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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mr David Cooper
Principal
Wilberforce College
Saltshouse Road
Kingston upon Hull
HU8 9HD

Dear Mr Cooper

Short inspection of Wilberforce College

Following the short inspection on 6 and 7 February 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since the provider was judged to be good in May 2015.

This provider continues to be good.

You, your leadership team and staff have continued to implement your clear and ambitious vision to provide high-quality study programmes for the young people of east Hull. As a result, the high standards of education and training have been sustained since the previous inspection. You have high aspirations for, and expectations of, your students. The great majority respond well to these aspirations, gain valuable skills, achieve their qualifications and progress to higher education or employment.

A broad curriculum and good-quality initial advice and guidance ensure that students are able to enrol on study programmes that very successfully reflect their career aspirations. Your managers have designed a curriculum that responds well to local and national priorities. It provides excellent opportunities for students to develop the skills and knowledge that they require to be successful when they take their next steps.

Managers and other staff provide students with access to a wide range of enrichment and volunteering activities. Your 'seeds of change' project has been particularly successful in promoting the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, enabling students to grow their own food and demonstrate entrepreneurial skills through the organisation of a food festival.

Leaders clearly identify the areas which still require further improvement, such as students' progress on academic programmes. Governors provide tireless support and challenge to ensure that a collective focus is maintained on raising the

standards of education provided for all students.

Managers have made very good progress in improving further the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They have developed a culture of continual improvement that ensures that teachers develop their practice to a high standard and share their ideas and expertise effectively with their colleagues. Students rightly value the teaching they receive and enjoy their studies.

Safeguarding is effective.

The culture of safeguarding is very well embedded across the college. Safeguarding policies and procedures are scrutinised thoroughly to satisfy managers that their safeguarding arrangements are of the highest quality. Managers ensure that appropriate pre-employment checks are in place for all staff, including those recruited from an agency, and for contractors working on the college site. The central staff list includes all the necessary information and is accurate and up to date.

Students feel safe in the college and have great confidence that their teachers and other staff will deal promptly with issues that they raise. Staff provide very effective support for students affected by safeguarding issues. They help students to access external agencies that offer good support and enable them to be successful in their studies.

Managers provide staff with excellent safeguarding training. They respond well to teachers' requests for additional training to increase their ability to provide the highest standard of care for their students. Teachers receive useful briefings about issues such as 'sexting', neglect and child sexual exploitation.

Most students can identify adequately the risks of extremism and dangers of radicalisation. A minority demonstrate a very sophisticated understanding of these themes. Managers ensure that the college is inclusive and that students are respectful and tolerant of others. Teachers reinforce these values well in lessons.

Inspection findings

- Teachers plan and deliver lessons skilfully. They make good use of information about students' starting points and current progress to enable students to develop their subject knowledge and vocational skills. Lessons are interesting and enthuse students. The use of video clips and other media contextualise learning well. For example, students in business studies quickly developed their understanding of how to organise and chair a successful meeting after watching an entertaining parody of a meeting. English language students were able to identify key features of African-American vernacular English clearly from listening to a range of song lyrics.
- Teachers plan and deliver activities that develop students' English and mathematics skills effectively. All students have specific personalised targets for aspects that they need to improve. They apply their developing skills well to

improve the standard of their written work.

- Teachers raise students' aspirations by setting challenging tasks and supporting students to complete them successfully. They provide activities and resources that enable students to apply their knowledge confidently to solve new and complex problems. For example, in mathematics, good-quality learning resources assist students to identify the correct rule they need to solve a problem. In sociology, students collaborate well to share their research; they question each other's findings to extend their learning.
- Teachers prepare students very effectively for life in modern Britain. They enable students to discuss topics confidently, such as the importance of an inclusive menu in the canteen. In history, students thoughtfully considered the impact of the anniversary of The Representation of the People Act 1918. Health and care students provide well-prepared, interesting and enjoyable activities for elderly local residents who visit the college. For example, they made dragons to celebrate the Chinese New Year and poppies to commemorate Armistice Day.
- Following regular assessment, the vast majority of teachers provide very useful feedback to students about how to improve their work. Most students take the recommended actions, and the large majority produce work of a good standard.
- Managers ensure that work experience and work-related learning are integrated very effectively into study programmes. Teachers identify students' career goals during induction and plan work experience that effectively matches students' aspirations. Staff organise frequent visits to, or from, employers to promote the link between the courses that students follow and the career opportunities available to them. Students benefit greatly from an online resource which enables them to record their good progress in developing the skills that they need for their future careers.
- Managers increasingly use data very well to monitor the impact of their actions on the progress of current students. At this stage in the academic year, the large majority of current A-level students are making at least the expected progress.
- Staff organise a valuable and well-attended study day at a local university to promote the importance of good study habits and independent learning for academic success. Students find this event very helpful and now demonstrate these skills well in their studies.
- Students on vocational courses make very good progress and develop very good skills. The vast majority complete their courses successfully and a high number achieve high grades.
- Students receive excellent careers advice and guidance from their tutors and specialist careers staff. Staff hold regular careers events, at which prestigious local and national employers and higher education institutions provide helpful advice and guidance on career choices and opportunities. They ensure that the development of the skills that students need for employment is an integral focus of study programmes. Consequently the large majority of students make well-informed choices regarding their careers and progress successfully to their chosen destination.
- Leaders and managers have implemented a range of initiatives to increase

attendance, but these have not yet been fully successful across all courses. They have reorganised the tutorial system, and teachers now act as personal tutors. In this role, they target poor attendance by ensuring that students 'pay back' the time that they miss. Students value the 'pay back' approach and agree that it promotes the importance of good attendance.

- A significant minority of students experience circumstances that prevent them from meeting the college's expectations for attendance, including, for example, young carers, young parents and those with mental or other health issues. In these circumstances, staff provide excellent support, including carrying out home visits and providing good electronic resources to promote learning. As a result, the great majority of these students achieve their qualifications.
- In 2016/17, achievement on A-level courses declined and was below what would be expected based on students' starting points. Around a third of students take an A-level qualification as part of their study programme. In response to this decline, leaders and managers, with robust challenge from governors, have implemented a sharply focused action plan which contains clear and measurable targets for improvement. Personal tutors closely monitor the progress that students make across all their courses and provide assertive mentoring to students who are making slow progress. However, this system is new and managers have not yet fully implemented it to a sufficiently high standard across all curriculum areas.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- managers monitor closely the progress of students on A-level courses, making sure that all personal tutors provide high-quality support and guidance to students who are not making rapid enough progress towards achieving their target and aspirational grades
- they continue to monitor the impact of their A-level action plan, taking swift action if progress is not sufficiently rapid across all subjects
- they improve attendance further by consolidating the current strategies and continuing to promote the importance of attendance as a key skill for employment.

I am copying this letter to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Angus
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Ofsted Inspector were assisted by the deputy principal as nominee. We held meetings with students, teachers, managers and governors and carried out observations of teaching, learning and assessment. We scrutinised key documents, including those related to safeguarding, self-assessment and quality assurance, and analysed achievement and progress data.