

Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth I College

Sixth-form college

Inspection dates

31 October–3 November 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

- Decisive actions by senior leaders and governors have led to considerable improvements in students' progress and achievements since the previous inspection.
- Good and improved teaching in most subjects interests and motivates students. This helps most achieve their qualifications.
- Students are enthusiastic about the subjects they study. They enjoy learning, work hard and behave very well.
- Leaders, managers and staff have created a caring and highly supportive environment. Students work sensibly together, respect the views of others and are courteous.
- Leaders, managers and governors have high expectations of staff and students. They lead by example and have successfully dealt with most of the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection.
- Students benefit from the broad programme of additional activities on offer. This helps them develop new skills and supports their learning.
- Students receive high-quality careers advice to help them make informed choices about their future. The large majority progress successfully to higher education.
- Despite improvements since the previous inspection, not enough students on vocational courses, and very few students on academic courses, benefit from real work experience.
- Too few students have the opportunity to develop their learning about British values and the dangers of those who hold extremist views.
- Not all teachers use effective strategies to check students' learning. Consequently, a few students do not make the progress they should.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth I college is a large sixth-form college in the centre of Leicester. It attracts an ethnically diverse group of students from the city and surrounding area, and offers a programme that consists almost exclusively of A levels. There are two other sixth forms and a general further education college in the city and three schools offering A-level courses.
- Attainment in Leicester schools has declined over the past two years and the number of young people who leave with five A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, is lower than the national rate and the rate in the county of Leicestershire. Unemployment in Leicester is higher than the national rate and the proportion of people with qualifications at level 2 or above is considerably lower than seen nationally.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers should continue their effective work to raise the quality of teaching and learning and ensure that they fully prepare students for employment. To do this, leaders should concentrate on:
 - ensuring that all students studying vocational subjects, and a greater number of students on academic courses, benefit from substantial external work placements
 - improving the checking of learning in those subjects identified as requiring improvement
 - improving and strengthening the range of activities used to develop students' understanding of topics such as British values and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders and governors successfully cultivate a culture of high expectations throughout the college. This has led to substantial improvements in the quality of education. They have dealt with the large majority of the weaknesses noted at the last inspection. As a result of their emphasis on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, students' progress and achievements have increased and are now good.
- Leaders, managers and governors accurately identify strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They monitor the pace of improvement work effectively, and look carefully at the progress that students make. They have clear plans to continue to improve the quality of the provision.
- Leaders hold staff at all levels to account for their performance. Staff and governors value the team approach to quality improvement and shared accountability. Teachers evaluate their own performance as part of the curriculum reviews. All staff understand their role in promoting good practice and improving quality.
- Managers and teachers frequently discuss how they can improve teaching and learning. Peer support, training, and clearly identified weaknesses from observations make sure that teachers know the teaching techniques that they need to develop. This allows them to improve their practice and make sustained improvements in their teaching. Managers track the quality of these initiatives through observations. Students in subjects targeted for improvement made substantial progress, as evidenced by the outcomes of their most recent examinations.
- Leaders and managers make accurate judgements on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers receive detailed feedback from observations that identifies what they do successfully and how they can further improve. During joint lesson observations, college observers accurately identify the strengths and weaknesses.
- Managers consider students' progress, outcomes, views and self-evaluations when appraising teaching staff in order to improve their performance. Managers use professional development and peer-support work very effectively and, because of this, most staff improve their skills. Where staff do not make enough improvement, leaders and managers take decisive action.
- Senior managers successfully support an inclusive and welcoming culture throughout the college to make sure that students understand the diversity of British society. Incidents of bullying and discrimination are very rare. Staff and students organise helpful and well-attended events throughout the year to celebrate diversity and encourage learning about equality. Inter-faith training courses and a cross-college 'diversity day' help students learn and understand well the society in which they live.
- Senior leaders and governors have developed the curriculum well. They recognise the need to balance the strategic requirements of the college with the needs of students. An effective partnership with a local college and the introduction of a small number of vocational qualifications ensure that students have access to a broad range of courses that prepare them well for their next steps.

- Strong relationships with local schools help senior leaders to align the college's courses to the needs of the local area. This provides good progression routes for the young people of Leicester. Leaders and managers work effectively with schools to publicise different aspects of the courses offered.
- A small but significant minority of courses have underperformed over the past two years. Leaders and managers have not taken action quickly enough to improve these subjects. Consequently, students on these courses have not made the progress of which they are capable.
- Senior leaders have not made progress fast enough to develop a coherent programme of work experience for students. A greater number of students now take part in work placements than at the time of the previous inspection. Despite this, the number of students who completed planned external work experience in 2016/17 is very low. All vocational students are due to experience placements later in the academic year, but it is too early to judge their impact.

The governance of the provider

- Governors have a wide range of skills and experience. They use these well to secure improvements and are ambitious for the college and its students. Through good links with teaching and support areas, governors make sure that they understand fully the strengths and weaknesses of the college. They are very clear about the improvements that are still required to make even better progress.
- Governors receive detailed reports from senior leaders about progress on actions for improvement. They analyse this information in detail, and use it to hold leaders to account, and to track the improvement of underperforming subjects. They work effectively with senior leaders to bring about further improvements.
- Governors oversee the finances and resources of the college very successfully. They have made sure that improvements to the estate have been sensitive and effective. Governors work well with senior leaders to create a welcoming environment that is conducive to learning.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and managers take all aspects of their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. The safeguarding team, led by the designated officer, makes sure that staff and students understand the importance of safeguarding. Students feel safe and know who to contact if they are concerned about their own well-being, or that of others. They know how to keep themselves safe online.
- Recruitment procedures are well established, safe and effective. Managers who appoint new staff receive thorough training on safer recruitment. Staff pre-employment checks are up to date and comprehensive.
- All staff understand how to report concerns and handle disclosures. The safeguarding team has good links with external agencies, and uses these well to support vulnerable students. Leaders, governors and staff receive frequent and valuable training and updates on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Although students receive training about the risks

of radicalisation and extremism, this is not detailed or thorough. They know how to report concerns, but they have too few opportunities to discuss these issues in sufficient depth.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers create lively and stimulating lessons. They use a wide range of activities and resources, including online materials. Teachers apply their specialist subject knowledge and practical skills to enthuse students and support their progress. They plan work in detail to help students understand complex new terminology. For example, in an English lesson, the teacher used students' ideas effectively to explain how symbolism in a poem related to the important social norms of the period, improving students' understanding of difficult vocabulary. In a geography lesson, the teacher skilfully built on students' fieldwork to explain thoroughly ideas of urban water distribution.
- Teachers prepare students well for their examinations. They give detailed verbal feedback to students about how to improve their work. Most teachers set demanding tasks that challenge students and encourage them to become more independent in their learning. Imaginative classroom displays reinforce important learning points. Teachers increase students' analytical skills successfully. They help them develop skills such as summarising and evaluating information.
- Staff set high expectations for students in their studies and behaviour. They build good relationships with students. Teachers create a safe and collaborative environment in the classroom, and structure activities sensitively. Students with diverse backgrounds work well together, and listen carefully to the views of others. For example, in a classroom discussion, students commented tactfully and politely on answers given by other students, even when they disagreed with the views expressed.
- Teachers use their knowledge about students' previous learning to plan effective classroom and homework activities. They take into account students' different abilities when organising pair and group activities. Consequently, almost all learning is effective.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not plan learning sufficiently to meet the different needs of students. In these lessons, they do not devise additional challenging activities to extend students' learning and broaden their understanding. In a few instances, lessons are too rushed. Teachers do not allow enough time to explain tasks clearly, or for students to reflect on important learning points. Teachers do not link abstract concepts to practical examples to help students understand these concepts. Consequently, a small minority of students lose motivation and confidence.
- Most teachers assess students' progress and learning effectively. They use a variety of effective techniques, such as monitoring group work, questioning, end-of-lesson discussions and tests. For example, economics students complete a timed, online quiz at home to check their earlier learning. Teachers give prompt and constructive written feedback to students so that they know how to improve their work.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not check students' understanding precisely enough before moving on to new learning. Questioning does not effectively check that all students have understood previous learning. As a result, a small minority of students do not make the progress they should.
- Students benefit from good academic and personal support. They know whom to contact

if they have any concerns. They frequently review their individual progress with progress coaches, who take prompt action to help any student at risk of falling behind. Where students have concerns about mental health, they receive good personal support, including from specialist external agencies.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Students behave very well and respect the diversity of views, faiths and attitudes of others. They are courteous to each other and helpful to visitors. Students form constructive and respectful relationships with teachers and progress coaches. These support their learning very well.
- The vast majority of students are enthusiastic about their studies and work hard. They take pride in their work and set themselves aspirational targets which most meet. They make good progress in developing the attributes they need to succeed.
- Students are articulate and share ideas successfully when taking part in group work. They question each other skilfully and listen carefully to responses. When working on their own they concentrate and produce work of high quality. Students develop the skills, knowledge and confidence that they need for their next steps in their careers.
- Students receive effective and impartial careers advice throughout their time at college. This helps them to make well-informed choices about their next steps. Large numbers of students progress to higher education and a sizeable and growing proportion progresses to prestigious universities. Those who do not wish to move to higher education receive an extensive range of advice and information about other progression routes, including apprenticeships.
- By engaging in the extensive programme of additional activities that support their academic work, students learn new skills. For example, students studying fine art learn clay-work skills in ceramics lessons. Those studying social sciences acquire psychology research skills. Students develop a wider understanding of society through citizenship lessons and charity fund-raising. Physics students take part successfully in 'Fun Physics' in primary schools to encourage children to learn more about science. By involving themselves in these activities, students improve their social and employability skills, such as time management, personal confidence and team working. Sports lessons help them develop a healthy lifestyle.
- Attendance has improved over the past two years and is high. The vast majority of students arrive at their lessons on time. They are well prepared to learn and bring the correct equipment with them. However, lateness for the first lesson of the day impedes the progress of a small minority of students.
- Students develop their English skills successfully in most lessons. They acquire good speaking skills through class debates and peer work. They learn how to improve their written English because of useful feedback from most teachers. Students have fewer opportunities to improve their mathematics skills, particularly in subjects that do not have an obvious mathematical emphasis.
- Most students develop the skills they will need for work. External speakers inform them about employment opportunities and the skills they will need when in employment. Good links with employers, particularly in business, accounting and economics, help students

understand more about the world of work.

- Too few students learn enough about topics to do with personal welfare, including British values and how to keep themselves safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Progress coaches do not cover these subjects in enough depth and do not test students' understanding well enough. Teachers do not routinely include discussion and learning about these ideas in their lessons. Consequently, managers cannot be sure that students are developing their learning in these subjects.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- Achievement rates for students on advanced-level courses improved in 2017 and are now high, and in line with similar colleges. A high proportion of students now pass their AS- and A-level examinations, which represents a considerable improvement from the previous inspection. The vast majority complete their courses. Students achieve qualifications that help them to progress to further or higher education, training or employment.
- Since the previous inspection, students' progress has improved in most subjects. Teachers set students challenging goals, and most aspire to exceed these. Students on AS-level courses now make good progress from their starting points, especially those studying AS accounting, law and media.
- A-level students studying product design, drama, economics, geography and history make particularly good progress in their studies. However, in a small minority of A-level subjects, students do not achieve as well as their peers nationally, and improvements are too slow.
- The small number of students who come to the college without a GCSE at grade C or above in English or mathematics receive good support in their retake courses, and pass rates at grade C and above are high, particularly for English. Around three quarters of those who take GCSE English achieve a high grade and for students who take GCSE mathematics, achievement is more than double the very low national rate.
- Leaders and managers analyse the performance of different groups of students in detail, and use this information to plan improvements. Those in receipt of free meals and those with extra learning support achieve better than their peers. The previous achievement gaps between female and male students at AS-level, and also between White British students and other students, have now reduced. There are no substantial variations in the achievement or progress of different groups of students.
- Students enjoy learning. Most produce good-quality work, which helps them achieve their qualifications to a high standard and progress to further study, employment or training. Practical work is particularly good in A-level fine art, 3D design, and drama and theatre studies.
- The number of students progressing from year one to year two of their courses improved greatly in 2017. Progression rates for most courses are now high. Despite this, in some subjects, such as biology, psychology and mathematics, too few students progress to the second year of their course.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130756
Type of provider	Sixth-form college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	2,191
Principal/CEO	Sandra Hamilton-Fox
Telephone number	0116 247 1147
Website	www.wqe.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)	-	-	-	-	2,228	-	-	-
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	3							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	1							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	None							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the vice-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 and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions and assessments. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

Andy Fitt, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Alan Winchcombe	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Loxton	Ofsted Inspector

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