

Stanmore College

Re-inspection monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 103440

Name of lead inspector: Richard Pemble, HMI

Inspection date(s): 5–6 October 2016

Type of provider: General further education college

Address: Elm Park
Stanmore
Middlesex
HA7 4BQ



Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This is the third follow up re-inspection monitoring visit to Stanmore College following publication of the inspection report on 9 November 2015 which found the provider to be inadequate overall.

The principal has made several new appointments to the senior team and has restructured the college management team. The principal, senior leadership team and governors continue to implement the college recovery plan effectively.

Themes

Improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to enable all students to make good progress, as a result of interesting and stimulating learning activities and clear and accurate feedback on their work. **Significant progress**

Teachers continue to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The majority are using a wide range of effective teaching and learning activities which enable students to make good progress in lessons. Teachers plan and implement their lessons well, taking into account the development needs and potential of individual students.

Teachers now set students clearer and more specific learning objectives in the majority of lessons, which enable students to understand the purpose of the lesson and the progress they are expected to make. Teachers have much higher expectations of their students in lessons. In a few lessons at level 3, teachers do not yet set objectives for students that are sufficiently challenging.

Teachers have improved the quality and effectiveness of their feedback to students on their assessed work. The majority of teachers' feedback now identifies clearly what students have done well, what they could have done better and what other strategies or techniques they might try. However, they do not yet comment on, or correct, students' incorrect use of spelling or grammar consistently. In a very small minority of cases, teachers do not use correct spelling and grammar in their feedback and their handwriting is not easy to read.

Students value highly the feedback and support they get from their teachers, particularly the extra help they receive when they ask for further help or guidance.

Improving students' attendance at, and punctuality to, lessons by rigorous monitoring and swift intervention when their attendance and punctuality declines; ensure that students with poor attendance receive relevant support.

Significant progress

Students' attendance at lessons has improved by 10 percentage points, when compared to the same period of time in the previous academic year. Students now recognise very well the importance and benefits of high levels of attendance and punctuality. Staff have set high expectations for students' attendance, which they reinforce consistently when students do not attend lessons.

Managers have implemented changes to the college timetable, particularly to the timing of tutorials and lessons for English and mathematics qualifications. This has resulted in higher rates of attendance at these lessons, which have contributed considerably to the overall rise in students' rates of attendance.

More accurate and timely identification of students' support needs and barriers to participation, particularly at the enrolment stage, and improved support arrangements have helped to keep more students on track with their courses and attending frequently.

Improving the proportion of students who achieve qualifications in English and mathematics by ensuring that teachers of these subjects plan and teach lessons that enable students to improve the skills that they have not yet mastered.

Reasonable progress

Senior leaders have overhauled the strategy for English and mathematics, which has resulted in a wide range of appropriate changes for the 2016/17 academic year. These actions include timetabling lessons for English and mathematics first, only allocating subject specialists to teach GCSE and functional skills lessons and placing these subjects at the core of the curriculum.

While the proportion of students who achieved grades A* to C in GCSE English or mathematics qualifications rose significantly in the 2015/16 academic year, the proportion who achieved functional skills qualifications declined. Senior leaders have analysed the reasons for this decline and have implemented a recovery strategy promptly.

Improving the proportion of students who develop their skills for work and their vocational skills by completing and evaluating high-quality work experience placements.

Significant progress

Managers and teachers have implemented significant improvements to work experience provision, especially for study programme students, since the previous inspection. All students on level 2 courses in the previous academic year completed a relevant external placement and all level 3 students on courses where work experience is a requirement of their qualification completed a placement. However, not all students on level 3 courses who do not intend to progress to higher education take the opportunity to extend their learning by completing a relevant external work placement.

Managers have designed and implemented a proforma for students to use to record and reflect on their work experience placements. The proforma is well structured and has prompted some thoughtful and insightful responses from students, which have helped them to make decisions about their career development and inform their future aspirations.

Staff in subject areas make extensive use of visiting speakers, external trips and visits to increase students' awareness of the ways in which they can apply their learning in employment. However, managers have yet to analyse or evaluate the impact of this work in helping to improve students' practical skills and skills for work.

Ensuring that managers have accurate data and information about the performance of the students and teachers in their departments and that they use these to set precise actions for improvement and intervene swiftly when improvements are not being achieved.

Significant progress

Managers continue to use a wide range of data very effectively to manage their staff, courses and students. Senior leaders have established a series of college management team meetings at which they scrutinise reports from department managers closely. Department managers include a wide range of accurate data in their reports to evidence the performance of their provision. Senior leaders hold managers to account for the performance of their departments and set specific and challenging targets for improvement.

As a result of their monitoring, challenge and target setting, senior leaders, managers and teachers secured an improvement in the proportion of students who achieved their qualifications of approximately four percentage points for the 2015/16 academic year.

Ensuring that governors and senior leaders monitor frequently the progress students are making in different subject areas and intervene swiftly when actions for improvement are not being achieved within planned timescales.

Significant progress

Governors and senior leaders use a wide range of reports very well to monitor the performance of staff, students and courses. Governors are very aware of the performance of the college, as a result of clear and realistic reports from senior leaders. The information in the reports enables them to ask searching and challenging questions about key performance indicators.

As a result of their monitoring of college performance, historically underperforming courses are no longer offered and a number of underperforming teachers who, despite support, were unable to improve, no longer work at the college.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Learner View

Learner View is a website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too. To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

Employer View

Employer View is a website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too. To find out more go to www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016