

The City of Liverpool College

General Further Education College

Inspection dates

2–5 October 2017

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

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Governors, senior leaders and managers set a culture of high expectations. They have rectified successfully the vast majority of the areas needing improvement at the previous inspection.
- Governors ensure that they hold senior leaders and managers to account for the quality of education and training and they provide a good level of scrutiny and challenge.
- The proportion of students on study programmes and adult learning programmes who achieve their qualifications has increased steadily and is now high.
- Students and apprentices develop the practical and technical skills they need for work. Consequently most of them progress into further study, higher education or employment.
- Leaders' and managers' strategies to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are successful. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is now good.
- Students and apprentices have a positive attitude to learning. They take pride in their work, are highly motivated and develop self-confidence.
- Managers have nurtured highly effective partnerships, resulting in courses that meet local and regional needs very successfully.
- Teachers do not always plan learning that takes into account students' and apprentices' individual starting points. Consequently a small number of students do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The proportion of apprentices who achieve their qualifications by the planned end date is too low.
- The proportion of 16- to 19-year-old students who achieve GCSEs at grades A* to C or grades 9 to 4 in English and mathematics is too low.

Full report

Information about the provider

- The City of Liverpool College is the only further education college in Liverpool. It has five main sites located across the city. The college provides a wide range of post-16 education and training including 16 to 19 study programmes, vocational courses for adults, apprenticeships and community learning. The college works with five subcontractors.
- Liverpool is a large city and metropolitan borough, with a population of 473,100. Growth economic sectors in the city include the knowledge and innovation economy, the visitor economy, low carbon technologies, and logistics and transport. The unemployment rate in the city is 10.6%, compared with 6.4% across the North West region. The college recruits students and apprentices from 30 of the most 100 deprived areas in England. Attendance at school is lower than across the North West region. The number of school leavers who achieve GCSEs at grades A* to C or 9 to 4 in English and mathematics is also low.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers should bring about rapid improvements in the quality of apprenticeships so that apprentices achieve by their planned end date by:
 - ensuring that the off-the-job training for apprentices is planned with employers and recorded accurately, taking into account the knowledge and skills that apprentices already have
 - ensuring that teachers and assessors improve the progress apprentices make by planning their lessons and reviews so that activities are ambitious, interesting and relevant.
- Teachers should ensure that they set suitably demanding work for learners. In particular, teachers should ensure that they challenge the most-able learners to achieve the grades of which they are capable.
- Leaders, managers and staff should continue to focus their improvement strategies on underperforming courses. They should continue to increase the proportion of learners achieving their qualifications, including GCSEs at grades A* to C or grades 9 to 4 in English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Governors and senior leaders promote a culture of high expectations. They have rectified most areas that needed improving at the previous inspection. Leaders' and managers' strategy to improve teaching, learning and assessment has been successful. The proportion of students who stay on their course and gain their qualifications has increased and is now high. This is also the case for young people, adults and students with learning difficulties.
- Leaders and managers identify the college's strengths and areas for improvement through a comprehensive self-assessment process that involves all staff. Senior leaders set measurable targets to improve, which they check regularly.
- Managers' strategies to improve teachers' performance are successful. Staff who need to improve benefit from individual staff development. Most teachers value this support and improve their practice. Leaders and managers take decisive action so that teachers who do not improve leave the college. Managers use the appraisal process to set and monitor improvement targets for all staff. The initiatives that leaders and managers introduce focus on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Students now enjoy a high standard of teaching, learning and assessment.
- The principal, senior leaders and college staff have developed highly effective partnerships with local and regional stakeholders. As a result, the courses meet local and regional needs extremely effectively. Leaders and managers develop their offer with employers. For example, staff have worked with a construction company to embed the future digital skills needs of the industry into their courses. They have also developed a good partnership with a local employer to provide staff for the catering industry.
- Highly effective relationships with stakeholders are of considerable benefit to students. For example, engineering and digital students work with a multinational industrial manufacturing company to develop the skills needed for industry. Photography students tracked the construction of a hospital while other students developed the interior design and artwork for the hospital. Hospitality and catering students ran the canteen for the construction site workers.
- Governors, leaders and staff have created a culture which recognises and celebrates equality and diversity throughout the college. Consequently, students show tolerance and respect for each other, staff and visitors. Students take part in innovative events and activities throughout the year to promote equality and celebrate diversity. During the 'Liverpool homeless open house' event, students provide a good range of activities to people who are homeless, including haircuts, massage, and basketball and football tournaments. The catering students provide food and drink. The visitors also have a good opportunity to get helpful course-related advice and guidance.
- The management of some subcontracted and partnership provision requires improvement. Managers have recognised this and have taken appropriate actions to rectify the weaknesses. However, their actions have not yet led to consistent improvements.
- Leaders and managers have taken appropriate actions to improve the quality of the

apprenticeship provision and to increase the proportion of apprentices who achieve their qualifications. As a consequence, most current apprentices are making at least the expected progress.

- Leaders' and managers' attempts to improve the proportion of students on study programmes who achieve high grades in GCSE English and mathematics have not yet been successful.
- Governors and senior leaders recognise the challenges that they face to maintain the financial stability of the college. They have taken steps to manage the college's financial future so that the decisions they take do not affect the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and students' achievements.

The governance of the provider

- Governors are passionate about the college. They challenge senior leaders and managers and hold them to account for improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Their rigorous scrutiny has contributed to improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and in increased achievements for adult students and students aged 16 to 19.
- Governors know that apprenticeships and GCSE English and mathematics courses have been too slow to improve. They have set up a 'task and finish' group to provide additional support and challenge to senior leaders and managers. In the current year, the majority of apprentices make good progress. Students on GCSE English and mathematics courses make progress towards their goal of achieving a grade 4.
- Governors have an appropriate range of skills, knowledge and experience. They are highly committed to ensuring that the college meets the educational needs of the Liverpool City Region. They make very good use of their skills to help the senior leadership team to raise standards throughout the college.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Students feel safe. They know how to keep themselves safe online and from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. They are clear about reporting concerns relating to their safety. Managers ensure that they protect learners from a range of safeguarding concerns, including self-harm, homelessness and serious bullying. They take swift action when well-being issues arise.
- The designated safeguarding lead and all college managers benefit from relevant training. Leaders, governors and staff receive appropriate training and regular updates on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. As a result, staff are clear about their responsibilities and the procedures for reporting concerns.
- Managers carry out the appropriate checks on all new staff, including disclosure and barring-service checks. There is comprehensive scrutiny of job applicants' suitability.
- Teachers' focus on health and safety is effective. Students' and apprentices' knowledge and understanding about safe working practices in lessons and in the workplace are good.

Governors effectively check safeguarding and health and safety practices in the college.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- In most cases, teachers set high expectations for their students. They challenge and support students to develop and consolidate their knowledge, skills and understanding. As a consequence, the majority of current students on study programmes, adult learning courses and courses for students who have learning difficulties make good progress.
- Teachers plan lessons effectively. They use well-planned and often topical activities that promote learning and are relevant to students' needs. For example, catering students applied the recent food-safety issues in a chicken-processing plant to help them understand food-hygiene concepts. Teachers link learning and assessment to examination criteria and this helps students to understand what they need to do to succeed and achieve high grades.
- Teachers incorporate topics on diversity in their lessons successfully. As a result, students have a good understanding of issues relating to diversity in their everyday lives. For example, students in business discussed successful black business leaders, particularly those in Liverpool, as part of Black History Month.
- The majority of students receive helpful feedback on how to improve the standards of their work. For example, students in A-level English language receive very precise and thorough feedback on essays that helps them to improve their grades in later pieces of work. In A-level psychology, teachers link their feedback to students' target grades to help them achieve higher grades. Teachers' assessment of what students learn in lessons is effective in confirming that students have understood and are developing their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Staff provide comprehensive and impartial information, advice and guidance to students before the start of their studies. As a result, most students enrol on courses that match their abilities and aspirations. Students receive further advice and guidance during their courses about their next steps in learning or progression to employment. Consequently, most students progress to further study or employment.
- Teachers and assessors collect comprehensive information about students' and apprentices' prior achievements, including in English and mathematics. Most teachers and assessors use this information effectively to set targets for students that build on and extend their knowledge and understanding. However, a minority of teachers and assessors do not make good use of the information about students' and apprentices' starting points to ensure that they make the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Students gain independence in their learning and support each other appropriately in lessons. The standard of their oral communication skills is high. For example, health and social care students led a lesson and could explain articulately and accurately to each other the benefits of complementary therapies in health and care settings. In brickwork, students used their prior learning to check and review each other's work to ensure that it met industrial standards.
- Teachers and assessors use their high levels of subject knowledge and industrial experience to contextualise and develop learning. As a result, students and apprentices develop a high standard of technical knowledge and practical skills. They work accurately

to industrial standards and use technical language appropriately. For example, in a food-safety lesson, students were able to use the correct terminology to identify bacterial hazards in food. In engineering, students are challenged to prepare their work to the industrial expectations of a draughtsperson.

- Students and apprentices benefit from high-standard learning resources that make a strong contribution to the development of their knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers make particularly good use of electronic learning resources such as the use of interactive technology to check students' understanding during lessons. Students value the informative resource packs and study guides that help them to learn.
- Students and apprentices benefit from good industry-standard facilities that provide them with professional working environments. These help them to develop the practical skills they need for work.
- A small number of teachers do not check sufficiently whether students understand what they are being taught before moving on to the next topic. They accept low-level answers or respond to short answers with praise. As a result, the progress of these students is too slow.
- In a small number of lessons, teachers and assessors do not set clear objectives that reinforce their high expectations. As a result, students do not understand clearly the purpose of the activity they are doing and struggle to make progress in the lesson.
- Too often teachers and assessors do not develop students' English skills routinely in written work. Students repeat the same errors because they do not receive clear feedback to help them to improve. Most students and apprentices make good progress in developing their English and mathematical skills within vocational contexts. For example, catering students work out the cost of ingredients in a recipe and hairdressing students develop their speaking and listening skills when they carry out a client consultation.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Students and apprentices show high levels of respect and tolerance to each other, to staff and to visitors. They respect people from different cultures and backgrounds, and their behaviour in lessons and social areas is good. The good standard of behaviour contributes to the welcoming environment of the college.
- Students arrive at lessons on time and are fully prepared to start learning. Most students develop a very good attitude to their learning and work as a result of the teachers' high expectations. They are motivated, enthusiastic and attentive. Students take pride in their work and their college. For example, in a professional cookery class students learn how to prepare food to exacting industrial standards. They take pride in their uniform and in the work they produce.
- The standard of students' work is high across most subject areas. For example, art students complete work relating to Jackson Pollock and study geometrical shapes, which develops their understanding of shape and colour. The majority of students produce work that is above the level expected, resulting in them making good progress.
- The majority of students on study programmes take part in the excellent additional activities. These provide good opportunities for students to gain a range of personal, social and employability skills that prepare them very effectively for the next steps in their

education, training and employment. For example, health and social care students describe how they develop self-confidence and independence ready for the workplace.

- Staff provide good support for students in their lessons and outside of the classroom. Students know who to go to if they require additional help. Learning support staff work collaboratively with teachers in lessons to ensure that students with additional needs make at least the same progress as their peers. In technical areas, technicians engage with students to support them adeptly in developing technical skills. Most students receive good pastoral support which contributes to their well-being and helps them to stay on their course.
- Careers information, advice and guidance for students is impartial and effective. The large majority of students have a clear idea of how they want their career to progress. They have plans to gain employment, go to university, progress to a higher-level course or gain an apprenticeship. Staff support and enable students to develop the communication skills, attitudes and confidence that will help them to fulfil their ambition.
- Students and apprentices feel safe in the college and in the workplace. They demonstrate and adhere to safe working practices, which include the health and safety requirements that are needed to keep themselves and others safe. They are aware of how to report any concerns in relation to their own or their peers' personal safety.
- Students' understanding of tolerance, democracy and respect for each other is developed fully. Teachers reinforce the development of these values through appropriate links in lessons. For example, in a public services lesson the teacher linked the need for respect and tolerance of other people's views when dealing with the public.
- Attendance is low in some lessons. Leaders and managers have developed many strategies to tackle low attendance. For example, they work closely with students who had very low attendance while at school. The support that teachers and staff provide is raising these students' rates of attendance considerably. Students also get support to help them to catch up if they do not attend. The virtual learning environment that is used extensively by teachers enables those students who use it to catch up and make progress with their course work.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- Achievements have risen steadily over the last three years. They are now high for 16- to 19-year-olds and for adults. The number of students aged 16 to 19 who gain a qualification at level 2 has risen and is now high. A very high proportion of 16- to 19-year-old students on advanced-level courses achieve their qualification. The differences that existed between levels and subjects have been largely eliminated. Only a very small number of subjects now have low achievement rates.
- Students and apprentices develop good practical skills in their chosen subjects. They work to high-level industrial standards and they benefit from coaching and support from knowledgeable and well-qualified staff. Most students progress to further study, higher education or employment. Most apprentices gain permanent employment with their employer when they complete their apprenticeship.
- Since the previous inspection the proportion of students aged 16 to 19 who achieve their qualifications has increased. This is the case for most subjects, with very few exceptions.

Achievement is particularly high in health and social care, catering, construction and engineering. Most students on study programmes make the progress expected of them from their starting points. A large proportion of students gain their qualifications but they do not always attain the grades that they are capable of achieving, although these have also improved. A large proportion of students who prepare for functional skills examinations in English and mathematics are successful. Too many students, however, do not improve their GCSE grades in English and mathematics. In AS-level history, biology and chemistry achievement rates are low.

- Achievements for adult students have improved over the last three years and are now high. Achievement rates are high in health and social care, engineering, social sciences, construction, science, and access to higher education courses. Achievement rates are low on a small number of courses such as hairdressing, beauty therapy, and art and design. Students develop English and mathematical skills that are relevant to their subject areas. Many students who prepare for functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics are successful.
- The vast majority of students for whom the college receives high-needs funding make good progress. These students achieve their qualifications and develop their confidence and independence successfully. Students make excellent progress by developing their practical, employability and customer-care skills. Students now make good progress in developing their English and mathematical skills and they achieve their qualifications in these subjects.
- Managers' actions to narrow achievement gaps between different groups of students have been successful. Students who have learning difficulties or are from disadvantaged backgrounds now achieve as highly as their peers. Young people who are in the care of the local authority and who had very low attainment rates at school make good progress.
- The proportion of apprentices who achieved their qualifications by their planned end date fell slightly last year and is low. Apprentices on advanced-level courses achieve better than apprentices on intermediate-level courses. Last year the gap between males and females narrowed, largely because male achievement dropped. Most apprentices in the current year are making at least their expected progress. They develop good technical skills and the knowledge they need for work.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- At present, 3,213 students aged 16 to 19 follow a range of vocational programmes from level 1 to level 3. The largest numbers are in arts, media and publishing, public services and health, construction, engineering, hospitality, and hair and beauty.
- Leaders and managers have implemented all aspects of the study programme requirements successfully. All students who need to study English and mathematics do so. Students enjoy valuable work experience which develops their skills and prepares them for work. Students take part in exciting and innovative activities, which include trips, guest speakers and community projects. For example, catering students learn how to be beekeepers and engineering students complete the fabrication of an aquaponics fridge, designed to grow microgreens. Students develop high levels of customer care skills by

serving customers in the college restaurant and media students perform professional roles such as camera operators for the Liverpool Passion Plays.

- Initial advice and guidance ensure that students enrol on the correct course. Students study courses relevant to their career aims or future aspirations. They receive accurate information on the next level of their intended career choice and, consequently, most progress successfully to further study or employment.
- Students develop practical skills to a good standard. They make rapid progress and take part in stimulating practical work. Art and fashion students carry out primary research on field trips which provide inspiration for their sketchbook work and practical designs. Welding students learn complex testing techniques to assess the quality of their own welds.
- Teachers' lesson planning enables most students to make good progress from their starting points. High-quality electronic resources support learning very effectively. Information technology students use resources that enable the most able to make rapid progress. They use advanced techniques correctly in access databases.
- Students benefit from teachers' helpful feedback. Teachers provide feedback to students that enables them to produce written and practical work of a good standard. It also helps students to improve their work further and achieve high grades. Teachers discuss attendance and progress regularly with students. Students have a good understanding of their learning and personal targets. They understand what they have to do to make progress in all their subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Students work cooperatively. Their self-confidence improves and they enjoy their learning. Students use technical language with peers and ably demonstrate their learning to each other. Teachers motivate students successfully and encourage them to succeed.
- A small number of teachers do not take enough account of students' starting points. This slows students' progress, especially the progress of the most able students. A minority of students do not make enough progress because teachers' expectations are too low and they do not challenge their students to achieve or exceed their expected grade.
- Teachers use questioning frequently to assess students' progress on vocational and academic courses. It is often too superficial and it fails to assess students' deeper knowledge and understanding. Teachers do not always support the least able students or challenge the most able students to make more rapid progress.

Adult learning programmes

Good

- At the time of inspection, there are 2,688 students aged 19+ on a range of courses from entry level to level 4. The largest areas are access to higher education, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), English and mathematics, health and social care, hair and beauty, hospitality and catering, and arts and media. Just under half of the students are on full-time courses.
- Students make good progress in developing their subject knowledge and skills in most lessons. Students work purposefully in class. They show good teamwork, research, communication and problem-solving skills. Students undertake wider reading and make good use of previously learned theories. For example, sociology students use their prior knowledge to apply Marxist theories to feminism. Students in a history class discuss what

they had researched on the significance of Henry VIII's succession in bringing about the English Reformation.

- In most lessons, teachers make good use of their subject knowledge to plan and teach lessons that promote industrial standards. These lessons prepare students very effectively for future employment. For example, health and social care students use role-play to act as practitioners. They plan complex activities and complete risk assessments for care-service users and adhere to the required professional codes of practice throughout. Sports students design appropriate exercise techniques for class members who act as paying gym users.
- Students develop good knowledge of health and safety in their lessons and, as a result, work safely. For example, hairdressing students understand the correct way to apply chemicals in a professional salon and catering students follow the correct health and hygiene regulations when handling food. Students have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. They are aware of the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism.
- Teachers set challenging targets that motivate students and help them to make progress and achieve well. Students benefit from feedback that helps them to improve the standard of their work. This is particularly effective on access to higher-education courses. Most students progress to higher education or to employment. Students are confident and enjoy their learning. They are punctual, attentive and highly motivated. Students' behaviour is good.
- In lessons, most students improve their English and mathematical skills considerably. Teachers encourage them to use the correct specialist language and technical terms for their profession. For example, fashion and beauty-therapy students develop their own glossary of technical vocabulary. Students make good progress in developing their mathematical skills in vocational lessons. For example, construction students, when planning to decorate a house, calculate the cost of the materials they need. Electrical installation students calculate voltage capacity.
- Teachers prepare students very successfully for their next steps. Students have a clear understanding of what they need to do to achieve their career aspirations such as the journalism students who benefit from advice from past students who now work in the industry.
- Managers ensure that courses meet the needs of employers and the local community. Courses provide good opportunities for students to develop their knowledge and skills. Many students, including the most disadvantaged, go on to employment or further education and training.
- Students too often work on the same task, with the more advanced students waiting for the remainder of students to complete the task before moving on to the next activity. As result, the most able students do not reach their full potential.
- In too many instances, teachers do not place sufficient demands on all students to contribute to group feedback. Students do not develop their thinking skills sufficiently and not all students make progress in the lessons.
- In a small number of instances, students do not receive helpful feedback to improve their English. As a result they continue to make the same basic errors in spelling, punctuation

and grammar.

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

- Currently there are 886 apprentices on a wide range of frameworks. Of these, 189 of them are enrolled with one of two subcontracted partners. The largest apprenticeships are in passenger-carrying vehicle driving, business and administration, electrical installation, and clinical healthcare support. Frameworks are mostly at levels 2 and 3, with 34 apprentices on level 4 frameworks.
- In a small number of apprenticeships, off-the-job training is not recorded accurately enough and apprentices do not make the progress of which they are capable. Practical assessments too often lack challenge and do not extend apprentices' knowledge and skills sufficiently.
- Assessors' and teachers' assessments of apprentices when they start the course do not identify routinely the knowledge and skills that apprentices already have. Too often assessors do not plan realistic timescales for framework completion. In too many instances this leads to a lack of pace and slower progress for apprentices.
- Too often many apprentices do not have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve the standard of their work because teachers and assessors do not provide helpful feedback. However, in a minority of subjects, such as hairdressing, feedback is constructive and this helps apprentices to improve their cutting skills.
- Managers have taken decisive action to improve the quality of apprenticeships. Consequently the majority of current apprentices are now on track to complete by their planned end date. However, a very small minority of apprentices continue in learning past their planned end date.
- Managers have recently introduced electronic portfolios so they can monitor apprentices' progress online and ensure that appropriate actions are put in place if they fall behind. Assessors check their progress carefully and provide support to help them to achieve.
- Managers have put effective actions in place to improve the performance of subcontractors. Leaders and managers take action so that subcontractors who do not improve do not receive further funding.
- Teachers and assessors check health and safety carefully and reinforce healthy and safe working practices in sessions. Apprentices show an awareness of safe-working practices when in college or with their employers. Apprentices have a basic understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.
- Managers establish effective and productive relationships with large and small employers across the region. Consequently, they develop programmes which upskill local residents and provide a workforce for priority areas of employment, such as in passenger transport and the visitor economy.
- Apprentices make good use of the industry-standard resources in the college to consolidate their learning and develop their practical skills. Teachers and assessors are good role models and, as a result, apprentices develop in self-confidence and self-assurance. They demonstrate good practical and interpersonal skills. Mutual respect and tolerance are good.

- Most teachers and assessors use their considerable industrial knowledge and expertise to plan a broad range of practical tasks and activities. As a result, most apprentices develop their technical skills and the knowledge they need for work.
- Teachers provide effective support to apprentices. This helps them to understand the theoretical and technical concepts that underpin their practical work. Apprentices develop good skills in the workplace and many take on extra responsibilities as they progress. Apprentices enjoy their learning and most plan to train further in the sector in which they are working.

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

- At present there are 80 learners who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Of these, 19 have been enrolled on a specially designed 'pathways' course, with the remaining students following full-time vocational courses.
- Leaders and managers successfully prepare students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities to become more independent in their everyday lives.
- Students follow a carefully structured induction programme when they start their college course and when they progress to a new course. This enables them to settle into college life readily and embark on their courses confidently. For example, students following the 'pathways' course benefit from a thoughtfully planned transition programme. This includes a visit to the college before they start and provides an opportunity for them to meet their tutors. When they progress internally they get to know their new tutors and they learn about their course.
- Teachers use their expertise to plan targets for students. They provide informative feedback in lessons that helps students to improve their work. Teachers praise students' achievements and extend further their understanding of technical language. Students recognise fully what they are doing and where they need to improve.
- Skilled support staff, who understand students' needs, provide strong support in lessons. Students make good progress towards their goals. For example, communication support workers simplify instructions. They pace their support appropriately and allow students to complete their work unaided.
- Most teachers use questioning effectively to check students' understanding of terminology related to their subject. They link the work that they do in college to work and life settings very successfully. For example, students recognise that making a list of items for sports activities is a useful skill in life and in the workplace. This helps them to remember important details.
- Most teachers plan motivating activities, which include practical tasks, discussions, paired work and written work. Students respond positively. They complete their work enthusiastically and meet their targets.
- Students' behaviour is good. They show respect for staff and each other, and they listen carefully to instructions and follow college rules. Students feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe in college and where to seek support if they have concerns.
- Students make good progress in the development of the skills they need for work. For example, they practise teamwork, communication skills and meeting deadlines when

working on a fundraising project for a charity. Students make good progress in English and mathematics. They learn to practise their skills in a wider range of settings.

- Most students enjoy work-related activities in college and in volunteer placements. Project work helps them to develop a range of skills that they need for work. For example, students develop basic food-preparation and customer-care skills by making and selling sandwiches.
- Students develop independence at college and most learn to travel independently. They develop confidence in working without support. Some students require reduced support over time. Students enjoy their learning. A significant number of them have clear ideas about what they want to do when they leave college. The course they follow closely matches their aspirations.
- Managers use funding for students with learning difficulties very wisely to provide a positive learning environment. Managers have addressed the areas that needed improvement at the previous inspection. Students now make good progress in English and mathematics. Education, health and care plans determine students' learning goals. Where teachers judge the targets in the plans to lack relevance, they set their own targets with help from the students.
- Initial assessment does not accurately assess students who have complex needs. Although assessments capture information about students' prior learning, aspirations, sensory needs and learning difficulties, they do not assess more complex needs sufficiently well.
- In a small number of instances targets for communication, personal skills and independence are too broad and do not closely match students' priority areas of learning. Targets are not reviewed thoroughly enough. Consequently students do not always make the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- The work that teachers set in lessons for a small number of students is too easy. Students complete their work quickly and it does not develop their learning sufficiently. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not give students enough time to respond to their questions and they provide the answer. In these lessons students listen for long periods of time and sometimes lose interest.
- Although students develop practical skills in college, too few have the opportunity to practise their skills in external work settings.

Provider details

Unique reference number 130487

Type of provider General further education college

Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	8,400
Principal/CEO	Elaine Bowker
Telephone number	0151 252 3747
Website	www.liv-coll.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	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	307	907	1,255	633	1,650	1,144	1	4
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	155	308	107	292	1	33		
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	80							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Innovative Alliance Ltd Liverpool Media Academy North West Education and Training Ltd Sysco Training Geason Training							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the vice 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, 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 in the college and at employers' and subcontractors' premises. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the college.

Inspection team

Andrea Machell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alison Cameron Brandwood	Her Majesty's Inspector
Suzanne Wainwright	Her Majesty's Inspector
Liz Boynton	Ofsted Inspector
Malcolm Bruce	Ofsted Inspector
Marie Fairhurst	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Keenan	Ofsted Inspector
Jackie Shopland-Reed	Ofsted Inspector
Ruth Szolkowska	Ofsted Inspector
Bernie White	Ofsted Inspector

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Employer View

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