leavers in the area with five or more GCSE grades at A* to C is well below the national average. Unemployment in Oldham is higher than the national average and the proportion of people without a qualification is twice the national average. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds is above that of the local population.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	William Baidoe-Ansah HMI
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Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and seven additional inspectors, assisted by the Assistant Principal for quality and student experience as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on 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 college. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

What inspection judgements mean

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

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

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

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