

Franklin College

Sixth form college

Inspection dates

11–14 October 2016

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

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Leaders and managers do not make improvements to weak provision quickly or consistently enough.
- Students make insufficient progress in too many subjects, particularly at AS level.
- Not enough students resitting their qualifications in GCSE English and mathematics achieve a grade A* to C.
- A significant minority of students are not given sufficiently difficult work in lessons.
- Staff do not ensure that students know what progress they are making or what they need to do to fulfil their potential.

The provider has the following strengths

- Senior leaders, managers and staff create a highly inclusive environment where students feel safe, develop their personal skills well, behave responsibly and demonstrate values of tolerance and respect.
- Students benefit from a well-planned, coherent and relevant curriculum.
- Students develop good English skills while studying for their main qualifications.

Full report

Information about the provider

- The college has one main site in Grimsby. Most of the students attend the college full time, are aged 16 to 18 and are on study programmes. The vast majority of students are on courses at level 3, with the majority on academic courses. The remaining proportion are split between those taking vocational programmes and those taking mixed vocational and academic programmes. Most adult students take part-time courses. A very small number of apprentices are enrolled at the college and employed by local employers.
- The local area is one of great contrasts with areas of high deprivation and some relatively affluent ones. The proportion of school leavers achieving five GCSEs grades A* to C including English and mathematics was lower when compared with the national average in 2014/15. Students' attainment on entry to the college is generally lower than for sixth form colleges. There are a number of schools with sixth forms in the area and a general further education college.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers check students' progress regularly and plan activities that will challenge the most able and provide support for those who find the topic difficult so that all students make good progress in their studies
 - staff make students more aware of the progress they are making towards achieving their qualification and enable them to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Use quality improvement measures more effectively to identify how to improve teaching in weak subjects quickly and consistently.
- Ensure that students receive effective teaching and good support to help them achieve grades A* to C in GCSE English and mathematics resits.
- Tackle the variation in achievement rates on level 3 programmes so that students' progress and achievement in all subject areas reach the same high standards as those in the best performing courses.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not used quality improvement strategies, including self-assessment, to identify weaker areas of provision and make improvements quickly or consistently enough to ensure that all provision is good or better. Managers use a comprehensive range of data well to identify underperformance at individual student and course level. This analysis is used to set targets, which senior leaders and governors monitor carefully.
- The self-assessment report identifies the majority of areas requiring improvement accurately. The associated quality improvement plan focuses too much on processes and not enough on improving the experience of students. The self-assessment reports at curriculum level are often weak. For example, managers identify processes for sharing and developing teaching and learning without linking these to specific areas of underperformance and the impact the actions will have on improving students' outcomes. Consequently, curriculum reviews do not result in clear actions for teams to carry out or for managers to monitor progress.
- College staff who observe lessons provide reliable and accurate judgements of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Managers provide effective staff development, which improves teachers' practice where it is weak. Teachers who do not improve their practice following intensive support leave the college. Teachers recognise and greatly value the staff development and individual coaching that they receive to improve specific aspects of their teaching. However, this is not improving teaching and learning or the outcomes for students quickly enough.
- Senior leaders and managers ensure that close collaboration with schools and partners results in a well-planned, coherent curriculum. This meets the needs of students, employers and the priorities of the local enterprise partnerships well. However, the requirements of the study programmes, such as work experience, are not yet fully met for all students.
- Senior leaders and governors promote a highly inclusive ethos where students are tolerant of each other and behave responsibly. Students and staff demonstrate a culture that aligns well to British values such as tolerance and respect for others.

The governance of the provider

- Governors have a good range of skills, experience and expertise to support senior leaders effectively. Governors know the college well. They analyse data and performance information to support improvement.
- Some of the data provided to governors is over-optimistic and gives them an unrealistic view of the predicted progress students make from their starting points. As a consequence, governors are not able to challenge senior managers effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Managers maintain an accurate and up-to-date single central record of the checks made during recruitment. Designated safeguarding officers ensure that all staff have introductory and refresher training on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Strong and effective partnerships exist with the local safeguarding team, social workers and voluntary organisations. Staff respond quickly and appropriately to any safeguarding concerns raised by students. Students know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and social media.
- Personal tutors raise students' awareness of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism, and British values, in group tutorials. Most students have a good understanding of these concepts. Designated safeguarding officers are well informed about the main extremism risks in the region and use this to inform training.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- In too many subject areas, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment that students experience is not good enough. This is reflected in the differences in achievement and progress that students make in different subjects.
- Teachers do not always make sufficient use of information about students' prior attainment when planning their lessons, and do not ensure that they tailor learning to students' needs. As a consequence, the most able students find the work too easy and weaker students struggle.
- Too often during lessons, teachers do not check students' knowledge and understanding before moving on to the next topic. Too many teachers do not use questioning well enough to test students' understanding or to encourage them to develop their theories further. The more confident students dominate and less confident students do not demonstrate their learning sufficiently, or are left behind.
- Students' awareness of their own progress against their target grades is weak. Although students know their target grades, they are not sufficiently aware of their own progress towards completing their qualification. Students do not participate enough in progress meetings. For example, they do not take notes for their own use or reference.
- Teachers' marking of students' work gives clear guidance for improvement, and most work is marked for spelling, punctuation and grammar. In a minority of classes, spelling and punctuation errors are not identified or corrected, and students' presentation of their written work is weak.
- Teachers develop students' written English skills well using initiatives such as 'word of the week' to equip students with the technical and professional terminology that they need. Teachers do not encourage students enough to develop their oral presentation skills when speaking to others in lessons. The development of students' mathematical skills is weak in too many lessons.
- In subjects where students make good progress, teachers use well-paced and structured activities which maintain students' interest and stimulate learning. Teachers' clear examples of difficult concepts, for example in mathematics, enable students to grasp the concepts quickly. As a result, students are involved and keen to learn, and make good progress within these lessons.

- Teachers use their subject knowledge and realistic examples linked to subject areas to help to heighten students' interest. For example in criminology, a discussion of justice and crime scenarios challenged students' thinking about society and diversity. In history, students relate economic and social policies very well to different periods in British political history. Such lessons reinforce British values well.
- Adult students benefit from stimulating teaching, with topics and discussion that challenge and develop their knowledge and understanding. They see the value of the learning for their personal and career development. Apprentices benefit from carefully planned learning programmes that enable the vast majority of the small number on programmes to make appropriate progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

- Too few students improved their grade to a C or above when resitting GCSE English and mathematics. Teachers do not do enough to develop students' mathematics skills in lessons.
- Not enough students, particularly on vocational courses, for example in travel and tourism, have external work placements and work-related activities that enhance their future career opportunities and develop their employability skills. Students in many subject areas participate in a wide range of work-related activities, but this is not the case for all courses. Work experience for health and social care and childcare students is particularly strong and well-managed.
- Students who do not wish to progress to higher education receive insufficiently helpful careers advice and guidance. College staff are aware of this and have strategies in place to improve the guidance that students receive. Careers advice and guidance for students who intend to progress to higher education are effective. Mentors from business and education carry out mock interviews with students to help them develop interview and communication skills. A large number of students who complete their programme progress successfully to a range of higher education institutions, including prestigious ones.
- Most students take pride in their work, ensure it is neat, well presented and to the expected standard for the level of their programme. They develop self-confidence and talk confidently about their courses, what they are learning and their future career aspirations.
- Students understand how to stay safe and are aware of the risks posed by radicalisation and extremism, including how they relate to their lives and the local area. Staff ensure that relevant issues are covered in group tutorials, such as coercive control. Students feel safe in and around the college and know how to raise concerns about their own safety should they need to.
- Students develop a good understanding of the diverse society in which they live. They develop a high level of respect for people of different faiths and lifestyles. Students feel comfortable and confident to explore, for example, lesbian, gay and bisexual themes.

- Students attend lessons well and arrive on time. They behave well in lessons and enjoy their learning. They show respect for their teachers and peers and conduct themselves responsibly. They develop their social and personal skills well through their studies and broader aspects of college life, including the wide range of enrichment activities available to them.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- The progress that students make is too dependent upon which subjects they study. On some A- and AS-level and vocational courses, a significant number of students make very good progress compared with their starting points. However, this positive picture is not replicated across all subjects and, in many, students' progress is too slow. Too many current students are not making sufficient progress. A high proportion of students on vocational courses achieve high grades.
- Too many students leave the college over the course of their two-year study programme. Retention is high during each year, but a large number of students leave between the end of Year 1 and the start of Year 2. Although a number of these students move on to positive destinations, such as apprenticeships, there is also a significant proportion who restart the first year, whose destination is not known or who are looking for work.
- On AS-level courses, the proportion of students who achieve their qualifications has declined from the previous year and is below the comparable rate for similar providers in 2014/15. The proportion of students taking GCSE English and mathematics qualifications who achieve a grade A* to C declined in 2015/16. A high proportion of students achieve their A-level qualifications.
- Managers and leaders have put in place a number of measures to address poor performance and these have led to improvements in students' achievement of qualifications in only a small minority of subjects. In the majority of weaker subjects, improvements have been limited.
- There are no significant gaps in performance between different groups of students, such as different genders and students with high needs, compared with their peers. Managers have analysed the performance data of certain groups of vulnerable students, such as those living independently and those who have been in care. This analysis shows that some of the students in these groups do not achieve as well as their peers and actions are in place to address this.
- The collection and analysis of destination data for students who complete their courses is thorough, and managers know where the vast majority move on to. Nearly three quarters of students completing level 3 courses progress to higher education, with many achieving places at prestigious institutions. The majority of the remaining students progress onto further education, apprenticeships or employment.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130586
Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	2,096
Principal	Mr Trevor Wray
Telephone number	01472 875 000
Website	www.franklin.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	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	9	295	106	68	1520	17	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	15	5	2	2	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	3		-		3			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	22							
Funding received from:	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Grimsby Town FC Sports and Education Trust							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy principal, 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

Heather Barnett, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrea Machell	Her Majesty's Inspector
Catharine Jackson	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Lamb	Ofsted Inspector

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