

King George V College

Sixth form college

Inspection dates

20–22 September 2017

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

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Governors have a good understanding of the standard of the education and training at the college and which areas need to improve further.
- Leaders and staff have been successful in developing a positive culture and in focusing on delivering high-quality teaching, learning and assessment.
- Teachers skilfully relate all learning activities to examination requirements and provide extensive opportunities for students to develop their study skills.
- Teachers provide clear, concise and helpful feedback to students. It confirms exactly how successfully they have performed and what aspects of their work they need to improve to achieve higher grades.
- Students are enthusiastic and very positive about their learning.
- Students are aware of and uphold the high expectations set by the student body to promote mutual respect.
- The majority of students make good or better progress. Pass rates are very high in both A-level subjects and vocational diplomas.
- Most students on vocational diploma courses, across all subjects, achieve very high grades.
- Students studying A-level ancient history, classical civilisation, English language, and drama and theatre studies make excellent progress in relation to their starting points.
- Not enough students achieve high grades in A-level mathematics, physics and law. In 2016/17, achievement rates for AS-level mathematics and law were too low.
- Staff responsible for careers information, advice and guidance do not always provide accurate information on all the options available to students in preparation for their next steps in education, training and employment.
- Attendance is too low for a small minority of students.
- Too many students on vocational diplomas leave before completing their qualification.

Full report

Information about the provider

- King George V College (KGV) is a small sixth form college located in Southport, in the north west of England on the Sefton coast. The college provides academic and vocational 16 to 19 study programmes at level 3. Students' attainment when they enrol at the college is lower than the average for sixth form colleges. Approximately one half of students study for A-level qualifications. The remainder either study for vocational diplomas or a blend of A-level and vocational qualifications.
- The proportion of pupils in Sefton who achieve five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, is slightly above the national rates. The unemployment rate in Sefton is higher than the average for both England and the north-west region. A higher proportion of the population in Sefton has no formal qualifications when compared with both the north-west and the national averages.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all students attend the college regularly.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the minority of subject areas where performance is not yet high enough to enable students to achieve the grades of which they are capable by ensuring that:
 - managers continue to focus on supporting teachers to help them to improve their teaching techniques to enable students to obtain high grades.
 - all teachers use the extensive information that is available to them to plan stimulating lessons that challenge students and extend their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Ensure that fewer students leave their vocational study programmes before completing.
- Ensure that staff provide accurate careers information, advice and guidance on all the options available to students in preparation for their next steps in education, training or employment, including apprenticeships.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers have taken swift action to improve the quality of students' experience since the previous inspection. They have an ambitious vision for the college and understand fully what they need to do to improve the standards of education and training further. The rigorous self-assessment and quality-improvement processes introduced in 2015/16 have led to good improvements in students' achievements and a high proportion of students now make good or better progress.
- Leaders and staff set high aspirations for their students to achieve, despite many students' lower academic starting points. These high aspirations ensure that most students achieve and often exceed expectations.
- Leaders have created a culture for the college that promotes high expectations of both students and staff. The efficient management of the college is valued by staff and governors. The effective promotion of tolerance and respect is reflected in students' positive attitudes and behaviour. All staff ensure that students have a good understanding of British values and are aware of the diverse world in which they live. Most students enjoy their studies and work hard to achieve their target grades.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve staff performance. A number of teachers whose performance failed to improve have left the college. Regular planned learning walks and lesson observations now inform the professional development of teaching staff.
- Leaders focus staff development and support on improving the quality of lessons and teachers' assessment techniques. Consequently, students' enjoyment of college has improved and their achievements in 2016/17 are good. However, leaders have not yet secured consistently good teaching in all subject areas, particularly in A-level mathematics, physics and law.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve students' English and mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers' confidence in developing students' English and mathematical skills for further study and employment has been improved by a range of staff development activities.
- Teachers respond positively to the broad range of staff development opportunities and individual coaching they receive. As a result, they become reflective practitioners and the quality of their teaching has improved. Teachers enjoy sharing good practice at a number of events run throughout the year, including those with the local further education college. For example, the 'by the staff, for the staff' initiative uses teachers' skills to lead staff development workshops for their colleagues.
- Leaders have re-engaged effectively with local schools to promote the college to potential students. As a result, leaders have started to reverse successfully the very significant decline in enrolments.
- Students now receive effective and impartial information, advice and guidance before they start their college course. Consequently, they understand the expectations and are well prepared for their studies. The vast majority of students progress to university and are supported fully in the application process. However, staff responsible for providing

careers information, advice and guidance do not always give accurate information on all the options available to students to prepare them for their next steps in education, training and employment, including apprenticeships.

- Leaders and governors have embraced the opportunities presented by the local area-based review. Through a proposed merger, they aim to secure a sustained future for the college and to resolve its uncertain financial situation. Governors of both the college and the local further education college are working collaboratively to secure the best options for all students. However, at the time of the inspection the college is still awaiting ministerial sign-off for the merger.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the local and regional priorities. Under the merger proposal, they have a clear vision of how the college will contribute to these priorities. The two colleges are working collaboratively on developing a joint curriculum to support the needs and aspirations of young people in Southport.

The governance of the provider

- Governors have a good understanding of the college and of the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of the teaching, learning and assessment. They are very clear about the improvements that are still required. Through their careful scrutiny of the detailed senior management reports, they provide appropriate challenge, ensuring that leaders are held to account and work effectively to bring about further improvements.
- Governors have reviewed the skills of its board members and have recruited new governors to fill skills gaps, such as educational expertise. They have made changes to their board and committee structure to ensure that all governors have a good understanding of, and contribute to, the leadership of the college.
- Governors contribute fully to developing the colleges' strategic priorities and they have a clear view of both local and regional priorities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, managers and staff at all levels place students' safety as a high priority. They ensure that students are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe, including the risks associated with social media and working online.
- All staff and governors are trained to an appropriate level on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. As a result, they have a thorough understanding of the potential risks to students and the actions needed to keep them safe. Staff respond rapidly and appropriately to any concerns students raise. However, the recording of incidents needs to improve to ensure that all information is located centrally.
- Leaders and managers follow appropriate practice for safe staff selection and recruitment. All relevant staff receive training in safer recruitment practices.
- Leaders have implemented effective risk assessment processes for learning activities. These include off-site visits and the monitoring of external visitors and speakers.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and staff have been successful in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Senior managers have developed a very clear teaching and learning strategy which staff welcome. This has resulted in a consistently positive learning experience for students.
- Students enjoy learning and developing their thinking, analytical awareness and independent research skills. They improve their confidence throughout their studies at KGV. Students make significant progress in their studies during their time at the college. For example, classical civilisation students were able to give a clear and effective description of metopes and identify the figures and stories surrounding the temple of Zeus. This facilitated the planned class topic and ensured that students made swift progress in their studies from the start of the lesson.
- Teachers confidently relate learning activities to examination requirements. They provide extensive opportunities for students to develop their study skills. In lessons, students use the correct terminology and technical language in relation to their chosen academic or vocational subjects.
- Managers have successfully prioritised the development of students' English and mathematical knowledge and skills. Teachers stress the importance of relating these skills to their subject. For example, in law students calculate compensation settlements for claimants in a legal dispute. They also use 'plain English' to explain judgements handed down by a judge in a tribunal case study. Students studying music technology are able to teach each other the mathematical processes needed to calculate frequencies as part of their work on fundamentals and harmonics.
- Teachers provide well-timed, clear and helpful feedback to students following submission of their work. The feedback identifies exactly which aspects of their work students need to improve to achieve or exceed their target grade. The range and regularity of assessments throughout each course ensures that students are clear about their progress and what they need to do next.
- Students appreciate the support and feedback they receive, both from their teachers and from their peers. They feel that they have a positive impact on them and help them to achieve high grades. For example, students in fine art and photography use peer and teacher feedback to analyse and reflect on the quality of their classwork. They use examination criteria meticulously to hone their analytical and evaluative skills and make improvements in their next project.
- Managers have improved the rigour of students' assessment at the start of their course. This assessment identifies students' previous achievements, experiences and knowledge. The large majority of teachers use this information very effectively to plan learning and support students in their studies. In a minority of courses, the learning activities do not challenge all students sufficiently.
- In a small minority of lessons students struggle to provide answers to basic questions or give only partial responses. In such cases teachers too often provide answers for students and they are not developing their independent thinking skills sufficiently.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Students throughout the college, both in classrooms and social areas, display good levels of respect for each other, staff and visitors. This creates a harmonious and inclusive college environment where students enjoy learning and feel safe. For example, students in health and social care comment on each other's work in a professional and caring manner. This develops their skills of empathy in preparation for working in the care sector.
- Students develop their confidence throughout the academic year. They demonstrate good communication and team-working skills when working in groups. For example, teachers in A-level theatrical studies identify when students use colloquial slang such as 'erm' and 'like' so they can remove it from their vocabulary. This ensures more concise, articulate and confident performances from students.
- Students are punctual to lessons and have positive attitudes towards their learning. They have developed high expectations in the promotion of tolerance, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect. These are understood and exemplified in their behaviour around the college.
- Students demonstrate positive attitudes and a good awareness of equality and diversity. They extend their knowledge, adapt their behaviour and speak about the importance of promoting equality and celebrating diversity in their college and personal lives. For example, in media studies students identified social class and ethnicity as reasons for labelling crime and deviancy disproportionately within groups.
- Students appreciate the range of additional activities that are available to them. They gain good experience and new skills and knowledge outside the college. For example, social science students enthuse about their experiences when they visited Berlin and Auschwitz. Students who attended the world challenge in Costa Rica are appreciative of the opportunity they had to take part in activities they thought they would never experience. These activities help students to develop self-confidence and gain an understanding of social and ethical issues in society.
- Students benefit from a purposeful two-part 'employment package'. An external work placement and a mock interview organised through Sefton Education Business Partnership, in conjunction with local businesses, helps prepare them for the workplace.
- Students feel safe in college. They have a good awareness of the practices required to be safe in college and outside the college environment. Students know whom to contact if they have concerns in relation to personal safety.
- Attendance for a small minority of students is not yet good enough. This has a negative impact on the progress they make on their courses.
- The issues and dangers of extremism and radicalisation are covered in the tutorial programme. However, students are not sufficiently aware of how these may impact on their daily lives.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- Outcomes for students have improved since the previous inspection. The majority of students now make at least the progress expected of them and the majority make good progress.

- Teachers have very high expectations of their students. College data indicates that achievement rates for students in 2016/17 have improved. Pass rates are now very high. Almost all students on both vocational and A-level courses pass their qualifications.
- Students studying A-level ancient history, classical civilisation, drama and theatre studies and English language make excellent progress in relation to their starting points. Students who complete their vocational diplomas, across all subjects, achieve very high grades.
- The small proportion of students who study GCSE English and mathematics and achieve A* to C grades is above that of similar providers.
- The standard of students' work is good. Teachers help students to develop good technical and academic language that prepares them very effectively for their assessments, future studies and careers. For example in A-level psychology, students reviewed a basic answer to an examination question to see how to gain more marks. This activity helped them to identify how to improve their own language and terminology.
- Managers have been successful in closing the achievement gap between male and female students that existed at the previous inspection. Students who are in the care of the local authority and those who receive free school meals make good progress and achieve as highly as their peers.
- The vast majority of students progress to higher education, with approximately one fifth going to prestigious universities.
- The number of students remaining on vocational programmes has increased significantly. However, too many students still do not complete their study programmes.
- Students in a minority of subjects, including A-level physics and law, make slow progress in relation to their starting points. Not enough students achieve high grades in A-level mathematics, physics and law. In 2016/17, achievement rates for AS-level mathematics and law were too low.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130492
Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	16-18
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	476
Acting principal	Anne-Marie Francis
Telephone number	01704 530601
Website	www.kgv.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)	-	-	-	-	501	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	8							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the acting principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews and online questionnaires to gather the views of students and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the college.

Inspection team

Elaine Price, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Suzanne Wainwright	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alastair Mollon	Ofsted Inspector
Malcolm Bruce	Ofsted Inspector

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