

# BSix Brooke House Sixth Form College

Sixth form college

**Inspection dates**

26–29 April 2016

**Overall effectiveness****Requires improvement**

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

**Summary of key findings****This is a provider that requires improvement**

- Too few students on level 3 programmes, in particular those studying AS- and A-level subjects, achieve or exceed their target grades, and not enough students on GCSE and functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics achieve these.
- Not enough students on vocational and academic programmes at level 3 continue to the second year of study.
- In too many subjects, students' attendance is poor.
- Managers have not used quality assurance processes well enough to maintain high standards of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Teachers do not provide consistently good feedback to students following assessments so that they know how to achieve higher grades.
- Not enough teachers make effective use of their knowledge of students' prior attainment to set tasks that are sufficiently challenging for students.
- Not enough teachers check what students have learned during lessons and they do not provide precise guidance to students so they know how to improve.
- Staff do not provide sufficient work experience and related activities to prepare students for employment.

**The provider has the following strengths**

- The governors, principal and managers have created an ethos of inclusion at the college that is promoted very well by staff and is valued highly by students.
- A high proportion of students on programmes at level 2 or below achieve their qualifications and continue to study at the next level of learning.
- Managers have evaluated accurately the areas of underperformance and implemented effective actions, which are beginning to bring about improvements.
- Staff ensure that students have a very positive attitude to social and cultural diversity; students from very diverse backgrounds work harmoniously with each other.

# Full report

## Information about the provider

- BSix Brooke House Sixth Form College (BSix) is situated in the London borough of Hackney. Around 1,600 students attend the college. Most students are aged 16 to 18 and enrolled on study programmes. All of the students aged 19 and over follow the same study programmes as their younger peers as they are in their third or subsequent year of continuous study. The small number of students for whom the college receives high-needs funding also enrol on study programmes. Around a third of students are on AS- and A-level programmes, a third on vocational programmes at level 3, and the remaining third on vocational or GCSE programmes at level 2, or vocational programmes below level 2. The highest number of enrolments are in science, mathematics and humanities subjects.
- The college serves Hackney and its neighbouring boroughs, although students come from a wide geographical area. Hackney is one of the most deprived boroughs in the country and the unemployment rate is above the average for London and nationally. Although the proportion of students in Hackney who achieve five GCSEs with grades A\*–C, including in English and mathematics, is similar to the rest of London, a high proportion of students join BSix without a grade C or above in English or mathematics.

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

- Increase the proportion of students on vocational and academic study programmes who achieve or exceed their target grades, and enable more students to achieve functional skills qualifications and GCSE grades A\*–C in English and mathematics by ensuring that teachers:
  - use their knowledge of students' prior attainment to ensure that activities in lessons are suitably challenging for all students
  - check more carefully what students have learned in lessons and, based on their progress, set them precise guidance on what they need to do to improve
  - provide consistently high-quality feedback to students following assessments so they know what they need to do to achieve higher grades.
- Implement fully all aspects of study programmes by providing improved guidance about employment to students who do not continue in education and ensuring that they are better prepared for work by increasing the number who have external work placements and/or participation in work-related activities.
- Continue to improve teaching, learning and assessment and the progress students make by ensuring that managers make consistently good use of their quality improvement processes.
- Maintain a relentless focus on improving students' attendance on those courses where it is low.

# Inspection judgements

## Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the governors and principal have faced significant challenges in maintaining the college's quality of provision, compounded by difficulties of increasingly unresponsive management and brief industrial action by teachers. Students' achievements fell significantly in 2014/15 and on too many courses students' progress was poor. The principal and governors have successfully overcome the management shortcomings and secured sound industrial relations.
- During 2014/15, they simplified the management structures, appointed new managers and implemented more effective quality improvement actions. Together with the principal, the heads of department are successfully leading the initiatives to raise standards of teaching and learning and improve students' experiences and achievements. Staff morale is now good, having recovered from very low levels. Teachers feel positive about their roles and influence in the college and have a rekindled belief that they can make a difference to students.
- At the time of the inspection, managers had not yet ensured that improvements were consistent across all of the provision. Governors, leaders and managers are realistic about the extent of progress so far in achieving consistently high outcomes and good teaching and learning for all students. They acknowledge that there is still much to do and have yet to implement fully recommendations made at the last inspection, such as ensuring that teachers provide suitably challenging work for students with different levels of prior attainment.
- Managers' assessment of the college's main strengths and areas for improvement is mostly accurate. The quality and sharpness of their evaluation of individual programmes are too variable across different subjects and their quality improvement plans, whilst becoming more rigorous, are not yet used consistently well enough. The principal has set up a senior leadership advisory group, made up of external experts, in order to support the new management team to be more effective. This is beginning to bring about greater consistency in the implementation of improvement actions.
- Leaders and managers make good use of their performance management and staff development procedures to improve teachers' performance. Managers ensure that their evaluations of teaching and learning are validated by a member of the senior leadership advisory group and this has ensured that they have an accurate understanding of the improvements needed in aspects of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the college's curriculum meets the needs of its students and local communities. Managers have implemented most aspects of study programmes, but the inclusion of work experience or planned work-related activities for students is underdeveloped. Managers have taken positive action to improve the teaching of English and mathematics, although students' achievements are not yet good enough. Staff make effective use of partnerships with schools, higher education institutions, local agencies and community groups to facilitate the transition of students from school to college, and then on to further learning. Of particular note are the transition project with the Hackney Learning Trust to help prepare school pupils for college, and the Hackney University Extension programme, through which students are supported very effectively to prepare them for university.
- Staff successfully ensure that students from diverse backgrounds and with different prior attainments are able to participate in learning. They also develop very well students' understanding and appreciation of social and cultural diversity to prepare them for life in their communities and in the wider modern Britain. The development of students' understanding of fundamental British values is integrated effectively into their courses and wider life at college.
- **The governance of the provider**
  - Governors take the lead in setting and reviewing the college's ethos and mission. They ensure that the college's priorities are based firmly on local and regional priorities.
  - Following the decline in students' achievements in 2014/15, governors have improved their scrutiny of the college's in-year performance. They receive good-quality reports and data analysis from the principal and other managers to help them in their work, but need to review more systematically the progress of different groups of students. Managers attend governors' meetings so that governors have a thorough overview of the progress being made in underperforming areas.
  - Through careful management of resources, governors and senior managers have secured a stable financial position for the college, helping to secure the continuation of the college's inclusive provision over time.

## ■ The arrangements for safeguarding are effective

- Senior leaders have recently reviewed the college's safeguarding policies and procedures, including safe recruitment practices, and ensured that, through effective training, staff ensure they fulfil their obligations to keep students safe. Governors understand their safeguarding responsibilities well.
- Students have a comprehensive introduction to safeguarding when they start at the college, and through the tutorial curriculum. They know how to stay safe and to whom they should report any concerns. Students feel safe at the college.
- Leaders and managers ensure that they comply with the Prevent duty. Staff have a good understanding of the threats posed to their students and are effective at managing these. Staff work well with local agencies to ensure that they are informed about emerging issues related to Prevent and other safeguarding concerns, and to make referrals where necessary.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has not been maintained and the proportion of students achieving their qualifications and making the progress expected of them has declined. Managers and teachers are working well together to make improvements and teachers have a strong commitment to ensuring that their students make the progress expected of them.
- Teachers do not make enough use of their knowledge of students' prior attainment to plan activities that meet the different needs and abilities of students, in particular for those on level 3 programmes. This results in too many students not being set work that is demanding enough during lessons and not making sufficient progress relative to their starting points. In a minority of lessons, where teachers set work that is too easy, students lose interest.
- Not enough teachers check what students have learned in lessons before moving on to the next stage of learning, such as new arithmetical concepts in mathematics. Too few teachers use effective strategies to check learning for the whole group; they often rely too much on using questions that only a small proportion of students answer. In a minority of subjects, teachers evaluate well what students have learned in order to set increasingly complex work. For example, in A-level English language, students worked together under a tight deadline to compare and contrast the use of language in three texts and then completed a detailed evaluation of each other's responses to further their own knowledge.
- In order to improve the progress that students make relative to their starting points, teachers have improved how they set target grades for students in each of their subjects. Students know what their targets are and teachers monitor students' progress frequently. However, when setting short-term targets and actions for students to help them achieve higher grades, teachers do not provide clear enough guidance to students on how to develop their subject knowledge, or skills such as essay-writing, in order to improve.
- Teachers do not provide consistently good feedback to students on their written work. In the better examples, such as in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and the arts subjects, teachers explain what students have done well, what they need to improve, and direct the students to more demanding work. In too many instances, teachers' feedback lacks detail and does not help students make progress.
- Managers' actions to improve teaching in English on functional skills and GCSE courses are beginning to have a noticeable effect and in the current year, students are making better progress than last year. Managers have been less successful in developing the teaching of mathematics on functional skills and GCSE courses and recognise the need to make further improvements.
- Staff provide effective support to students who need extra help to succeed, including those for whom the college receives high-needs funding, and these students make good progress relative to their peers. Teachers and support staff communicate well with each other so that they know what help students need in class and during one-to-one sessions; they provide the guidance needed to ensure students make progress. Teachers are vigilant in monitoring students' progress and very quick to ensure that those who fall behind receive additional support. This includes teaching extra workshops for a range of subjects; these sessions are well attended and help students catch up with their work.
- Managers and teachers have taken effective action to improve the rigour of assessments during the year and these are now well planned and help students to prepare well for formal tests and examinations. Teachers focus well on giving students guidance on how to interpret and answer questions and how to manage their time effectively in examinations. Teachers make effective use of external assessors to moderate their marking and ensure that their evaluation of the progress students make is accurate.

- Teachers are skilled at ensuring students develop a positive understanding of social and cultural diversity and current social topics. For example, in art, teachers use the theme of migration as a stimulus to a project, through which students consider the causes and impact of historic and current human migration. In childcare, students learn about equality of access, for example for wheelchair users, and make insightful and sensitive contributions to class discussions.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

### requires improvement

- The majority of teachers have high expectations of students, but this is not yet consistent across the college. Consequently, students' compliance with coursework and homework deadlines is too variable across different subjects, as is their attendance at lessons which, whilst high in a minority of subjects and better than in 2014/15, is still too low overall.
- Teachers do not provide enough support to students to help them improve their English skills, in particular their writing. Too often teachers do not help students to identify or correct errors in their written work and students do not have the strategies necessary to review the mistakes they make.
- Not enough students on vocational courses attend external work placements and this limits their ability to make informed decisions about their future options and to gain the skills necessary for employment. Students on AS- and A-level courses who do not plan to go to university do not receive enough guidance, or participate in enough work-related activities, to prepare them for employment.
- Staff do not provide sufficient guidance for students who do not move on to the second year of their academic or vocational study programme at level 3 to help them with their next steps; staff are insufficiently aware of where these students go. Students on vocational programmes at level 2 and below receive good guidance regarding apprenticeships, which motivates them to succeed on their current programme of study.
- Despite managers' and teachers' initiatives to improve students' learning outside lessons, the extent to which students on different programmes develop study skills for independent learning requires further improvement. Since the previous inspection, teachers have improved the resources available for students on the college's virtual learning environment, which are used well by the majority of students. A minority of students are unclear about what resources are available and how to make best use of them. The learning resource centre is managed well and provides students with a good working area which they use well.
- Students' behaviour is very good; they are polite and courteous, and show respect to members of staff and to their peers. Students are positive about the inclusive ethos of the college and appreciate the frequent opportunities to celebrate diversity, through which they have a thorough understanding of modern society.
- Students are supported well in their academic and vocational subjects to develop their mathematical skills, such as being able to analyse data. For example, sport students learn how to design a health plan for clients and calculate calorific intake and usage with accuracy. Teachers provide good support to science students to ensure they are sufficiently competent in mathematics to succeed in their science subjects.
- Most students take pride in their work and teachers use effective strategies to build students' confidence in their abilities. For example, when calculating perimeters, GCSE mathematics students were encouraged to write their working method on the white board, through which students received respect from their peers and developed strong class cohesion amongst the group.
- Students take part in a wide range of activities, clubs, societies and sporting events through which they develop a broader understanding of, and commitment to, society. They also develop entrepreneurial skills through activities such as the college's 'six quid' challenge.
- Through a well-planned tutorial curriculum, students are well informed about a range of issues, including healthy living, emotional resilience, revision skills and staying safe, including online. They have a good awareness of the threats to their safety and well-being, including from extremist groups. Students are supported well in frequent one-to-one sessions with their personal tutors. Staff also provide quick and effective help to students who encounter difficulties in their lives that affect their learning.

- Since the previous inspection in 2013, the proportion of students who gained their qualifications at the college had risen steadily, in line with other providers. In 2014/15, although most students stayed to the end of their programme, the proportion that achieved their qualifications on AS-level programmes and GCSE and functional qualifications in English and mathematics declined sharply.
- On A-level programmes, the proportion of students who achieve their qualifications has risen over time, but still requires further improvement. On both AS- and A-level programmes, not enough students achieve the grades expected of them relative to their prior attainment.
- Students on around half the subjects on vocational study programmes at level 3, including information technology, art and design, music technology and applied science, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Students on other subjects, including public services, health and social care and business, make insufficient progress. On both academic and vocational programmes at level 3, the proportion of students who continue on to the second year of study is low.
- Not enough students achieve functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics. The proportion of students who achieve a grade C or above in GCSE English and mathematics is too low.
- A high proportion of students on study programmes at levels 1 and 2 in vocational subjects and ESOL make good progress and successfully complete their qualifications. A high proportion of these students continue their education at the college at the next level of learning.
- Few gaps exist in the performance of different groups of students. Where they do, such as the underperformance of male students relative to female students in humanities subjects, managers are aware of the issues and put in place suitable actions that have brought about improvements. Students who need extra help to achieve their qualifications receive effect support and perform better than their peers. Students for whom the college receives high-needs funding are enrolled on study programmes at all levels of learning and supported well to achieve.
- A high proportion of students on both level 3 vocational and A-level programmes gain places at universities, with an increasing proportion going to prestigious institutions.
- Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the reasons for the underperformance of students in 2014/15 in certain areas of the provision. At the start of the academic year, they put in place a range of well-considered measures to ensure that more students gain their qualifications and make the progress expected of them and, for those on programmes at level 3, progress to the second year of study. Data available from mock examinations and records of students' assessments indicate that current students are making good progress, but it is too early to judge the full impact of staff's actions.

## 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>	1,541
<b>Principal</b>	Mr Ken Warman
<b>Website address</b>	<a href="http://www.bsix.ac.uk">www.bsix.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>	131	20	337	34	836	172	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>	0							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ N/A.</li> </ul>							

## Information about this inspection

### Inspection team

Rieks Drijver, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Martin	Her Majesty's Inspector
Winsome Aldred	Ofsted Inspector
Suki Dhesi	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the vice-principal curriculum operations, 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 students; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions and assessments. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.



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