

Inspection dates

13–16 October 2015

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Outcomes for learners

Good

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Astute leadership of the college has resulted in considerable improvements since the last inspection.
- The proportion of students on study programmes successfully achieving their qualification has continued to rise and is now high.
- Students make at least expected or good progress in relation to their starting points and the number who progress to further study, higher education or employment is very high.
- Teachers have high expectations of students and teaching, learning and assessment are now consistently good.
- Students' work is often good or better and teachers provide detailed feedback, which enables students to make good progress.
- The college is highly inclusive and places a strong emphasis on valuing the individual; students respect each other and their teachers, they feel very safe and their behaviour in college is exemplary.
- Students benefit from individualised study programmes which develop their skills in English and mathematics well.
- Particularly good support for students, including those students with specific learning needs, enables them to participate and achieve.
- Students improve their self-confidence and raise their expectations in their work and personal lives; they are well prepared for higher education or employment.
- Staff pay excellent attention to safeguarding; the rapid implementation of the Prevent strategy has already demonstrated a positive impact on students.

It is not yet an outstanding provider

- Achievement rates for students on a small minority of programmes are low.
- Not enough opportunities exist for a minority of students to extend their learning through external work experience.
- In a very small minority of lessons, the pace and checking of learning is weak; as a result, students make slow progress.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Longley Park Sixth Form College is situated in the north of Sheffield on one purpose-built campus. The area served by the college has very high levels of social disadvantage. Around 1,100 students enrol each year, the vast majority of whom are aged 16 to 18. The majority of students take advanced courses.
- The proportion of students studying advanced vocational courses has increased and in the past two years the number taking advanced vocational programmes of study is greater than the number studying at AS and A level.
- The number of subjects on offer is broad and many students study a combination of vocational qualifications and AS level subjects. Around a quarter of students study at foundation and intermediate levels.
- A large minority of students come to the college with low attainment in English and mathematics; the college provides good opportunities for students to gain qualifications in these subjects. Nearly two thirds of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is a higher proportion than that of the local residents.
- Unemployment locally is higher than the national average; GCSE attainment by pupils in local schools is low.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement rates for students by:
 - identifying those courses where achievement is low and ensuring that rigorous actions plans are put in place to drive rapid improvements
 - identifying any variances between different cohorts of students and putting into place appropriate interventions.
- Continue to improve staff development and share good practice to ensure that teachers in all lessons have effective strategies to check learning and progress accurately and use a wide range of resources, methods and activities.
- Increase the range of opportunities for formal external work experience so that a larger proportion of students can extend their learning by developing their employment skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders and managers have been successful in developing a culture of high aspirations and achievement throughout the college. Astute management and ambitious target setting has been essential in securing the significant improvements achieved since the last inspection in the quality of teaching and learning and students' achievements.
- Performance management at both strategic and operational levels at the college is strong. The governing body monitors the achievement of challenging targets set by senior managers very effectively. Managers are supported to bring about improvements where underperformance is identified. Curriculum managers are acutely aware of improvement targets. They monitor the progress of students meticulously to ensure they achieve to their full potential.
- Managers accurately assess the quality of teaching and learning. Those who observe lessons are rightly focusing their attention on the impact of teaching on learning. Observers in most cases accurately identify the strengths and weaknesses of learning sessions. The action planning following these observations requires further development. A few improvement targets for teachers lack clarity and are being insufficiently monitored to ensure actions are completed. This leads to a very few teachers not improving the quality of their sessions at a fast enough pace.
- Leaders and managers have significantly improved self-assessment and they accurately evaluate performance across the organisation. Self-assessment is now inclusive, and considers the views of staff, students and external partner organisations. Improvements in the self-assessment process have led to managers identifying developments quickly and deploying appropriate resources effectively to bring about the significant changes since the last inspection.
- Action planning requires further improvement in order to ensure improvements are sustained. In a few cases improvement actions lack clarity, and as a result, managers cannot always sufficiently measure the progress they are making.
- Managers have developed a strong culture of core values, which prepares students well for life in modern Britain. Examples include democratic elections for the student body, exploring other faiths with a diverse range of faith leaders from the local community and the recent creation of 'My Longley', a group that is promoted in tutorials to focus on students' identity and that of their community.
- Leaders and managers respond to, and adapt the curriculum to meet, the needs of students and the local skills shortages well. Effective working partnerships with a range of employers, agencies and community groups provide students with the opportunity to enhance employability skills in the classroom and to use these skills well to enhance their local community. For example, one group of art students worked in collaboration with a local community group and manufacturing organisation to design and project manage bespoke railings for a local nature reserve.
- **The governance of the provider**
 - The governing body regularly reviews a useful range of key performance indicators in order to ensure good progress.
 - Governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the college as they receive clear and accurate reports from senior leaders.
 - Effective training enables student governors to contribute well to committee meetings and ensures the student voice is heard and acted upon.
 - Governors are very experienced and support and challenge the principal and senior managers well to bring about improvement at the college.
- **The arrangements for safeguarding are effective**
 - Managers have implemented robust policies and procedures covering staff recruitment, including the vetting of all teaching and support staff. The central register containing the disclosure and barring service checks for all staff is detailed and up to date.
 - Managers have ensured there are appropriate safeguards in place to protect students from the risks associated with the internet, social media and cyber-bullying. These policies are reinforced by very effective systems to identify when breaches occur. Managers take swift and decisive action to protect both staff and students at the college.
 - Leaders and managers at the college have been swift to protect students from the potential threats from radicalisation and extremism. The designated member of staff for safeguarding and the vice principal have attended training on the Prevent duty and have swiftly cascaded this throughout the college to provide staff and students with guidance on the indicators that may suggest a member of their community is at risk of radicalisation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Study programmes are good, with a large proportion of students successfully completing their qualifications. Teaching and learning methods and resources are interesting and motivate students to participate and demonstrate their knowledge. As a result, the large majority of students make sustained progress both in and outside of lessons.
- Retention rates for students on the very large majority of programmes have significantly improved and are now high. A much higher proportion are now progressing to further study at the college on A level courses or extended diplomas than in previous years. Punctuality and behaviour are good.
- The pace of learning in a very small minority of sessions is too slow, with insufficient individual challenge and interest for students. Consequently, progress and performance in those lessons are less successful.
- Teachers have high expectations of students. Teachers are adept at working with, and developing skills and knowledge in, students from different language backgrounds and at different levels. For example, A level sociology students demonstrate a sophisticated grasp of factors underlying social deprivation.
- Most teachers provide good coaching, particularly on examination techniques, and help students to develop the knowledge and skills required to progress and achieve. For example, students in economics responded rapidly to true/false questions on supply and demand, and by justifying their answers to the group they developed a deeper understanding of the subject area.
- Teachers plan well and set work that extends students' knowledge and understanding and develops skills that prepare them well for the future. In a vocational level 1 class, students created a guide on internet safety for schoolchildren; they learned the meaning of new terms such as 'phishing' and 'Trojan' and reinforced their own internet safety well.
- Staff assess students' starting points in English and mathematics very well and use this information to ensure that those who need to develop these skills work towards an appropriate qualification as part of their study programme. They support students' academic study skills and equip them well with the skills they need for employment.
- Teachers scrutinise students' assignment work carefully and provide prompt and detailed written feedback that enables them to improve. For example, in creative media, feedback is full and developmental, enabling students to take brief underdeveloped drafts and turn them into polished texts to meet the high standards required of them. Teachers often use students' written work in lessons to extend and build on learning. In childcare, teachers give structured feedback with a focus on realistic and achievable targets, motivating students to make good progress.
- Students with high needs have a positive experience of college. Teachers and support workers liaise with their former schools and collaborate effectively to support students' academic, social and emotional needs. Consequently, students feel safe, supported and confident in their abilities to progress and achieve.
- Teachers use a range of accessible materials and collaborative approaches that foster good relations, are sensitive to, and promote, equality of opportunity. For example, students celebrate Black History month in GCSE English through relevant and pertinent links to course texts, and in English as a second language use songs and lyrics from iconic Black singers to develop their language skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

- Students improve their self-confidence and raise their expectations in their work and personal lives; as a result they are prepared well for higher education or employment. For example, students in media develop good skills and confidence in using complex professional software for film editing.
- Teachers place a high priority in setting individual aspirational targets and have effective processes to track and monitor progress compared to targets. As a result, nearly nine out of ten students on vocational advanced programmes have achieved their target grades.
- Students benefit from very good individualised impartial advice before joining the college. As a result, they make good choices, which meet their individual needs and aspirations well. Students receive good careers guidance, enabling them to develop their academic and employability skills to meet the needs of their chosen pathway.
- Students benefit from the wider aspects of their study programmes. They participate in a variety of suitable activities to prepare them for work, including interview practice, careers fairs, and business challenges. The varied enrichment programme enables students to gain the wider skills that they will need as they move to the next stage in their lives.
- Students develop the critical thinking, debating and writing skills they need for higher education well during their time at the college.

- Progression within the college to a higher level of study is very good. The vast majority of students move into higher education or employment when they leave the college. Approximately 10% of students successfully enter one of the Russell Group of universities.
- There is a strong culture of valuing the individual; students respect each other and their teachers. They feel very safe and their behaviour in college is exemplary. The college embraces an inclusive ethos and provides good opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to develop. The majority of students enter college with low levels of prior attainment, however, they make good progress and achieve well.
- Students are acutely aware of the importance of developing their English and mathematical skills to enable them to realise their career aims. Many students undertake additional 'booster' courses in mathematics to prepare them for progression. The large majority of students successfully complete an English and mathematics qualification at level 2.
- Most students benefit from work experience or work-related learning that meets the requirements of study programmes and enhances the quality of their work. For example, students studying design and visual arts work with the local authority and a local foundry to design and produce metal sculptures for a large and prestigious project in a local park.
- While students take part in a range of appropriate work-related activities relevant to their next step, the number who take part in formal external work placements needs increasing, particularly for the small minority of students who plan to progress to employment.
- Attendance is very high. Punctuality has improved because of the strategies that managers have introduced. One particularly effective strategy in improving attendance is the introduction of academic tutors who monitor individual performance through innovative 'real-time' reporting mechanisms.

Outcomes for learners

are good

- The proportion of students achieving their qualification has risen and is now high. This improvement is evident for the large majority of programmes of study for students, including A levels and levels 1, 2 and 3 vocational courses.
- Success rates are high in the large majority of subject areas, although a few subjects have not improved at the same rate as others. For example, success rates require improvement on the level 3 in child development and well-being, and accounting, social science, mathematics and business courses at AS level.
- Leaders and managers have taken effective action to improve underperforming AS, A level, and vocational courses. Managers have established effective and rigorous monitoring systems; as a result, students' progress is now good. In many courses, a high proportion of students are on track to achieve grades above their minimum target grade.
- Many more students make good or better progress on their courses than at the time of the previous inspection. Students make at least the expected progress in relation to their starting points. Level 3 vocational students often make excellent progress on their courses, and A level students overall make good progress.
- The development of students' English and mathematical skills in lessons is good. In response to the introduction of study programmes, leaders and managers have increased the number of students studying for GCSEs in English and mathematics. Around half of students achieve grade C or above in their GCSE English and mathematics, which is better than in similar colleges. The proportion of students who achieve functional skills in English and mathematics at level 1, although in line with national rates, is low.
- As part of their study programme, a minority of students aged 16 to 18 extend their learning through formal external work placements; the number of these external work placements needs to be increased for those students whose next step is employment. Leaders and managers are using their good relationships with employers to increase work placement opportunities for students in the current year.
- Students' work is good and they develop skills that they can apply to their current study and future employment. Nearly half of students come to the college with low levels of prior attainment and aspirations, and staff support them well to develop their confidence and employability skills, including achieving English and mathematics qualifications.
- Managers monitor the performance of different student groups and have suitable actions in place to improve them. Students from a White British, Arab or Caribbean background achieve significantly less well compared to other students.
- Progression within college and onto other destinations is good. Students benefit from the comprehensive and specialist guidance that they receive from staff. College managers have been very successful in monitoring the destinations of every student who left the college in the previous academic year.

Provider details

Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	16–18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	1,103
Principal/CEO	Ms Mo Nisbet
Website address	www.longleypark.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	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	61	1	140	3	861	34	N/A	N/A
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16	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:	N/A							

Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Andrea Machell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Cocker	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Dunn	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Jackson	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the Vice principal Curriculum and Quality, as nominee, and carried out the inspection at short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews and online questionnaires to gather the views of students and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

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