

Totton College (Part of Nacro)

Independent training provider

Inspection dates

6–9 June 2017

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	Provision for learners with high needs	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement		
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not applicable	

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have failed to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good.
- The proportion of learners on 16 to 19 study programmes who achieve their qualifications is too low.
- Too many teachers have insufficiently high expectations of their learners in lessons, and do not ensure they make the best possible progress.
- Learners' attendance is low, especially in English and mathematics, and this impedes their progress.
- Not enough learners benefit from relevant, well-planned work experience linked to their study programme.
- Staff do not provide learners with high-quality impartial careers advice to support them to achieve their career goals.

The provider has the following strengths

- Senior leaders and managers have communicated the ethos and vision of Nacro to the staff at the college well, this has had a positive impact on the culture and morale.
- The proportion of learners aged 16 to 18 who achieve grades A* to C in mathematics GCSE is higher than that of similar providers.
- Learners are confident and respectful of each other and enjoy learning in the open, friendly and welcoming environment where they feel safe.
- Leaders and managers have recently invested significantly in a well-planned programme of staff development for teachers to improve their practice.
- Learners studying on level 3 courses achieve well and the majority attain high grades.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Totton College is a small technical education college which is part of the not-for-profit training provision run by Nacro. Nacro is a national social justice charity. The college is located in Totton, a small town close to Southampton and serves the diverse population of the town and its surrounding areas that include large areas of deprivation.
- Unemployment in the area is higher than both regional and national averages. The proportion of pupils achieving five A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics is below the national average.
- The college provides a wide range of post-16 education and training including study programmes for 16- to 19-year-olds in a variety of vocational areas, adult learning programmes and apprenticeships. The college also works with local schools to provide young people with opportunities to study vocational programmes while still at school. At the time of inspection approximately 290 learners were enrolled on study programmes at the college; of these the college receives high needs funding for 72.
- Provision for apprentices and adult learning were not in scope for this inspection and were inspected as part of the Nacro provision.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Managers should improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that learners make the progress of which they are capable and achieve their qualifications, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers plan and deliver interesting and challenging lessons to meet the needs and abilities of learners, including the most able
 - ensuring that learners achieve their potential by setting them aspirational targets, closely monitoring their progress and intervening where progress is not sufficiently swift.
- Leaders and managers should improve English and mathematics teaching to ensure that learners achieve qualifications in these essential subjects.
- Managers should take effective steps to ensure that learners' attendance improves rapidly across all subjects, to increase their opportunities to make good progress.
- Managers must ensure that all learners benefit from good-quality, impartial careers advice to make sure they realise their aims and aspirations.
- Managers should ensure that more learners on study programmes develop their work-related skills through participation in meaningful, external work experience.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the transfer of ownership to Nacro in December 2015, the pace of change has been slow. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is not consistently good, attendance is low and not enough learners aged 16 to 18 achieve their qualifications. However, senior leaders and managers from Nacro have worked diligently to establish a new management team, create a safe place for learners to study and to place the college at the heart of the community.
- The chief executive officer of Nacro, working with the board of trustees and newly appointed local senior leadership team, has established a clear vision for the college to serve the local community. Adult learning and apprenticeships provide much needed skills training in Totton, and the college has realistic plans to extend apprenticeships to other sectors such as retail and logistics. Vocational study programmes and provision for learners with high needs provide appropriate pathways for younger learners to develop skills for work and independence in line with their chosen careers.
- Leaders and managers are beginning to respond to local needs and have strategic plans to develop vocational education and training in line with the local enterprise partnership priorities to increase opportunities for employment; for example, in project management, information technology and the creative sector. Recent partnerships with local schools have led to the provision of alternative vocational training to a small number of learners aged 14 to 16 and there are plans to extend this provision in 2017/18. The large majority of these learners progress into further education at the college.
- Managers have not identified the reasons behind learners' low achievement and how these should be addressed. They monitor progress against their quality improvement plan well but do not have sufficient understanding of whether or not actions are having a positive impact for learners. More recent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning have not taken place swiftly enough to improve learners' achievements.
- Managers do not identify well enough the aspects of teaching that individual teachers need to improve. Although managers evaluate the quality of teaching through observations, they do not use these evaluations to target appropriate support and training for individual teachers or to share the good practice that they observe. Managers do not ensure that teachers' objectives are sufficiently focused on aspects of their teaching that require improvement.
- Managers have been more successful with recently introduced, whole-college training to support teachers to improve. This includes a wide range of topics such as planning effective lessons and assessing learners' progress. Teachers are keen to learn and develop their practice and are confident to try new approaches to make learning more stimulating and enjoyable. Managers and staff report improvements in their motivation and morale because of the support they receive from senior managers and leaders. It is too soon to judge the impact of this on learners' achievements.
- Managers and trustees do not have access to reliable and detailed information on learners' achievement or progress. As a result, they do not have a clear overall picture of how well learners are doing, and are not able to identify areas of weakness or

underperformance early enough to intervene successfully.

- Managers do not monitor the progression or destination of learners who leave the college systematically enough. They do not know how successfully their courses prepare learners to work in sectors related to their courses.

The governance of the provider

- The trustees of Nacro provide governance of the college. Board members have a wide range of experience in business and industry, but until recently did not have an educational specialist to focus specifically on education and training. Because of this lack of expertise and knowledge, they failed to hold the senior managers to account for the quality of provision.
- Trustees now have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the college through leaders' and managers' detailed and comprehensive reports, including safeguarding, finances and achievements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Nacro safeguarding procedures and processes have been effectively introduced to the college. As a result, learners are safe and feel safe. Managers check thoroughly the suitability of individuals to work with young people and vulnerable adults. All staff complete extensive safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training and are clear about their individual and collective responsibilities to keep learners safe.
- Safeguarding and incidents of bullying are managed well, recorded appropriately and referred to relevant external agencies where necessary. Records are shared effectively with Nacro safeguarding leads and included in reports to trustees. Managers monitor the health and safety of learners and staff well and record risks and incidents as appropriate; these records are used to inform senior leaders and trustees regularly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good; for example, teaching and learning are not sufficiently good in health and social care but good in hairdressing. Recently, leaders and managers have increased their expectations of teachers and are now supporting them to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Teachers have detailed information about each of their learners' needs and abilities, but do not make sufficient use of this to plan and deliver lessons. As a result, the most able learners find learning activities too easy and are not challenged to achieve their full potential and the least able find the work too hard and struggle to keep up.
- Teachers do not assess what learners have understood and learned and their checks on learning are not sufficiently thorough. They do not routinely use appropriate questioning techniques to assess, reinforce or extend learners' understanding. In a few instances, one or two learners dominate question and answer sessions to the exclusion of others in the

group.

- Teachers do not set sufficiently demanding or individualised targets for learners to help them achieve their qualifications; for example, learners' targets at the front of their workbooks are all the same and have not been reviewed or updated over time. Teachers' activities and exercises are not effective in developing learners' critical thinking skills, improving their insight or raising their aspirations.
- Teachers do not consistently structure the activities they design well enough or provide sufficiently clear guidance to help learners complete them and make good progress. For example, learners struggled to complete a task because they were unclear as to the different stages needed to achieve it.
- Managers and teachers have been successful in giving learners a good understanding of British values so that learners can, for example, distinguish between being tolerant and being accepting of different cultures. However, they have not been sufficiently effective in developing learners' understanding of these different cultures.
- Although teachers mark and return learners' written work promptly and their assessments are accurate, they do not consistently provide sufficient information on how learners might improve the quality of their future work. Not all teachers correct learners' grammatical and spelling mistakes which means learners have insufficient guidance and continue to repeat these errors.
- Many class sizes are small and give teachers opportunities to work with learners individually. Teachers make good use of these opportunities to provide beneficial coaching and support to help learners gain new skills.
- The college offers learners a high-quality learning environment with spacious, well-equipped classrooms that provide a welcoming and professional learning environment. Learners enjoy being at the college and value the quality of accommodation that it provides.
- Staff carry out effective assessments of learners at the start of their programmes to ensure that they study on the most appropriate courses. Their assessments are successful in identifying learners' English and mathematics skills and their additional learning and support needs. Managers and staff are responsive to these needs, placing high priority on providing good levels of support to make sure learners participate and improve.
- Teachers pay careful attention to developing learners' English and mathematics skills in vocational lessons, introducing them seamlessly into teaching and often making them relevant to their vocational subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

- Learners' attendance is low, impeding them from making good progress. Managers have not yet improved attendance to meet the college target; it is particularly low in English and mathematics classes.
- Not enough learners have access to an external work experience placement that links to learning in the classroom to prepare them for employment.
- Too few learners access careers information, advice or guidance either via the online tool or in person. Specialist representatives are not routinely involved with the annual review

of learners with an education, health and care plan. As a result, many learners are unable to say what it is they would like to do when they leave college.

- The majority of learners are involved in useful work-related and enrichment activities. For example, learners on sports programmes have undertaken an ironman challenge and childcare learners have raised funds for the local intensive care unit. Learners become self-assured and gain confidence by interacting with the public through taking part in these activities.
- Learners feel safe in the college and online; they are able to articulate what it is that makes them feel safe, how to raise a complaint and who they would go to for help and advice. All learners have a practical understanding of how to stay safe from radicalisation and what to do if they are concerned about the risk of extremism.
- Learners are well behaved, polite and respectful of each other, staff and visitors. A few take advantage of free membership to the leisure centre situated next door to the college in order to stay physically fit. The college nurse supports learners well with their physical and mental health, signposting to specialist services as needed.
- Although attendance is too low, learners that do attend arrive punctually to lessons, well prepared for learning. They are well behaved in class, settle to tasks and activities and contribute well. Learners are proud of their work in their portfolios; they exhibit work in the community, in the college gallery and on college walls.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- Despite recent improvements, there is too much variation in the achievement of learners aged 16 to 18. For example, young learners in public services, sport, and travel and tourism achieve well, but achievement rates in motor vehicle and childcare programmes are low.
- Too few learners who retake a GCSE in English achieve a grade C or above. Too few learners studying a functional skills qualification in mathematics or English are successful, this represents a decline from 2015/16. However, the proportion of learners aged 16 to 18 who achieve grades A* to C in GCSE mathematics is higher than that of similar providers.
- Managers' actions to improve achievement and progress are taking too long to have an impact in a minority of subjects and, as a result, learners do not yet make the progress expected of them. This is particularly the case in motor vehicle, health and social care, and child development and well-being.
- Learners with high needs achieve well, particularly those in mainstream programmes and the majority continue into further studies at the college. However, too few progress to a higher level of study.
- The majority of learners who complete a study programme successfully progress to their next steps in further or higher education, into an apprenticeship or employment.
- Managers monitor the progress of different groups of learners but have not yet been successful in closing the achievement gap between learners who require extra help to complete their studies and those who do not. Managers are able to identify the reasons why and have introduced interventions but it is too early to measure their impact.

- Full-time learners on level 3 courses achieve well and the large majority attain merit or distinction grades.
- Learners on vocational courses develop good practical skills. As a result, most learners are successful in gaining employment or continue in further training. The proportion of learners who gain a place at university, while modest, is improving.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- The college has approximately 290 learners following vocational study programmes from entry level to level 3, with just under half studying at level 3. The largest subject areas are arts, media, health and social care and public services.
- The quality of provision on study programmes is not yet good. The majority of learners on study programmes fail to achieve their English and mathematics functional skills qualifications. Leaders and managers have developed plans and systems to support improvement in this area; however, the impact of this is not yet evident in all vocational areas.
- Teaching and learning on study programmes do not take sufficient account of learners' individual needs and as a result, learners do not reach their full potential. Although teachers provide good coaching and support and are successful at establishing high standards of behaviour, they are not as successful in providing teaching that is sufficiently demanding for learners, or makes sure they make best use of their time in lessons.
- Too many learners leave their courses early, before completing their qualifications.
- Managers do not have effective arrangements for providing learners with impartial and high-quality careers advice. Teachers provide help on next steps in learning or employment and give good advice on applying for higher education. However, few learners benefit from opportunities outside of lessons to explore the range of options available to them.
- Managers do not provide enough external work placements for learners to develop skills for the workplace. They provide useful work preparation activities based on project briefs from local employers or with community and charitable work but too many learners who would benefit from an external work placement do not have one. For example, learners aspiring to an apprenticeship have not all had suitable work experience. Hairdressing learners' work experience is too often in the college's training salon rather than with an external employer.
- Teachers make effective use of information about learners' skills and knowledge when they join the college to place them on appropriate programmes of study.
- Most teachers hold regular meetings to review learners' progress and take action where necessary; for example, intervening to provide additional support for learners who need it. However, the frequency and quality of these review meetings are dependent on individual staff and vary from good in travel and tourism to poor in motor vehicle.
- Teachers are well qualified and use their industry experience well to make vocational learning interesting and relevant. For example, learners in the busy hairdressing salon

appreciate the need to adapt their communication skills when speaking to clients.

Provision for learners with high needs

Requires improvement

- At the time of the inspection, the college had 72 learners in receipt of high-needs funding from four local authorities. Most of these learners study on discrete entry level programmes; a few are studying on a range of study programmes at all levels. One learner is on a supported internship.
- The discrete provision for learners with high needs does not prepare them sufficiently well for work or a higher level of study. Not enough learners have the opportunity to take qualifications in order to demonstrate gains in the skills and knowledge required for employment or further study. The large majority of learners remain in education, but, too frequently, this is at the same level of learning. Only a small minority of learners progress to higher levels of study in vocational subjects.
- Few teachers plan learning that takes account of different learners' abilities and needs. Most teachers set generic targets in lessons and fail to provide sufficient challenge for all learners. As a result, a minority of learners are bored, waste time waiting for others to complete an activity and do not achieve their full potential.
- Too few learners improve their understanding of the world of work and develop useful skills for the workplace. Managers do not place a high enough priority on securing external work experience placements for learners with high needs.
- Learners with high needs do not routinely benefit from impartial careers advice and guidance; as a result, they are unable to make independent choices and decisions about life after college.
- Personal care for learners is effective in supporting them. Learners who require specialist therapies to complete their studies benefit from well-coordinated occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech and language therapy.
- Learners benefit from the effective use of assistive technology to ensure they are able to participate fully in lessons; for example, specialist software is used to aid communication with peers and support staff.
- Learners benefit from a number of break-out rooms and quiet spaces to help them to manage their emotions and behaviour during the college day.
- Arrangements to manage the transition of learners from school to college are detailed and effective. Learners benefit from visits to the college before they join. This makes sure teachers and support staff fully identify learners' needs and place them on the most appropriate course with the correct level of support.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130699
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	16–18,19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Not available
Principal/CEO	Derek Headrige/Jacob Tas
Telephone number	02380 874874
Website	www.totton.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)	48	50	67	4	116	7	-	-
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			
	5				5			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16								
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	72							
Funding received from:	Education 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 campus principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. 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

Kate Hill, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Helen Flint	Her Majesty's Inspector
Penelope Horner	Ofsted Inspector
Kate Brennan	Ofsted Inspector

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