

Stockport College

General further education college

Inspection dates

11–14 October 2016

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

Summary of key findings

This is an inadequate provider

- Leaders and governors have not halted the decline in standards since the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is weak; teachers fail to plan effective learning to meet the specific abilities of all learners.
- Achievement rates on study programmes are low and have been in decline since the previous inspection.
- The very large majority of apprentices do not complete their programmes successfully within their planned time and the rate of achievement has declined significantly.
- Learners' attendance is low, especially in English and mathematics.
- Leaders and governors are not aware of the slow progress that different groups of learners make on their courses in relation to their starting points.
- Teachers do not ensure that learners develop the skills they need in English and mathematics.
- Managers and the quality improvement processes they use have failed to identify significant weaknesses in the quality of the provision.
- Managers have not rectified areas for improvement noted at the last inspection; they do not identify gaps in college performance, nor do they take effective action to tackle them.
- Learners do not make sufficient progress on their courses and they fail to achieve the target grades of which they are capable.
- Leaders and managers have failed to reduce the numbers of learners who leave their courses early.

The provider has the following strengths

- College managers have continued to work well with local businesses to ensure that the curriculum meets local skill requirements.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Stockport College is based in the centre of Stockport and provides education and training for around 1,400 16- to 18-year-old learners, 1,000 adult learners and 600 apprentices. The college provides courses from entry level up to level 4 in a range of vocational subjects, the largest of which are science, engineering, construction, art and business. The vast majority of learners attend the main college campus in Stockport; a small minority of learners attend the Woodley campus. Stockport College directly teaches all of its courses and does not use subcontractors.
- Approximately 288,000 people live in the local authority of Stockport. Wards within Stockport vary greatly in levels of deprivation. The proportion of learners achieving five GCSEs grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, has improved in recent years and is broadly in line with the national rate. Levels of unemployment are below those regionally and nationally and currently stand at 4.4%.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- As a matter of the utmost urgency, senior college managers should implement a rigorous system for monitoring learners' progress and providing accurate and useful reports on performance; leaders and governors should use these reports to identify slow progress and intervene swiftly to ensure that more learners and apprentices stay on programmes, and achieve their qualifications within the planned timescales.
- Teachers should plan effectively to meet the specific abilities of all learners and apprentices and ensure that they challenge the most able to achieve their potential. Those learners who are not making the expected progress should receive support to rapidly improve the standard of their work and develop good vocational skills.
- Managers and teachers should develop ways to improve attendance and reduce the number of learners who leave without achieving their qualifications.
- Assessors should rigorously assess apprentices' starting points for the vocational, English, mathematics and information and communication technology components of their programmes at the start of their apprenticeship; assessors should use the results of these assessments to plan programmes carefully which meet apprentices' varying needs.
- Teachers should monitor closely the progress that learners and apprentices make, and provide clear and constructive advice on how they can improve their work, develop their skills and achieve higher grades.
- Managers and teachers should improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in English and mathematics, to ensure that learners develop their skills, and that significantly more achieve their English and mathematics qualifications, including good grades in their GCSEs.
- Managers should identify specific and challenging targets for the improvement of provision, based on more accurate self-assessment, and monitor meticulously their progress towards achieving these targets.
- Managers should identify any differences in achievement between particular groups of learners and implement improvements to reduce these gaps.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The principal has actively sought to secure a sustainable future for the college. In the past year, a new management team has very recently begun to implement many new processes, in order to improve outcomes for learners. However, these changes have not yet prevented a further decline in learners' outcomes.
- The financial status of the college remains very weak. The college is still in administered status and will be dependent on funding agencies' continued support to ensure that it can continue to operate in the future. In September 2016, more learners continued to study a course at the college at a higher level and so it is now on track to meet its funding target for 2016/17. In spite of the very limited funds available, the college has recently invested well to improve the experience of learners by bringing the library into the heart of the college, thus significantly improving its usage.
- Leaders and managers have not taken rapid enough action to improve those areas identified for improvement in the previous inspection. Managers have not received useful reports on learners' progress swiftly enough to identify the slow progress being made in many curriculum areas. As a result, governors and managers have not been able to carry out effective monitoring and intervention to improve learners' outcomes.
- Teaching, learning and assessment have not improved quickly enough to secure the urgently needed improvement in the proportion of learners achieving their qualifications, which both managers and governors recognise is too low. The management of teachers' performance is weak. Managers have not ensured that the outcomes of the observations of teaching, learning and assessment lead to individual professional development to secure swift improvement in teaching.
- Managers' self-assessment of the college is insufficiently rigorous. Managers do not evaluate or identify areas for improvement well enough. The associated action plan does not result in rapid improvement to learners' outcomes. Where improvement targets are set they are not specific enough to allow clear monitoring of progress and to give confidence that the required improvements to learners' progress and outcomes will take place.
- Managers have recently proposed to governors a new self-assessment process for curriculum teams, which will enable staff to make clear judgements and recognise the very many areas for improvement. Managers now have a better understanding of the specific areas for improvement throughout the college.
- Managers have made good progress in the current year in improving work experience opportunities for learners. Previously, too many learners did not have the opportunity to undertake relevant work experience or enrichment opportunities. Managers' plans are now much improved and a minority of learners have already had good experiences of work. Local businesses work with the college, offering workshops for learners to develop their skills, confidence and employability.
- Managers have not fully developed effective ways to promote equality and raise awareness of diversity. They have not sufficiently identified differences in outcomes for particular groups of learners or taken action to tackle them. A new equality and diversity

coordinator has effectively planned to integrate key diversity themes, including the understanding of British values, into the vocational curriculum. A newly designated personal mentor is effectively supporting care leavers and learners who are looked after. Managers have developed appropriate policies to ensure that the transition of these learners into college life is planned and their progress and welfare is carefully monitored.

- The college offers a broad curriculum in vocational courses from entry level to higher education. Since the previous inspection, managers have aligned the curriculum to local skills priorities. In September 2016, managers introduced new courses to ensure appropriate progression routes for learners, resulting in improved progression between levels of study within the college.

The governance of the provider

- Well-qualified and experienced governors now offer effective challenge to the senior leadership team. They have shown very effective strategic leadership during the area-based review and are committed to ensuring continuing further education for the local community.
- Governors have clear responsibilities and have created effective thematic links with the curriculum and management areas in order to develop their understanding of the college and to offer the benefit of their considerable expertise. Link governors report in detail to the board to inform their decision-making.
- In order to monitor the performance of the college better the board of governors has requested more detailed reporting from college managers, but has not yet received the reports they need to hold managers to account sufficiently. Governors have recognised that a large minority of reports they receive are not concise enough or lack the necessary evaluation to enable them to fulfil their roles fully.

Safeguarding

- Safeguarding is effective. Through a well-designed new strategy, managers have made effective use of learning mentors in the curriculum areas to promote safeguarding. These mentors ensure that learners are well supported and find it easy to get help if they need it. Managers have developed good partnerships with external groups to ensure effective referrals and support for learners.
- Reports to governors on safeguarding are detailed and informative. One governor, who is particularly well informed about safeguarding, takes on the role of link governor for this topic and communicates information well to the other members. Learners' feedback indicates an increasing confidence in their safety in the college year on year.
- Most learners know how to keep themselves safe and show a good understanding of the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Staff development has been effective and staff understand the 'Prevent' duty well. Staff make appropriate referrals to relevant agencies where any cause for concern exists to enable early intervention. Apprentices do not yet have a clear understanding of radicalisation and extremism.
- Learners produced an innovative film on the dangers of 'sexting' and the posting of indecent images, which has been shared, to acclaim, with schools and colleges in Greater Manchester and beyond.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teachers often fail to assess learners' knowledge effectively, so they are unable to ensure that learners have understood new topics. Where teaching is more effective, teachers use a variety of methods including in-depth questioning to assess if learners have grasped the full meaning of their work, but too often learners do not understand what they have been taught.
- Learners receive insufficient challenge to motivate them to make good and rapid progress. The pace of learning is frequently too slow and the level of learning is often below the standard of the course. Consequently, learners make slow progress in completing work and do not advance their understanding sufficiently.
- In too many lessons, learners all follow the same activity for the same length of time, irrespective of their abilities and prior attainment. Consequently, the most able learners complete learning activities early, have nothing to do and fail to reach their potential. The least able learners are unable to complete tasks successfully within the time allotted. Consequently, learners' progress is poor.
- The development of learners' English and mathematics skills is not given sufficient prominence in vocational lessons. Learners do not develop their skills in these areas nor do they apply them well to their vocational work. On occasions, teachers raise matters related to learners' development of their skills in English and mathematics, but these do not connect successfully with the main topics being taught.
- In many discrete mathematics lessons, the topics do not relate to everyday life, the world of work or learners' own vocational areas. By contrast, where the teaching of English is most effective, learners enjoy discussing a wide range of topics related to world affairs, diversity and topical social issues.
- Attendance in many lessons is low and well below the college target. This is a major concern to managers, especially so early in the academic year. In particular, attendance is very low in English and mathematics lessons.
- Teachers often have low expectations of their learners. They accept mediocre standards of work and uninspiring responses to questions and assessments. They make few demands of learners and rarely encourage them to aspire to higher levels of learning or the production of good quality work. Lessons and learning lack urgency, energy and dynamism, resulting in a lack of motivation among learners.
- In many lessons, learners lose interest and become bored because learning activities lack variety and stimulation. Learners state that they would prefer a wider range of interesting ways of learning.
- In the best examples of assessment, teachers provide learners with effective feedback and support learners to identify spelling and grammar mistakes appropriately. Teachers' written feedback is detailed and constructive and helps learners to improve their next assignment very effectively. In less effective assessment practice, teachers ignore serious mistakes and consequently learners are unaware of the improvements they need to make. Written comments are brief and unhelpful in aiding learners to develop their skills further and make progress.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and experience of the world of work. They make

good links between theory and practice. Teachers encourage learners to relay their own work experiences to their peers to help learners' understand how topics relate to job roles. Learners develop good skills in practical lessons; for example, in childcare lessons they develop creative thinking to develop play activities for children that they use at their external work placements.

- Newly appointed middle and senior managers are aware of the areas for improvement in teaching, learning and assessment, as evidenced by their recent audits and the joint observations they made with inspectors. They have introduced appropriate strategies, practices and monitoring systems aimed at improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including in English and mathematics. These very new processes have not yet had a positive impact on learners' experiences at the college.
- Recently, managers have introduced a standardised system to record the findings from lesson observations and more comprehensive measures of learners' progress. These measures inform professional reviews of teachers' work and staff development action plans but the quality of too much learning remains weak.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

- Staff are not successful in developing among students the behaviour and attitudes expected by employers. Learners' attendance is low, and especially so in English and mathematics lessons. Managers were rightly concerned about low attendance last year but have failed to improve the rate this academic year.
- In a minority of lessons, poor punctuality disrupts learners and learning. Learners arrive at lessons long after their start and disturb the learning activities that are taking place. This distracts the teacher and other learners from their work and delays progress.
- Too many learners did not experience relevant external work experience in 2015/16. Current learners are not fully aware of their entitlement to work experience with employers. Managers have recognised this and have made plans to ensure that all learners benefit from suitable work placements this year. It is too soon to determine whether these plans will come to fruition.
- The development of learners' employability skills through gaining English and mathematics qualifications last year was poor. Managers and teachers have failed to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the current year, nor have they halted the decline in attendance. Consequently, too many learners are not improving their skills in English and mathematics. Adults have insufficient opportunities to improve their English and mathematical skills to help them prepare for employment.
- Too few learners aged 16 to 18 achieved their main vocational qualification in 2015/16 and too few apprentices achieved their expected outcomes. Consequently, too few learners in both groups were able to increase their prospects for employment.
- Apprentices understand how to develop their practical skills and they make a good contribution to their employers' workforces, although the impact of these benefits is reduced by their slow progress.
- Most learners behave well throughout all areas of the college. They treat each other and college staff with respect. Adult learners take pride in their work and gain confidence during their course of study.

- Managers have improved the recruitment and selection processes for potential learners and the induction process for new learners. This year staff ensured that more learners started on the most appropriate course at the right level for their needs, interests and prior attainment. Managers have improved information, advice and guidance systems, including the transition arrangements for vulnerable learners. Fewer learners have left the college early in their course this year when compared with the same period last year.
- Most current learners enjoy college life and their courses and appreciate the improved support they receive to stay on their course. The majority of classroom-based learners progress to higher-level courses within the college. The numbers of learners continuing with their education at the college once their course has ended has increased compared with previous years. Conversely, very few apprentices progress to a higher-level programme.
- Through induction and tutorials, managers and teachers have very effectively raised the awareness of most learners with regard to safeguarding, 'Prevent', the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism, and bullying. Staff are less successful in raising awareness among apprentices of these topics, leading to them not being sufficiently aware of dangers in the workplace or in their communities. Learners understand the potential dangers of inappropriate use of the internet, mobile phones and social networking. They know how to keep safe and whom to notify should they have concerns. However, some learners do not display their identity cards in college to show that they are bona fide learners.

Outcomes for learners

Inadequate

- Achievement rates are low. For learners aged 16 to 18, who account for the majority of the college's provision, achievement rates in 2015/16 have seen a decline at level 2 and level 3; the rates are low and below the achievement of their peers nationally. The achievements of level 1 learners have improved in 2015/16 but are still too low and below national rates. Achievement rates are particularly poor in construction, childcare and business management.
- The small minority of 16- to 18-year-old learners who work towards level 3 vocational qualifications do not progress far enough from their starting points. Consequently, too few learners achieve high grades, develop their skills and reach their full potential.
- The proportion of learners aged 16 to 18 who achieved grades C or above in GCSE English in 2014/15 was low and below national rates; the proportion achieving good grades in GCSE mathematics was much better and above the national rate. However, in 2015/16 there has been a significant decline in high-grade pass rates. Less than a fifth of learners in English and a quarter in mathematics achieve grades C and above, which leaders and governors have identified as inadequate.
- Apprenticeship achievement rates are very low. Too many learners do not complete their apprenticeships within the planned timescales. The decline in the number of apprentices achieving their qualifications over the past three years is significant. The achievements of intermediate apprentices are particularly low, with just over a quarter of these apprentices completing their programme within the planned time. Advanced apprentices aged 19 to 23, who account for the minority of all apprentices, achieve significantly better

than all other apprentices. A significant decline in achievement has occurred over the past 12 months in engineering, construction, and warehousing and distribution.

- Achievements for adult learners require improvement. Over the past three years, the college has seen gradual improvements in achievement for adult learners, with very good performance in subjects such as accounting and finance, administration and applied sciences. The pace of improvements made last year did not continue in 2015/16; adult learners' achievement rates remained static and are low in foundation learning courses.
- Managers do not sufficiently monitor the achievement of particular groups of learners or have plans to reduce differences in achievement between them. For example, learners who are looked after, and adult learners of Arabic, Caribbean and Indian heritage, achieve less well than their peers in the college from other backgrounds do.
- Progression to higher levels of study for those who complete their courses is good. Destination data demonstrates that, of those who complete their studies at college, the majority remain in further education, with a small minority progressing onto apprenticeships, employment and higher education.
- Leaders and managers acknowledge that in previous years they have not received sufficient information on the progress that learners make on their programmes from their starting points. The methods used by managers to monitor learners' progress focus too much on final outcomes and not enough on regular, thorough evaluations of short-term progress. Consequently, staff do not challenge the most-able learners to develop wider skills and achieve higher grades, and do not always put support in place for learners who need it.
- Managers have recently introduced a range of easily understood tracking and monitoring methods to identify the extent to which learners make progress on their courses against the targets that they have agreed with their tutors. However, the effectiveness of these new systems has not yet been demonstrated.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Inadequate

- At present 1,415 learners aged 16 to 18 are following a range of vocational study programmes from entry level to level 3 across 15 subject areas. The largest areas are arts, media and publishing, construction, engineering, health, public services and care, retail and commercial enterprise and preparation for working life.
- Managers have not yet ensured that teaching, learning and assessment, and the monitoring of learners' progress, are of a high enough standard; as a result, a significant minority of learners do not make as much progress as they should and do not successfully complete their study programmes. Too many learners on level 3 programmes make less progress than would be expected from their starting points on entry.
- Most teaching does not sufficiently challenge learners to work to their full potential, resulting in learners making slow progress and the most-able under-achieve. The pace of learning is often too slow, so that many learners lose interest and stop learning. In contrast, in a few vocational subjects, such as sport and catering, learners benefit from high staff expectations; as a result, learners achieve well and produce work of a high standard.

- Teachers fail to plan their lessons sufficiently well as they do not make enough use of information on the prior learning and knowledge of their learners. Learners too often have limited opportunities to contribute fully to the learning process, so that they do not develop productive study skills quickly enough.
- Teachers do not use assessment methods successfully to find out how well their learners are making progress. Teachers often fail to assess whether learners have a good understanding of the topic before moving on with the subject. They do not check learners' knowledge regularly, with the result that learners do not achieve key learning objectives, and most-able learners do not reach their potential.
- Teachers' assessment of written work, in most cases, does not help or guide learners to improve. Conversely, on a minority of programmes, teachers provide detailed feedback, including the identification of learners' grammatical and spelling mistakes, and this helps them improve their work.
- Teachers do not promote the development of learners' English and mathematics skills in the majority of vocational lessons sufficiently well. Learners often continue to make the same basic errors and mistakes within their written work and do not receive the support they need to develop and make progress.
- Attendance is low in the majority of lessons and significantly lower in English and mathematics lessons, which means that too many learners cannot make good progress. Poor punctuality also negatively affects learning in a significant minority of lessons.
- All learners participate in a variety of work-related activities that support the development of their employability and working skills. For example, learners complete an 'expo' project within the first six weeks at college where they develop communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills. Too few learners have benefited from external work experience previously. Managers have acknowledged this deficiency, and taken steps to improve the planning and management of work experience in the current year, so that all learners are expected to undertake appropriate placements, although it is too early to see the impact of this.
- Learners who remain on their course participate in a wide variety of good-quality enrichment opportunities, including sporting activities, links with local media including the BBC, employer visits and local and national competitions, which support and enhance their employability and social skills. For example, through effective partnership working with Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, performing arts learners acquired experience of being film extras. The majority of these learners subsequently gained external work placements at a range of employers within the performing arts sector.
- Learners develop good technical skills in effective practical sessions. For example, in catering, learners prepare fish to minimise how the college restaurant could avoid waste and add value and efficiency to the business.
- Learners have a clear understanding of health and safety and the use of personal protective equipment. They demonstrate good behaviour in and outside lessons and show respect to fellow learners and staff. Learners are positive about the British values displayed and discussed in tutorials. Most learners have a clear awareness of the signs of radicalisation and extremism and to whom they should report any concerns. They know how to keep themselves safe when using social media in and outside of the college.
- Learners receive appropriate impartial advice and guidance when choosing their study

programme for future career pathways and have a clear understanding of their routes to potential employment. Learners speak highly of the support they receive in making such choices and feel that staff support them well.

- Learners who complete their courses progress on to further and higher education and employment. Learners with additional learning needs receive effective support, enabling them to make the progress expected of them based on their prior achievements.

Adult learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Currently 1,131 adult learners attend courses. The large majority of learners undertake courses leading to vocational qualifications and GCSE English and mathematics, with the remaining learners undertaking access to higher education courses, trade union education and pre-employment courses. The college has removed provision for adults in English and mathematics functional skills and English for speakers of other languages from the curriculum in 2016/17.
- Teachers do not sufficiently take into account the individual abilities of learners when planning learning. Learners often complete the same tasks, irrespective of their starting points. As a result, the most able are not challenged sufficiently and the least able struggle to complete the tasks, which limits the progress that learners are able to make.
- Too few teachers set individual targets for learners. Consequently, learners are not aware of what they need to do to improve their work or achieve higher grades. This leads to learners not making the expected progress or developing the skills they need to produce good standards of work.
- In their feedback, teachers do not provide learners studying foundation and vocational subjects with sufficient detail on how to improve their work. They do not support learners to develop their English skills, for instance by helping them to identify and correct spelling and punctuation errors.
- Teachers provide very effective impartial information, advice and guidance, which enables learners to be fully aware of how to progress to the next level of learning or into work. For example, the early introduction of university visits and UCAS applications for learners on access to higher education courses enables them to make informed decisions on their chosen route to university.
- Learners on pre-employment courses achieve well. Teachers successfully prepare learners for their next steps. The college's relationship with Jobcentre Plus, The Manchester Airport Group and Trade Union Learning supports the majority of learners enrolled on short programmes to progress into employment and/or further study.
- In theory lessons, teachers utilise their high levels of subject knowledge and practical experience to motivate learners successfully. Their sharing of this knowledge enables learners to develop a much deeper understanding of occupational standards and industry requirements.
- Teachers support learners well on their programmes and consequently they enjoy their learning. This enjoyment increases the confidence of learners, many of whom have been out of formal education for some time. They take pride in the skills and knowledge they develop.

Apprenticeships

Inadequate

- The college has 253 intermediate apprentices and 367 advanced apprentices. Apprenticeships are offered in nine subject areas, the largest of which are building and construction, engineering and manufacturing technologies. The college provides all the apprenticeships directly rather than through subcontractors.
- Too many apprentices have not completed their apprenticeships successfully in the past three years because of inadequate planning, disrupted training and weak assessment practice. Many of those who completed their apprenticeships did not do so by their planned end date. Recently appointed managers acknowledge that achievement rates have declined to a very low level. They have adopted a positive, energetic and determined approach to reforming the apprenticeship provision; early indicators are positive but have not yet led to improvements.
- Managers acknowledge that apprenticeship programmes have not been designed and managed effectively to meet the needs of each individual apprentice. Trainers do not measure apprentices' starting points in vocational subjects and in English, mathematics and information and communication technology before their training begins. Trainers place insufficient importance on identifying and responding to apprentices' additional learning needs. Trainers do not ensure that apprentices are sufficiently stimulated and challenged by their training programme; consequently, their progress is too slow.
- Managers have not ensured that trainers plan the on- and off-the-job learning in conjunction with employers to ensure that apprentice programmes meet the statutory requirements. College staff do not liaise with employers sufficiently when planning training and assessments to ensure that all apprentices have a cohesive training programme that enables them to progress quickly and achieve their full potential.
- Trainers do not set apprentices clear and specific targets to ensure they make good progress in their learning, and they allow learners too much time to achieve their targets. Trainers do not give enough attention to identifying targets to improve apprentices' personal effectiveness as well as their vocational knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Trainers do not ensure that the development of apprentices English and mathematics skills are integrated into their vocational work. Consequently, apprentices fail to appreciate the importance of good standards of English and the significance of the accurate use of number in the workplace. Tutors do not maximise opportunities to reinforce apprentices' development of these essential skills in vocational sessions.
- Apprentices receive too little information about the technical accuracy of their written answers or how they can improve. Apprentices' written work, including that in their portfolios, contains spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, which tutors do not identify or support apprentices to correct. Consequently, apprentices make repeated errors, which detract from the accuracy and quality of their work.
- Apprentices now develop good practical skills in, for example, bricklaying, catering, and painting and decorating. They enjoy acquiring vocational skills in the college workshops and, when possible, practising them in their workplaces. Apprentices understand clearly how their vocational knowledge and skills will help them to achieve their qualifications and gain employment in their chosen careers.
- Current apprentices receive good personal and pastoral support to help them deal with

personal and health-related issues. The support for a minority of apprentices who are at risk of leaving helps them to stay on programme.

- Newly appointed vocational tutors have very relevant and recent work experience, which they use successfully when they are coaching and tutoring apprentices. Apprentices value the way in which tutors reinforce various techniques in, for example, bricklaying, carpentry or plastering, by using real illustrations from their own work experience.
- Second-year apprentices' morale has improved considerably. They favourably compare their experience so far this year with the disappointing experiences many of them had last year, when tutors were regularly absent. As a result, apprentices' studies last year were disrupted or their on-the-job assessments were infrequent, limiting significantly their progress.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130512
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	4,409
Principal	Mr Simon Andrews
Telephone number	01612 965941
Website	www.stockport.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 or above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	452	98	473	461	489	426	1	46
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	151	102	166	201	0	0		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	6							
Funding received from:	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Not applicable							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the vice principal, quality, teaching, learning and assessment, 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.

Inspection team

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