

Tyne Metropolitan College

General further education

**Inspection dates**

7–10 June 2016

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
Adult learning programmes	Requires improvement
Apprenticeships	Good
Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Leaders and governors set high expectations and promote ambition for students. They work very effectively with partners to ensure that the college's curriculum addresses regional skills gaps and enables local people to gain employment.
- Leaders and managers have successfully implemented a strategy to become a leading provider of science, technology, engineering and mathematics in the North East.
- Leaders and managers have successfully improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in English and mathematics leading to a high proportion of students achieving functional skills qualifications.
- Well-managed study programmes enable students to make good progress compared with their starting points in gaining the skills, knowledge and experience they require to progress to further learning or work.
- Teachers and trainers are well qualified and use their good industrial experience to motivate students and apprentices to succeed.
- Staff provide good personal support to students and apprentices to enable them to achieve.
- Students with high needs receive particularly good support to enable them to achieve their learning goals, become more independent and improve their opportunities to progress in learning and life.

It is not yet an outstanding provider because

- Not enough students in 2014/15 made the progress they were capable of in GCSE English and mathematics and on level 3 programmes.
- Initial advice and guidance provided to adults on access to higher education courses does not prepare them adequately for the demands of the course and too many leave without completing.
- Targets in college improvement plans and in personal development plans for staff are not always sufficiently precise to bring about rapid improvement.
- Not enough apprentices complete their programmes within the planned timescale.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Tyne Metropolitan College is a medium-sized further education college. The majority of provision is delivered at two main campuses in Wallsend and North Shields. Construction training is provided at a smaller campus in Benton. The majority of students are aged 16 to 18 and they follow study programmes across a range of academic and vocational subjects. Adults make up around a third of the total student population. Of the adults, just over a third study vocational qualifications alongside 16- to 18-year-olds and around a half are following access to higher education programmes. The college provides apprenticeships at intermediate, advanced and higher levels in a number of subject areas.
- The college recruits the large majority of its students and apprentices from the Metropolitan Borough of North Tyneside. North Tyneside is one of the least deprived boroughs in the North East, although within its 20 wards there are pockets of high deprivation.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers must ensure that the improvements they introduced to target-setting and progress-monitoring procedures at the start of the 2015/16 academic year continue to be strengthened and rigorously applied by all staff so that the improved progress that students are making on GCSE English and mathematics and level 3 programmes is sustained.
- Managers and staff should ensure that adults planning to enrol on access to higher education programmes receive detailed advice and guidance that prepares them fully for the demands of the course so that the proportion who remain in learning and achieve improves significantly.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that targets in college, department and course improvement plans and in staff's personal development plans are specific and time bound to enable rapid improvement to take place, particularly in the minority of areas of the college where the pace of improvement has been slow.
- Review the arrangements for planning and delivering apprentices' programmes so that these take more account of apprentices' individual needs and circumstances, and the proportion of apprentices who achieve in the planned timescale increases.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The principal, senior leaders and managers enthusiastically and successfully deliver the college's mission to raise aspirations and change lives through learning within the local community. Leaders and governors set high expectations and promote ambition for students. They work closely with employers and subcontractors to design programmes to address specific skills gaps. They successfully communicate the college's plans to parents, carers and community groups to allow individuals to take advantage of the opportunities the college provides.
- Governors and leaders have successfully implemented an ambitious strategy to become a leading provider of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) within the North East region. The principal works very closely with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and neighbouring educational institutions in order to develop continuously the curriculum to meet the evolving requirements of employers and the local community. For example, college managers have developed a range of qualifications to meet the specific needs of a leading wind turbine manufacturer, resulting in an increasing proportion of students gaining employment within this sector.
- Managers have continued to implement a good range of actions to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is good for the large majority of students. Teachers recognise and greatly appreciate the support that they receive from the new learning and development directorate, established for the start of the 2015/16 academic year. Innovation and improvement practitioners support teachers very well to improve, following formal observations of their teaching practice. Consequently, the majority of teachers who receive this support improve. However, the pace of improvement is not universal across the college. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment on a minority of courses, particularly those provided for adults, requires improvement.
- Study programmes for students aged 16 to 18 are well managed. Students follow programmes at an appropriate level given their starting points. Experience of work is very effective in preparing students for their next steps. Management of apprenticeships has been centralised under one manager and strengthened since the previous inspection. Leaders and managers have taken decisive action to improve the proportion of apprentices who complete their programmes in the planned timescale. They also recognise that aspects of the management of provision for adults require improvement, and they have well-advanced plans to deal with these to bring about the necessary improvements.
- Managers have successfully implemented a strategy to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in English and mathematics. Managers worked very closely with local schools to share best practice in assessment, target setting and classroom management, which has had a demonstrable impact on students' achievement. In the current year, a higher proportion of students have achieved functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics. The progress that students make in improving their grades to A* to C in GCSE English and mathematics qualifications is improving, although from a low level in previous years.
- Managers have a thorough understanding of the college's strengths and areas of improvement through a robust self-assessment process, which incorporates the views of students, apprentices and employers. However, the subsequent improvement planning arrangements require further development. Managers have failed to prioritise sufficiently improvements in a minority of these plans. Improvements required in teaching, learning and assessment in construction, information and communication technology (ICT), hairdressing, beauty therapy and a few courses designed for adult students, such as access to higher education, are not progressing at a sufficient pace, as improvement plan targets are insufficiently specific to drive rapid improvement.
- Performance management is effective. Managers set clear targets for staff, which align to strategic business targets. Managers are particularly effective in improving the performance of staff who do not meet the college's clearly defined expected standards. However, personal development records do not always record sufficiently all aspects of the staff development individual teachers need to undertake to improve their practice.
- Managers have been successful in establishing a culture of tolerance, respect and good behaviour within the college. Students and apprentices respond well to this and develop the skills, behaviours and knowledge that prepare them well for life and work in British society. The college is inclusive, welcoming and promotes equality and diversity well both in the classroom and in public spaces.

■ The governance of the provider

- Governors ensure that the college plays an integral and successful role in supporting individuals, communities and employers in North Tyneside to be successful. They use their good experience drawn from the education, public and commercial sectors to engage effectively with staff, students and the local community.
- Governors have a good understanding of the college. They request and receive data on the performance of the college on a regular basis, and appropriately challenge senior managers to make improvements to the quality of teaching and learning.
- Education professionals recruited onto the governing body have contributed to improving key processes at the college.

■ The arrangements for safeguarding are effective

- Managers and staff have integrated safeguarding practices throughout the college well and are effective in ensuring that students are safe in the college and in their personal lives. Students and apprentices have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe around the college and online through regular discussions in tutorial sessions at the college.
- Designated safeguarding and welfare staff have very good links with a range of agencies including the local child and adolescent mental health service, social services and local housing charities to support students who require it in their personal lives. The safeguarding team works very well with the local police to inform students of identified risks in the locality where they live.
- Staff have undergone all the necessary checks and the single central register of those cleared to work in regulated activity is up to date. All staff receive regular updates on safeguarding and have recently received training on the 'Prevent' duty, detailing the risks associated with extremism and radicalisation. Staff make students aware of modern British values, which are discussed appropriately in lessons and tutorials. However, students' understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism is not consistently good across the college.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Most students and apprentices benefit from well-qualified teachers and trainers, who have extensive industrial experience and good teaching skills. The large majority of teachers and trainers create and deliver a variety of activities that engage and motivate students and apprentices well. As a result, most students and apprentices make good progress given their often low starting points. They develop a good range of skills that they need to achieve a positive destination, including progression to employment or to a higher level of learning including higher education. Staff develop a positive working atmosphere where students and teachers work together well. In a minority of lessons, students become disengaged and do not make good progress, particularly on adult courses because the pace of learning for them is too slow.
- A good range of resources and equipment support teaching and learning well, and provide students with extensive opportunities to develop good techniques and gain expertise. Students on 16 to 19 study programmes improve their skills and confidence through well-planned experience of work. Students and apprentices enjoy their work and are motivated to progress to higher levels of study as a result. Teachers and trainers promote health and safety well in lessons.
- Teachers and specialist staff provide students with a good range of support and care. Pastoral, progression and performance tutors are highly effective in supporting students. They have a good understanding of the barriers students face, and work very hard and successfully to help students overcome them. Students value highly their approachability and willingness to provide extra help when needed.
- Teachers benefit from a significant investment by senior managers in their professional development, particularly in relation to developing their teaching skills. They are very keen to develop their own teaching skills and apply what they have learned. Most teachers and trainers have high expectations of students and apprentices, but occasionally they do not always challenge them well enough to achieve their potential.
- Most students make good use of their time in lessons. They work purposefully and often work together and help each other. Most teachers use a good variety of effective methods to check students' understanding and consolidate learning in lessons. As a consequence, students develop confidence in their own ability and apply knowledge to more complex tasks.

- Most teachers provide students with good verbal feedback and encouragement. Teachers assess students' work regularly and although the majority provide detailed written feedback on how to improve their work and correct spelling, punctuation and grammar, in a minority of cases this is not so effective. For example, some assessment comments are too formulaic and do not evaluate the strengths and areas that could be improved clearly enough.
- Students and staff treat each other with care and respect. Well-qualified staff support students and apprentices who have additional needs through highly effective partnerships with other agencies, and through careful planning of support. Those students identified as having additional support needs make good progress because of effective in-class support.
- Managers and staff have successfully improved the management and quality of provision for English and mathematics. Success rates for functional skills in the current year to date have improved significantly and those students who study at GCSE level are making good progress. Increasingly, teachers successfully integrate aspects of both English and mathematics into their course teaching, and students are more aware of how these subjects are important in their vocational area. However, apprenticeship trainers structure their training less well and they and a small proportion of other staff do not always integrate English and mathematics in their teaching and training effectively.
- Promotion of equality and diversity is effective in most teaching sessions and the majority of students have a good understanding of the value of a diverse society. Students demonstrate mutual tolerance and respect. Students are able to access a range of enrichment and course activities that develop their understanding of issues well, including visiting key historical sites.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

- Students and apprentices demonstrate a good attitude to their learning and participate in classes very well. They are keen to learn, and they follow their teachers' and trainers' instructions well. They carry out tasks readily and work independently and collaboratively with each other. Students' behaviour and conduct around the college and in class are excellent. They are polite, courteous, and highly respectful of staff and their peers.
- Information, advice and guidance activities focus appropriately on ensuring that students enrol on relevant programmes aimed at meeting their individual needs, as well as addressing the local employment priorities as identified by local employers and partnerships. However, college staff recognise that the advice and guidance access to higher education students receive is not good enough. They have revised the system and improvements are in place for the next recruitment period.
- A range of new roles and responsibilities introduced at the start of the 2015/16 academic year, such as the pastoral, progression and performance tutors and academic mentors, offer effective support for students, especially at the dedicated review weeks that take place every sixth week. Group and individual review sessions are very effective in monitoring and recording progress for all students. Interventions by these dedicated staff are very effective in addressing issues such as punctuality and attendance, as well as providing a range of day-to-day support to improve students' self-esteem, confidence and independence.
- Many students and apprentices develop good employability skills. A wide range of additional activities both within teaching sessions and as part of the college's enrichment programme include many that relate to developing or enhancing work-related skills. In most areas, teachers make good use of occupational contexts and examples to reinforce industry standards and expectations. The vast majority of study programme students on vocational courses have the opportunity to undertake a relevant external work experience or related activity.
- College staff have developed extensive links with employers and other training providers who also have further links with employers, and they use these very effectively to advise students about future options and job opportunities. Specialist staff provide very good help with applications for university: for example, in drafting personal statements, curriculum vitae and choosing suitable courses. A very high proportion of students achieve a positive progression to further education, higher education, employment or a combination of any of these when they complete their course.
- The very good tutorial programme and range of enrichment activities cover many topics relevant to students' lives and their plans for their futures. The frequent progress reviews for apprentices are successful in supporting them to make progress and develop their knowledge and understanding of broader issues. Staff create a safe and secure environment for their students and apprentices, which they value highly. Students have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and social media, at work and in their daily lives.

- Although the large majority of students have good attitudes to learning, attendance, particularly for adults, is below the college's own target.

Outcomes for learners

are good

- Achievement rates for students on 16 to 19 study programmes have been high, according to published data, on all but a small minority of qualifications. The proportions of students taking A-level and vocational qualifications who achieved or exceeded their target grades based on their starting points were not sufficiently good in previous years. According to published data, on vocational qualifications at level 3, this was particularly the case for males who made slower progress than females. This was due to large numbers of male students who took the level 3 diploma in engineering in the years up to and including 2014/15, and who passed the qualification but did not achieve the grades they were capable of, based on their starting points.
- At the start of the 2015/16 academic year, managers took effective action to introduce a revised target-setting process that set clear and challenging achievement grade targets for all students. Managers reviewed the design and delivery of the level 3 engineering diploma and introduced more regular and robust interim assessments and reviews, which now take place every six weeks in line with all other courses. Significantly improved monitoring of students' progress, and timely intervention and support for those who are at risk of not achieving their targets, have resulted in the large majority of current students now making at least their predicted progress based on their starting points. This includes the relatively large number of males taking engineering qualifications and those on academic A-level courses.
- Students with high needs receive particularly good support to enable them to achieve their learning goals, improve their opportunities to progress, including to higher education for a small number of students, and become more independent.
- Achievement rates for adults who take vocational qualifications alongside 16 to 18 year olds are high. Too many adults who enrol on access to higher education programmes leave early without completing their course because the advice and guidance they received when they enrolled did not prepare them sufficiently for the demands of the course. Managers have recognised this and have put plans in place to provide more robust advice and guidance to prospective students in the future. Of the small cohort of adults taking English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) qualifications, the proportion who were retained in 2014/15 was low and there has been no improvement in the current year.
- The proportion of students aged 16 to 18 who improve their skills in English and mathematics, often from very low starting points, is good. Success rates in English and mathematics functional skills qualifications, already above the average for similar providers in 2014/15, have improved further in 2015/16 and are high.
- Students aged 16 to 18 taking GCSE qualifications in English and mathematics improve their skills given their often low starting points. However, in 2014/15, the proportion who achieved high grades was low in both subjects. The number of students taking GCSEs in either or both subjects has increased significantly in the current year. College managers identified that improving English and mathematics was a key priority for 2015/16. Because of more regular and rigorous assessment and monitoring of students' progress and the implementation of a range of staff development and support interventions, students in the current year are making much better progress and in-year tests suggest that the majority will improve their grades.
- Although low in previous years, the proportion of adults gaining functional skills qualifications in English has improved markedly in the current year, particularly at level 2. The proportion of adults who achieve functional skills qualifications in English is now well above the average for similar providers. The proportion of adults gaining functional skills qualifications in mathematics has also improved but, other than at entry level, rates remain low.
- From a very low base four years ago, the proportion of apprentices who successfully achieve has continued to improve each year in the majority of subject areas. A high proportion of apprentices in health and social care, engineering, construction, leisure travel and tourism, and education and training now successfully achieve their qualification. Apprentices following programmes in business and administration and retail do not achieve at a sufficiently high level. However, a substantial minority of these apprentices did not complete because they were made redundant due to company restructures and business relocations. Although improving, the proportion of apprentices who achieve within the planned timescale remains low.

- There are few differences in the achievements of different groups of adult students. Similarly, there are few differences in the achievements of different groups of apprentices. For students aged 16 to 18, a higher proportion of females achieved their qualifications than males in 2014/15. Females also made better progress compared with their starting points than males.
- Students and apprentices develop a good range of skills that they apply effectively to achieve their qualifications, and which prepare them well to progress to further study or work. The standard of students' work is often good, although adults in hairdressing and beauty therapy do not consistently demonstrate high professional standards. A high proportion of students, particularly those who follow vocational programmes of study, come to the college with low levels of prior attainment. Staff support them very well and successfully develop their confidence and work-related skills.
- The large majority of students progress onto further study, employment or apprenticeships when they complete their programme of study. For example, students in engineering have excellent opportunities to progress to higher-level qualifications, gain apprenticeships or find employment through the network of employers and other training providers that the college works with through its STEM partnership. A good proportion of students who apply to university successfully obtain a place.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- The college provides study programmes from entry level to level 3. Students are able to access vocational programmes in 30 subjects and AS- and A-level programmes in 26 subjects. At the time of the inspection, there were around 250 students on AS- and A-level courses and around 1,020 students on vocational courses.
- Study programmes are well managed. A high proportion of students achieve their qualifications. Current students make good or better progress from their starting points, which is an improvement on the previous years where too many students, particularly studying at level 3, did not make the progress they were capable of given their starting points. Students behave well in and out of lessons, show a great deal of respect for each other and staff, and are well prepared for learning.
- Managers and teachers have developed a good programme of work experience and work-related learning. Students benefit from a wide range of activities that help them to improve the skills they need for employment. For example, uniformed services students regularly visit armed forces establishments and take part in fitness tests. Childcare students work directly with a local primary school and plan activities for the children at the school related to both their courses and the children's learning.
- Managers have developed excellent relationships with local employers to deliver learning on their premises. Through these, students make good progress, develop a wide range of skills and gain valuable work experience. For example, students on a level 3 sport and performance course work with a local rugby league club in their academy and develop additional coaching skills, gain experience working on match days and benefit from excellent sporting facilities.
- Teachers check students' work for spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors well. As a result, students improve their written English skills. Teachers reinforce work-related terminology in lessons well. For example, in engineering, students now have a good knowledge of the parts of a piston engine and are able to describe each element effectively.
- Teachers integrate mathematics into lessons effectively and students are able to apply mathematical methods confidently into their learning. For example, catering students use ratio well to increase numbers of portions for restaurant service using standard recipes.
- Students develop good practical skills. Because of good coaching, students on vocational courses produce work to the high standards required by industry. For example, joinery students improve their skills when using a circular saw and are now able to cut complex designs for kitchen worktops. Plastering students demonstrate industry standard skills when finishing off plastered walls using effective cutting-in and polishing techniques.
- Teachers provide students with helpful written feedback on their work. Students are able to identify the progress they make and the steps they need to take to improve further.
- Students develop their ICT skills well and have a good understanding of how to stay safe online. Teachers integrate ICT very effectively in lessons. Students update their online learning plans regularly and access learning materials through the college's student intranet, enabling them to work independently when not at college.

- Students benefit from good support to help them to set targets and to prepare them for their next steps. Pastoral, progression and performance tutors work well with students to identify areas for improvement and to achieve higher grades. They also help students with their applications for further and higher education, apprenticeships and jobs. As a result, a very high number of students progress into positive destinations.
- Teachers integrate equality and diversity into lessons well. Students gain a good understanding of the needs of groups with protected characteristics and of living within a diverse society. For example, students studying to become personal trainers talk confidently about designing individual programmes to meet different customers' needs and of respecting customers' religious beliefs. However, although teachers have all undergone training, not all are sufficiently confident to improve students' understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

Adult learning programmes

require improvement

- There are just over 780 adult students on courses at the college. The majority follow programmes at level 3. Around a third of adult students take award, certificate or diploma qualifications where they study alongside students on 16 to 19 study programmes. The remaining adults follow a range of programmes targeted specifically for adults, the most popular being access to higher education, ESOL, English and mathematics.
- Leaders and managers have ensured that the provision is relevant to the needs of local adults, including working with Jobcentre Plus to improve the work skills and literacy of speakers of other languages. Managers have also worked in partnership with local universities and neighbouring colleges to review access to higher education provision, improving its relevance to employers and increasing students' opportunities to progress to university or employment.
- Adults who are integrated into study programmes achieve well and the large majority gain their qualifications. However, the picture for discrete adult programmes is more mixed. Retention rates on access to higher education and ESOL courses are too low and, as a result, too many students leave without achieving their qualification. Managers have recognised that the quality of information, advice and guidance for access to higher education requires improvement, and have clear plans in place to strengthen the process in the coming year.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment differs considerably across the adult provision. For adults taught on discrete courses, not enough teaching is good enough and teaching strategies do not develop students' skills well enough. Adult students make much better progress when they are integrated into study programme lessons.
- Not enough teachers set targets for students that are sufficiently personalised and relevant to allow them to make rapid improvements, leading to a decline in outcomes on some courses. Students in some areas are only vaguely aware of their personal targets and, as a result, are not always aware of the progress they are making.
- Teachers demonstrate appropriate levels of subject-specific knowledge and technical skills. In most practical lessons, students' skills development is sound. Teaching activities capture and hold students' interests and link well to industry standards. For example, in a floristry session, students were taught how to design and cost bridal flower displays to ensure that the business remained profitable. In the less effective lessons, teachers do not take responsibility for the progress of their students, do not link lessons to work-related skills and do not assist in the promotion of professional standards.
- Teachers provide good verbal feedback enabling students to develop knowledge and skills. However, the majority of written feedback on assessed work is insufficiently developmental to enable students to improve rapidly. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not always corrected and students continue to make the same errors on subsequent pieces of work. In addition, not enough teachers prioritise the progress of students in the development of mathematical skills, resulting in low levels of achievement on some mathematics programmes.
- Students feel safe and welcome in the college and know how to report any concerns. Through the provision of effective support, they are able to overcome initial fears about returning to education. Adult students understand how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including online, and are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

Apprenticeships

are good

- Around 656 apprentices of all ages are on programmes with the college. Most apprentices follow programmes at intermediate and advanced levels with the proportion between the two levels being roughly equal. A small proportion study at the higher level. Most apprentices follow programmes in health and social care, construction, planning and the built environment, retail and commercial, leisure and tourism, and business and administration.
- The quality of both apprenticeship provision and the service that employers receive has improved since the college centralised the management of all apprenticeships and business development services in the summer of 2015. All apprenticeship delivery is now located in one cohesive team, overseen by one manager, where best practice is shared more effectively and strategies have been put in place to address remaining weaknesses. For example, managers recognise that they still need to make further improvements to ensure that apprentices' programmes take more account of their individual needs and circumstances so that a higher proportion achieve within planned timescales.
- Apprentices value the frequent and flexible support and mostly good coaching they receive from trainers. Apprentices extend their knowledge through effective individual and group training sessions, which they apply well in practical tasks. In one beauty therapy session, the trainer facilitated a well-paced range of learning activities for the group in facial massage techniques. Apprentices learned and were able to demonstrate a good range of new skills to apply in their work.
- Specialist staff develop apprentices' English and mathematics skills well in functional skills lessons. However, vocational trainers do not always successfully integrate functional skills in their subject training and assessment. A few trainers fail to provide sufficiently effective learning for apprentices when training them or conducting reviews of their progress to help them develop their skills in English and mathematics skills further.
- Since the introduction in September 2015 of centralised electronic tracking software, trainers and managers now monitor and track apprentices' progress very effectively. Managers use the system to identify apprentices who are at risk of not making the progress they should, and challenge their trainers to provide additional support. As a result, the proportion of apprentices who are making good progress has improved, particularly those who started programmes within the last year.
- Assessment of apprentices' work is thorough, accurate and consistent. The quality of most apprentices' practical and theoretical work is of a good standard. Trainers provide apprentices with constructive and supportive verbal feedback on the quality of the work they produce, accompanied by excellent encouragement to help them to improve further.
- Most apprentices are confident and articulate. They develop good personal, problem-solving, technical and employability skills that make them valued members of their employers' workforces. Apprentices demonstrate a high regard for safe working practices and feel safe in their workplace and at college.
- Where appropriate, trainers integrate equality and diversity into their learning activities with apprentices well. However, trainers do not have sufficient confidence, or access to sufficient resources, to reinforce the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism with apprentices.

Provision for learners with high needs

is good

- The college provides programmes for 62 students with high needs, the majority of whom are on courses for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In addition, five students with profound and/or multiple learning difficulties attend a local special school, through subcontracting arrangements, based at the Queen Alexandra campus.
- Managers' careful assessment and good guidance, together with close partnerships with local authorities and social services, result in comprehensive education, health and care plans for students. As a result, managers design individual programmes for students with a wide range of physical disabilities and learning difficulties, including autistic spectrum disorder, that meet the ambitions of students and their parents or carers very well.
- Students' targets on individual learning plans, particularly for those with profound and/or multiple learning difficulties, are clear and unambiguous and form a focus for learning in lessons. All students make good progress in developing their confidence and become more skilled in interacting with others. Consequently, students' behaviour and attendance are good. Students with difficulties in speaking use assistive technologies effectively to communicate with others.

- Students become more independent in their everyday lives through good travel training and road safety awareness. They benefit from participating in a good range and variety of work experience, volunteering and enterprise projects through which they extend and develop their work-related and employability skills.
- Motivated and skilled teachers use a wide variety of learning activities effectively to sustain the interest levels and enthusiasm of students in lessons. Students develop their communication skills effectively, through dance, drama and well-managed discussions in class. In one lesson, a well-planned series of group tasks successfully challenged stereotypical behaviour and all students contributed thoughtfully to the discussion.
- Students enjoy a safe and inclusive learning environment enhanced by spacious and attractive accommodation, reducing the anxieties a few of the students experience in social situations. All teachers have a very good understanding of the social and emotional difficulties of students and their needs in terms of physical space and a quiet atmosphere.
- Support for students with high needs is particularly strong. Students benefit from high levels of skilled and unobtrusive support, which focuses very well on increasing their independence. In all activities, well-trained and experienced support workers give careful guidance and encouragement, enabling students to express their own ideas, develop their skills and make informed choices. Regular physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language therapy continue to improve students' communication and maintain their health.
- Teachers promote English and mathematics well in all lessons and match work effectively to each student's level of communication and understanding. However, students' targets in English and mathematics and the recording of their progress against these does not always reflect, in sufficient detail, the incremental steps in learning and achievement they are making in these subjects.
- Teachers and support workers use praise effectively and give good verbal feedback in lessons. Students' progress is well monitored and tracked, and students know the progress they are making. Discussions about students' next steps include students, parents and carers, and take place in a timely manner. The majority of students progress within the college to courses at a higher level.
- Staff provide good initial preparation and guidance for students wishing to attend university. They give very good practical help on issues such as financial support, accommodation and independent living options.
- Teachers provide too few alternatives to handwritten exercises for students who find this difficult. Consequently, a minority of students do not improve the clarity of their notes or become skilled in alternative methods of recording information.
- Teachers' observations of students' work experience placements do not routinely record the progress students make in developing employability and work skills. Students' programmes do not routinely include the development of housekeeping skills to promote good routines in preparation for independent living.

Provider details

Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	3,208
Principal/CEO	Mr Jon Vincent
Website address	www.tynemet.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)	272	138	229	231	770	405	NA	10
	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	72	210	38	236	NA	100		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	NA		NA		NA			
Number of learners aged 14-16	NA							
Funding received from At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Beacon Hill School and Specialist College for Business and Enterprise ■ Building Futures East Limited ■ Engineering Training Centre North East Limited ■ Health and Safety Training Limited ■ Lomax Training Services Limited 							

Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Malcolm Fraser, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tim Gardner	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Cocker	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jonathan Wright	Ofsted Inspector
Debra Gray	Ofsted Inspector
Derek Whitehead	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Scott	Ofsted Inspector
Stella Owen	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the deputy principal curriculum and business development, 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 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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