

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



30 November 2016

Mr Chris Ball  
Principal and Chief Executive  
Brooksby Melton College  
Asfordby Road  
Melton Mowbray  
Leicestershire LE13 0HJ

Dear Mr Ball

### **Short inspection of Brooksby Melton College**

Following the short inspection on 1 and 2 November 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since the provider was judged to be good in November 2012.

Owing to the length of time that has elapsed since the previous full inspection, inspectors prepared lines of enquiry drawn from your most recent self-assessment report, position statements and qualification achievement data.

### **This provider continues to be good.**

Since the previous inspection, you have led the college's senior leadership team, supported by an active and well-informed governing body, to instil in staff and learners a collaborative ethos and high expectations that place the nurturing of students' employability and life chances at its centre. The completion in September 2015 of a new state-of-the-art campus at the Melton site and professional sports and land-based learning facilities at Brooksby provides an excellent high-quality learning environment that students and teachers value. Students and parents report very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the college's provision.

Curriculum planning matches local needs well and reflects leaders' commitment to providing a high-quality vocational offer that specialises in land-based industries, rural hospitality, sport, performing arts and media studies. Your managers have maintained their good relationships with local and regional employers, and they continue to use these effectively to ensure that students and apprentices receive teaching and training that are relevant to the industry they wish to enter. Particularly good links with local sports teams, care providers, health spas and hotels ensure that students develop good vocational skills and significantly increase their employability.

You and your senior managers have made good progress in maintaining the high

standards of provision identified at the last inspection. Robust performance management, together with accurate and honest self-assessment, has helped you to manage and support underperforming staff. As a consequence, teaching, learning and assessment continue to be very effective in helping students to progress and achieve.

Your decision to reduce the volume of apprenticeship provision subcontracted to often poor-quality independent learning providers has resulted in improved outcomes for apprentices over the last two years. The proportion who complete within the planned period is now in line with that in similar colleges, though you acknowledge that outcomes still need to improve further.

Lessons at both campuses are lively, engaging and vocationally relevant. They are well prepared and learner profiles are used effectively to meet the individual needs of all students, including those who have high needs. Teachers make particularly good use of information learning technology to enliven lessons, especially in sport and in health and care. Managers acknowledge that learners' use of the virtual learning environment, especially those on apprenticeship programmes, is still not high enough.

The college provides a welcoming and safe learning environment, including for those who have high needs, who have integrated well with their peers. Students' behaviour in class and in communal areas of the college is exemplary. Those on vocational courses in hairdressing, beauty therapy and healthcare courses take pride in their professional appearance and work to industry standards. Managers provide a very wide range of well-attended enrichment activities and additional qualifications that students value and which enhance their career prospects.

Managers have responded well to the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes. They have introduced a range of very well-structured and responsive programmes that have taken careful account of labour market information, student demand and the needs of local employers. Outcomes for students on these programmes are high, with the large majority progressing into higher education, training or employment.

Qualification achievement rates for students on study programmes, which account for the large majority of the college's provision, have been consistently high for the last three years, with few differences in performance between groups of students. Most students achieve the grades expected of them given their prior attainment, with a few achieving higher grades, especially in land-based study programmes. College managers have implemented strategies to help more students achieve the highest grades of which they are capable, but these measures have not yet had sufficient impact.

The development of students' English and mathematics is particularly good. Managers have been very diligent in ensuring that students' entitlement to good-quality English and mathematics is an essential component in the design of the study programme. As a result, the achievement of high grades in GCSE English and

mathematics is well above that in similar colleges, though managers acknowledge that further improvements are required.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Managers responsible for safeguarding are clear about their responsibilities and they have established effective practices for safeguarding students. Staff are confident in referring potential concerns to safeguarding staff, who investigate and record each case thoroughly. Managers have established good relationships with a range of external agencies to ensure that they have suitable points of referral for those students who need further help.

Governors, senior leaders and managers have taken effective action to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that learners are safe at the college's two campuses. Staff ensure that effective arrangements are in place for learners on work experience and for apprentices in the workplace. Learners report that they feel safe and that the college has a strong culture of respect.

Managers have good security and monitoring arrangements of their information technology systems to ensure that learners stay safe when working online. Managers maintain an overview of the progress of learners made vulnerable by their circumstances, including care leavers, those who have health concerns and students who have special educational needs. They ensure that effective arrangements are in place to keep these learners safe and help them to achieve.

Managers have implemented their obligations under the 'Prevent' duty well, with appropriate staff training and training for learners which ensure that they have a good understanding of British values. Students are developing a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe from the dangers of extremism and radicalisation, although managers recognise that there is still work to do to develop students' understanding further.

Managers ensure that recruitment processes for new staff are well managed. They ensure that all new members of staff have appropriate background checks where their roles warrant this. Human resources staff maintain an up-to-date record of Disclosure and Barring Service checks and references for staff.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders, managers and teachers have embraced the principles of study programmes well and are determined to ensure that they prepare young people for employment. Leaders have set high expectations for all 16- to 19-year-olds to gain external work experience and they provide this for the majority of learners. Students develop very good vocational skills through the range of high-quality work placements and work-related enrichment activities that managers have been able to secure.
- Inspection evidence supports the large majority of the key strengths identified through self-evaluation and these strengths outweigh significantly the areas for

improvement. However, the judgement that outcomes for learners are outstanding is not supported by inspection evidence because:

- not enough students achieve the highest grades of which they are capable
  - apprenticeship outcomes are not yet high enough
  - the proportion of students achieving high grades in GCSE English and mathematics is not yet high enough.
- College managers have strengthened target-setting arrangements, especially for students on level 3 programmes, and have trained teachers to help them deploy effective strategies that challenge the most able students in their classes. It is too soon to assess the full impact of these measures.
  - Students know their target grades and they work hard to achieve them. They are clear about progress against their learning targets and are aware of how to achieve their goals and the standards needed to move to further study or employment. As a result, the large majority of students achieve qualification grades at the level expected of them.
  - Students who do not have a GCSE grade C or above in English or mathematics are placed on an appropriate English, mathematics or functional skills programme. Teachers use initial and diagnostic assessments well to support students' development of these skills, and students understand the importance of successfully achieving these qualifications.
  - Teachers skilfully instil in students an understanding and respect for the specialist language of the vocational subject they are studying. The deployment of specialist English and mathematics teachers in vocational areas has been particularly successful in helping teachers to map these skills to the vocational area. In sports studies, for example, students confidently articulate specialist terms such as pulmonary circulation, systemic circulation and hypertrophy in the context of athlete training programmes.
  - Managers make every effort to find out what happens to students after they finish their courses, and the vast majority progress to a destination in line with their original intention. However, managers have been unable to find out the destination of around 20% of full-time learners. Internal progression between different course levels is good.

### **Next steps for the provider**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- Outcomes for learners continue to improve, specifically, so that:
  - more students achieve the highest grades of which they are capable by setting them challenging in-year targets and by providing greater challenge during learning sessions
  - apprenticeship achievement rates continue to improve through the careful monitoring of the remaining subcontracted provision
  - the proportion of students achieving high grades in GCSE English and

mathematics improves further.

- They have a more accurate understanding of the impact of the study programmes by finding out what happens to students who finish their courses and for whom no destination data is available.

I am copying this letter to the Skills Funding Agency and the Education Funding Agency. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jai Sharda  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection we were assisted by the assistant principal, as nominee. We met you, your senior leaders, managers and governors. We visited both of your sites to observe teaching, learning and assessment and to look at learners' work and the facilities available to them. We spoke to learners whenever possible, including apprentices. We held meetings with staff and managers. We reviewed key documents including those relating to self-assessment, performance and safeguarding. We considered the views of learners and employers by reviewing the comments received on Ofsted's online questionnaires and by seeking their views during the inspection.