

# Saint Francis Xavier

Sixth form college

19–22 January 2016

**Inspection dates****Overall effectiveness****Requires improvement**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for learners	Require improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Require improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not maintained the good standard of teaching, learning and assessment seen at the previous inspection; the proportion of learners completing their qualifications successfully has declined.
- On A-level courses, learners in most subjects do not make sufficiently rapid progress in comparison to their starting points, and too few achieve high grades.
- Too few learners on level 2 courses and below achieve their qualifications successfully.
- Teachers do not ensure that learners make enough progress in improving their skills in English and mathematics.
- Too few teachers review thoroughly learners' progress or ensure that learners are improving their skills and knowledge sufficiently.
- The quality and amount of learners' independent work are not consistently good.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Leaders and managers focus very well on social inclusion and have successfully broadened the curriculum to meet learners' aspirations and interests.
- A high proportion of learners progress successfully to higher education.
- Learners' behaviour is very good and they work well with staff and peers in a tolerant and respectful manner.
- Learners develop good skills for employment, such as problem-solving and working in teams.
- Learners' understanding and awareness of how to keep themselves safe from a wide range of potential risks to their well-being are good.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- The college is situated in Clapham, south London, and is a Roman Catholic institution under the trusteeship of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark. Around 1,400 full-time learners, nearly all of them aged 16 to 18, attend the college and are on study programmes. The vast majority of learners are on courses at level 3, with just over half taking vocational programmes and the remainder taking predominantly academic programmes. A small number of high-needs funded learners attend mainstream courses at the college.
- This inspection did not extend to denominational education or the content of collective worship.

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

- Governors and senior managers need to hasten the rate of improvement by acting quickly to raise all teachers', curriculum managers' and learners' ambitions for what learners can achieve, and holding curriculum managers and teachers fully accountable for quickly improving standards.
- Improve significantly the proportion of learners who achieve or exceed their target grades by ensuring that teachers set challenging targets for learners and then carefully and frequently monitor learners' progress towards achieving them. Ensure that teachers, when monitoring learners' progress, concentrate on the extent to which learners improve their subject knowledge and understanding, and on ensuring that they know what they need to do to improve further.
- In English and mathematics, rapidly improve the proportion of learners who achieve the qualifications and skills they need. Ensure that teachers plan learning well to take account of what learners can and cannot already do in English and mathematics.
- Ensure that learners do frequent independent work for all their subjects, and that this work is demanding, marked rapidly and annotated with helpful feedback.

# Inspection judgements

## Effectiveness of leadership and management

requires improvement

- The actions taken by leaders and managers have not had enough impact on improving the quality of provision, which in key respects has deteriorated since the previous inspection. Outcomes for learners and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment have declined. Too many learners do not achieve their potential.
- Since the previous inspection, the rigour of the college's self-assessment of its performance has improved; however, while leaders and managers are clear about what needs to be done to improve, self-assessment grades are still not always realistic. Managers have not focused sharply enough on evaluating and improving the progress learners make compared with their starting point when joining the college.
- Leaders and managers have not prioritised sufficiently the need for all learners to develop and extend their skills in English and mathematics. Too few teachers are confident enough to promote and reinforce learners' skills development, or plan their lessons to help learners to improve sufficiently.
- The Principal and senior managers now have demanding improvement plans for poorly-performing subjects. Thorough performance management of teachers, accompanied by effective appraisal and professional development, are helping more teachers to improve. A minority of teachers have left the college as a result of effective performance management. Despite this, teaching is still not consistently good.
- Leaders and managers successfully promote the college's vision and values, including those stemming from its Catholic mission and ethos. They focus very well on social inclusion, and have significantly extended their recruitment of learners from neighbouring boroughs to provide for an increasingly diverse group of learners. Through careful management of resources, and prudent financial management, leaders and managers have ensured that the college's inclusive provision has been maintained over time.
- Leaders, managers and teachers continue to make effective use of the college's wide range of partnerships. Their effective relationships with higher education institutions help support learners' progression to higher education. Teachers often make good use of the growing partnerships with employers to enrich the quality of their learners' programmes and to introduce them successfully to the world of work.
- Leaders and managers pay particularly good attention to matching the curriculum to the needs of their diverse range of learners. Study programmes are well managed. Employers are closely involved in the college's work to help develop learners' skills for employment, including the provision of work experience. All learners receive good, impartial careers guidance.
- Learners are very well prepared for life in modern Britain, including in their many different local communities. An atmosphere of respect, dignity and tolerance is very evident in all aspects of their lives at college. Learners' understanding of fundamental British values is skilfully integrated into their courses and wider life at college.
- **The governance of the provider**
  - Since the previous inspection, governors have increased their challenge to senior managers, especially through the work of their curriculum, standards and quality committee. They have an effective understanding of what the college needs to do to improve and they work closely with college managers to secure improvement. However, as yet, actions taken have not had sufficient impact, and standards have declined since the previous inspection.
  - Governors lead effectively in the promotion of the college's ethos and mission and have assisted senior managers to successfully broaden the curriculum to meet the ambitions of learners, both now and into the future, and focus well on regional and national priorities.
  - Governors have a good understanding of the college's work and they contribute their very good range of skills and experiences, drawn from their working lives, to the college.
- **The arrangements for safeguarding are effective**
  - Staff integrate safeguarding arrangements seamlessly into the work and lives of learners and staff. Safeguarding is particularly well promoted to learners. Learners know that college staff are committed to keeping them safe, and they feel and are safe at college.
  - Governors', learners' and staff members' good understanding of safeguarding, reinforced by good training, leads to prompt identification of any issues and their swift resolution. Managers carry out comprehensive recruitment checks on staff and keep thorough and up-to-date records.
  - Leaders and managers comply well with the 'Prevent' duty. Particularly thorough arrangements are in place to identify the potential risks posed by those who seek to promote extremist views and to tackle these appropriately.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** requires improvement

- The standard of teaching, learning and assessment has declined since the previous inspection and too little is now good or better. Fewer learners than was previously the case achieve their qualification successfully and not enough make the progress in their learning that they should.
- Too few teachers review individual learners' progress, develop learners' knowledge and understanding thoroughly, or ensure that appropriate and prompt action is taken should learners make slower than predicted progress. While learners know their target grades well, they often do not achieve them successfully or understand what they must still do, and by when, to make good progress in their studies.
- Teachers set tasks in class that are often too easy for the most able learners, and do not challenge learners sufficiently to extend and deepen their awareness of the subject studied. Teachers do not always pay close enough attention to what individual learners have learned and achieved in their lessons or provide sufficient opportunities for learners to test their own understanding and subject knowledge.
- The emphasis teachers place on learners completing independent study varies too much between, and sometimes within, subject areas. Not enough teachers regularly set independent tasks and activities to extend learning outside of lessons. For example, too few teachers set homework or insist on learners completing and submitting their homework on time and to a high standard.
- Teachers do not ensure that learners develop good general English language skills. Learners' ability to clearly articulate their ideas, in ways that will help them succeed in further study or help them to secure employment, is underdeveloped. Teachers' marking does not help learners to improve the quality of their writing, including spelling and grammar. However, learners' use of subject-specific and technical language is good.
- Too few teachers are confident and able to help learners develop the mathematics skills and knowledge they need to ensure examination success. Managers now place a sharper focus on the teaching of mathematics, and new initiatives are starting to improve the quality of discrete mathematics teaching, learning and assessment. However, too few subject teachers extend and further develop learners' mathematical skills and knowledge within subject teaching.
- Staff and teachers work well together to provide effective support to ensure that learners who need extra help to achieve, including those with specific learning needs and learners for whom the college receives high-needs funding, complete their studies successfully. Most students who receive additional support achieve as well as, or better than, their peers. Additional learning and study needs are identified quickly and communicated effectively to teachers who respond appropriately, using this knowledge effectively when planning learning.
- Learners enjoy their studies and work well with each other, their teachers and college staff. As a result, they quickly develop high levels of confidence and good self-esteem. Learners are able to critique their own and each other's work well. Good behaviour is a significantly noticeable feature of the majority of lessons.
- Many lessons are well planned, with a brisk and purposeful pace, and most teachers make effective use of information and communication technology to enliven and enrich classroom-based learning. All teachers are highly effective in weaving the principles of democracy, freedom of speech and democratic values into their lessons.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare** are good

- Managers and teachers ensure that learners have good opportunities to practise and develop good skills for employment. Examples include learning to work well together in teams, using information and technology confidently, and learning to solve problems effectively.
- Arrangements for work experience and work placement on vocational programmes are comprehensive and relate well to learners' programmes of study. Learners benefit from the opportunity to extend their learning and put into practice the theory they have learned while at college. For example, learners on health and social care programmes plan and supervise structured play activities for young children very effectively when working in their nursery placements.
- Learners benefit from a wide range of worthwhile and stimulating enrichment activities, trips and visiting speakers. These activities help learners to have a wider understanding of life beyond the college and understand the demands of higher academic study and prepare them well for university life. For example, AS-level learners attend week-long university-based study courses, and many participate in university-sponsored tutorial programmes and gain much from the experience.
- Learners receive very good careers guidance that extends their understanding of the potential career paths available to them on completing their studies. For example, staff ensure that learners understand

how to successfully research and apply for a job and know how best to present themselves for a job interview. The good help and guidance provided for learners with their university applications ensures that most learners who apply for university are successful in gaining a place.

- Learners understand clearly how to keep themselves and their peers safe when working online and/or when using social media. Learners are confident that teachers and managers take any concerns they may have seriously. Learners understand and are able to articulate well the potential dangers of radicalisation.
- Learners' behaviour in and around college is very good. The ethos of tolerance, kindness, honesty and respect are evident in all aspects of college life. While most learners enjoy their studies, have a positive attitude to their learning and work well together in lessons, attendance for a small minority of learners is low.

## Outcomes for learners

## require improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the proportion of learners who complete and achieve their qualification has declined and is now low.
- Learners on A-level courses do not make the progress expected of them relative to their starting points, and the proportion achieving high grade passes is low. For example, it is very low in science subjects, mathematics and English. The majority of learners on level 3 vocational courses do not make good progress.
- The proportion of learners who improve their GCSE grade from a D to a C or above in English and mathematics remains low. Those learners who enter college with high grade passes do not always continue to extend and improve their English and mathematics skills during the course of their studies. Too few teachers are sufficiently skilled and confident to help learners effectively to develop their skills fully.
- The proportion of learners who achieve their qualification successfully at level 2 and below varies considerably. For example, it is high in health and social care but very low in business studies. Recent management action taken to improve the standard of learning in business studies is beginning to have positive impact on the progress of current learners.
- Learners often achieve appropriate standards in their work. In sports studies, learners develop good confidence and present their work well, for example in presentations promoting the benefits of sport and exercise to individual health and well-being. Learners working towards the extended project qualification have worked successfully and well on external projects for national employers.
- Managers and teachers have successfully eliminated the difference in achievement that previously existed between male and female learners, and both now achieve equally well. Learners in the care of the local authority, and the small number of learners identified as having high needs, have high attainment.
- The proportion of learners who progress from year one to year two on both vocational and academic courses is good. Most learners are prepared well for their next steps and the progression of learners into further training and higher education is high. However, managers do not know the destination of a significant minority of learners, nor do they analyse how well learners' studies prepared them for employment and the workplace.

## Provider details

<b>Type of provider</b>	Sixth form college
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16+
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	1,392
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Stella Flannery
<b>Website address</b>	<a href="http://www.sfx.ac.uk">www.sfx.ac.uk</a>

## 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+
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	14	0	110	0	1,252	16	0	0
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	0	0	0	0	0	0		
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	NA							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>								

## Information about this inspection

### Inspection team

Julie Steele, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Martin	Her Majesty's Inspector
Philip Elliot	Ofsted Inspector
Dr Philida Schellekens	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the Associate Principal Curriculum and Quality, as nominee. 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, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners 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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