

# East Norfolk Sixth Form College

Sixth form college

**Inspection dates**

3–4 November 2016

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

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good provider

- High standards of teaching, learning and assessment in the large majority of provision enable the large majority of students to make good progress from their starting points.
- Most students progress to positive destinations upon completion of their courses, including a high proportion taking up apprenticeships and courses at prestigious universities.
- Staff provide pertinent support that enables students who require additional help to achieve and make good progress.
- Students exhibit high standards of behaviour and demonstrate a very positive attitude to their learning.
- The large majority of teachers use their assessment skills adeptly to ensure that students excel.
- Leaders and managers have established a broad curriculum that is responsive to local needs, regional priorities and the ambitions of students.
- Students benefit from a broad range of purposeful enrichment activities that improve their subject knowledge and understanding of how to be useful members of society.
- Students studying chemistry, creative writing and law make particularly good progress.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- East Norfolk Sixth Form College is a medium-sized college located just outside Great Yarmouth in Gorleston-on-Sea, Norfolk. At the time of the inspection, approximately 1,650 students were studying at the college. Most are under the age of 19. The majority of students are on courses at level 3, studying AS and A levels, with the remainder enrolled on vocational qualifications at level 2 with a few on levels 1 and 4. Around 40 students are in receipt of high-needs funding.
- Great Yarmouth and the surrounding area has large pockets of deprivation. Unemployment is higher than the national average and the proportion of residents who have qualifications at level 2 and above is much lower than the regional or national average. The proportion of pupils in the schools from which the college recruits its students who achieve five GCSEs at grade C or above, including English and mathematics, is just below the national average.

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the small minority of subject areas where performance is not yet to a sufficiently high standard by ensuring that:
  - leaders and managers focus on improving the performance of the few teachers who have not yet enabled students to achieve the high grades of which they are capable
  - teachers plan a broad range of activities and tasks that meet the different ability levels of students and challenge them to excel.
- Ensure that teachers reinforce routinely the use of subject-related mathematics in lessons to enable students to improve their mathematics skills through regular practice.
- Urgently improve attendance on discrete English and mathematics courses, so that students develop these skills, achieve their qualifications and are better prepared for their next steps.
- Ensure that the tutorial programme meets the needs of all students and challenges them to improve their personal and social skills effectively.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The principal and governors have established a supportive culture that places a strong focus on setting high expectations of students and raising their aspirations to achieve the best they can. As a result, most teachers have high ambitions for their students and plan teaching, learning and assessment that ensure that the large majority of students make good progress.
- The broad A-level programme provides a wide choice of subjects for students that enable most to pursue their interests and progress to higher levels of learning, higher education or apprenticeships. Leaders and managers have been responsive to local needs and the priorities of the local enterprise partnership. Newly developed vocational courses reflect these needs well; for example, the introduction of a travel and tourism course with foreign language options.
- Leaders and managers have implemented the requirements of the study programme to a high standard and ensured that the large majority of students receive a high-quality experience that prepares them well for further study and the world of work.
- Managers have established fruitful partnerships that help to develop and enhance the curriculum and provide work-related learning. For example, a local offshore survey company works well with science, geography and geology students, enabling them to develop the skills needed in this important local sector. The company provides valuable work experience that students use well to enhance their subject skills and understanding of the demands of employers.
- Judgements within the self-assessment report are broadly accurate and identify clearly areas for development, with corresponding improvement actions and measurable outcomes. Team leaders know their courses and teams well and have a clear understanding of what needs to be improved. They have developed appropriate improvement plans and use them effectively to raise the attainment levels of students.
- Managers monitor accurately the quality and impact of teaching, learning and assessment. They develop appropriate action plans for teachers after completing observations of teaching, learning and assessment. The large majority of teachers make good use of the high-quality training that leaders provide to improve their performance. However, actions to bring about improvements in a small minority of lessons have been too slow.
- Leaders' and managers' aspirations for the college to be inclusive and respectful are reflected well in students' behaviour and attitudes. Staff embrace diversity and promote equality of opportunity through a culture of mutual respect that students respond to well.
- Leaders and managers monitor the progress of different groups of students so that none is disadvantaged. For example, managers' scrutiny of the achievement of students with Asperger syndrome on different courses has led to an improvement in the quality of support, advice and guidance they receive. As a result, they enrol on courses that best meet their needs and maximise their chances of success.

- Managers evaluate the progression and destinations of their students carefully to inform future planning. Most students successfully progress to higher education or purposeful employment.

### **The governance of the provider**

- Governance arrangements are good. Well-trained and knowledgeable governors use their skills well to ensure that the college meets the needs of students, parents and the employment demands of the area. Governors have a good understanding of their college and the performance of all subject areas. They challenge leaders robustly on the accurate information they receive.
- Governors have been successful in ensuring financial and organisational stability during a period of significant change within the senior team and uncertainty surrounding possible mergers.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Managers follow up all safeguarding and student welfare issues appropriately to resolution. The tracking and monitoring of students at risk is very good. As a result, students feel safe and are safe.
- College managers conduct thorough frequent recruitment checks to ensure the suitability of all staff and vet visiting speakers effectively.
- Managers ensure that all staff receive relevant training on the 'Prevent' duty, including how to highlight the dangers of extremism to students. Managers use a pertinent 'Prevent risk assessment' to monitor the promotion of British values; as a result, they ensure that students acquire a good understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Most teachers promote high expectations for their students and as a result, the large majority achieve high grades, especially those studying AS- and A-level courses. Most teachers plan their lessons well to ensure that students are able to develop their higher-order thinking skills and reach their full potential. As a result, the large majority of students are making good progress; they enjoy their time at college and produce work to a high standard. However, a small minority of teachers do not adapt lessons to meet the different ability levels of students. For example, teachers adopt a one-size-fits-all approach that fails to enable a minority of students to excel.
- The large majority of teachers' planning takes good account of students' starting points and uses information effectively to ensure that students benefit from purposeful tasks and activities that enable them to progress and achieve.
- Staff support students in receipt of high-needs funding especially well. They use effective techniques and approaches to enable students to become more independent and steadily reduce their need for support. For example, students with autistic spectrum disorder participate in a 'talking partners' programme which supports their transition into college and fosters the development of skills such as teamwork, while helping them to become more resilient. As a result, most students with high needs achieve at the same rate as

their peers. The majority progress to higher education at the end of their time at college.

- Most students develop good independent study skills and regularly use the wide range of high-quality resources available in the college during breaktimes. For example, learning resource centres are equipped to a high standard and students receive good-quality support to help them conduct research for their homework, complete applications for university or prepare for interviews.
- The large majority of teachers check and extend students' understanding accurately through frequent questioning, and use of assessment and assignment work. Most students receive good quality, constructive written feedback on their work, which enables them to improve. For example, in health and social care a teacher's incisive feedback on an anatomy assignment resulted in students new to the rigour of level 3 assignments significantly improving their work to meet the high standards expected.
- Teachers broaden students' understanding of equality and diversity well through imaginative projects and assignments. For example, in a sociology lesson, students considered how interpretations of post-modernist society shape the lifestyle and behaviour of individuals and then reflected on their own lifestyle decisions in a perceptive and well-informed manner.
- The majority of teachers enable students to develop their written and spoken English skills well. They place a strong emphasis on syntax and spelling and are adept at ensuring that students understand technical terms and apply these in their writing. For example, in theatre studies students develop high levels of analytical skills when discussing the political thinking surrounding Brechtian theatre. While most feedback on written work in vocational courses identifies and corrects students' errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation, not enough students receive feedback or are set targets that support the improvement of their wider English skills, such as how to improve the evaluative nature of their writing.
- Teachers' promotion of students' mathematics skills requires improvement. Too many teachers do not reinforce routinely students' understanding and application of mathematics in a vocational context. As a result, too many students do not improve their mathematics skills effectively.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

- Students are motivated to learn and have a very positive attitude towards their studies. They demonstrate high standards of behaviour and are respectful to each other and to staff. Attendance is very good for A-level and vocational subjects, and punctuality to all lessons is excellent. Students arrive prepared to work, apply themselves to their studies and engage with learning activities well. However, attendance on discrete English and mathematics courses is low and attendance of vocational students at tutorials requires improvement.
- The majority of students value the weekly tutorial sessions, which provide comprehensive support and guidance on how to improve their study skills, keep themselves safe, and apply for places at universities. However, too much of the tutorial programme is dedicated to those who intend to progress to higher education and as a result, too many students do not find these sessions useful and do not attend.
- Students participate in a wide range of well-conceived enrichment activities that support

the development of their personal and social skills well. For example, a good proportion of students participate in innovative fundraising activities for local causes. Managers ensure that a large volume of students participate in activities that highlight the dangers of bullying and discrimination. Students regularly participate in educational visits and gain much from attending lectures given by guest speakers from local and national high-profile employers.

- In vocational programmes, students develop good practical skills. In media studies, they use dedicated specialist software confidently and improve their presentation skills well. Those with an interest in working in offshore industries such as wind farms spend time living and working on-board service vessels; such activities deepen their understanding of the demands of employers.
- Students receive good advice and guidance at the start of their programmes that enables them in to choose appropriate qualifications and subjects that will help them fulfil their career aspirations. As a result, in 2015/16 significantly more students progressed from the subjects taken at AS level to A level with far fewer changing their subjects than previously.
- Most students gain a good understanding of the importance of British values and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism as a direct result of the well-planned induction and tutorial programme. The importance of respect and tolerance is promoted successfully throughout the college. For example, students are involved in the promotion of the rights of students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. As a result, students have a heightened awareness of the rights of all groups of people.

## Outcomes for learners

**Good**

- The large majority of students are making good progress. Leaders' data for 2015/16 indicates that the proportion who complete their courses successfully is broadly in line with other similar providers nationally and has increased since the previous inspection. Most students on AS- and A-level programmes make good progress from their starting points – particularly those studying chemistry, creative writing and law, who make very good progress. In a minority of subjects such as geography and history, students do not achieve the high grades of which they are capable relative to their prior attainment.
- In AS- and A-level subjects, students produce work to a consistently high standard. Teachers ensure that students check and correct their own work and produce assignments that are rich in depth and content. For example, in law, psychology and economics, teachers reinforce frequently the appropriate use of technical and subject-specific terms, such as 'precedents' when referring to case law. In vocational programmes such as art, students develop their skills using different media and a broad range of techniques. As a result, they produce high-quality work, which they display with pride.
- The small proportion of students for whom the college receives high-needs funding achieve at the same rate as their peers. Managers have been effective in reducing the achievement gaps between different groups of students including gender, those with experience of local authority care and those in receipt of free school meals. As a result, most students achieve at similar rates. Support staff have been particularly effective in ensuring that students with dyslexia and hearing impairment are not disadvantaged and these students achieve at a higher rate than their peers.

- Most students progress to further or higher education or employment on completion of their studies. The majority of students on A-level programmes, including those in receipt of high-needs funding progress to higher education with a good proportion studying courses at prestigious universities.
- Most students who come to the college with low IGCSE grades in English almost always achieve an A\* to C pass when they retake the exam. Achievement rates for those who study mathematics functional skills courses at level 1 are good. Few students studying English functional skills at level 2 achieve. While the proportion who achieve A\* to C grade passes on mathematics GCSE courses is above that of other providers nationally, it remains too low.
- In 2015/16 leaders' data indicates that not enough students studying vocational courses at levels 2 and 3 achieve high grades.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	130767
Type of provider	Sixth Form College
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	1,643
Principal/CEO	Dr Catherine Richards
Telephone number	01493 662234
Website	<a href="http://www.eastnorfolk.ac.uk">www.eastnorfolk.ac.uk</a>

## 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)	3	-	212	5	1401	16	11	1
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	38							
Funding received from:	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the 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 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.

## Inspection team

Shane Langthorne, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Roger Pilgrim	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Sherwin	Ofsted Inspector
Penny Fawcus	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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