

Chesterfield College

General further education college

Inspection dates

13–16 February 2018

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

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Learners on 16 to 19 study programmes make insufficient progress from their starting points, particularly on level 3 programmes.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment on 16 to 19 study programmes is not good enough; much is dull and uninspiring.
- Too many teachers do not have high enough aspirations for their learners, or do not take sufficient account of their existing skills and knowledge; they do not plan lessons that provide the right level of challenge for learners.
- Too many teachers lack the necessary skills to help the most and least able students to fulfil their potential.
- A minority of teachers fail to check learning with sufficient frequency and rigour.
- The majority of teachers do not do enough to help classroom-based learners to develop their written English skills.
- Quality assurance processes are unwieldy and as a result, managers and teachers do not use them well to improve the quality of provision.
- Managers' actions to improve the performance of staff have had limited effect; lesson observation is not used well and the impact of training is unclear.

The provider has the following strengths

- Apprentices, adult learners and learners with high needs make good progress from their starting points.
- Stakeholder engagement is exemplary and as a result, learners and apprentices have good opportunities to improve their employability.
- Learners' behaviour is good, and the college is welcoming and inclusive.
- Most learners enjoy attending college and grow in confidence because of their experiences.
- Learners and apprentices develop their practical skills well in most subject areas.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Chesterfield College is a large further education college with three main sites in Chesterfield and three satellite apprenticeship centres in Manchester, Nottingham and Birmingham. It offers programmes from entry level through to higher education in all subject areas apart from agriculture, horticulture and animal care.
- Although the educational attainment of school leavers is similar to that of Derbyshire as a whole, the college draws a disproportionate number of its students from deprived backgrounds, and their attainment at 16 is lower than for the region and England. The proportion of local adults qualified to level 3 or above is similar the rest of the East Midlands. Fewer local residents work in managerial or professional roles than in the rest of the region. Unemployment is similar to national levels, but the proportion of those aged 18 to 21 who are unemployed is substantially higher than in the rest of the East Midlands.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the outcomes of 16 to 19 study programme learners so that they make the progress and achieve the grades of which they are capable.
- Increase the aspirations teachers have for their learners, particularly on 16 to 19 study programmes, by helping them to understand their learners' starting points and potential.
- Provide teachers with training and support to help them to:
 - recognise the difference between progress and attainment and develop lessons that are appropriately challenging for learners
 - develop the skills they need to extend the learning of the most able learners and help those who are struggling to keep up
 - master a range of interesting and motivating approaches to teaching, learning and assessment so that they teach lessons that capture the imagination and interest of learners
 - check whether all learners have understood topics, either through effective use of questioning or other methods, so that they are able to address quickly any misunderstandings and proceed with greater pace when learners have understood topics fully
 - develop the writing skills of learners so that they are able to produce better extended writing.
- Review quality assurance processes so that they focus on doing things that really improve learners' experience and progress, are sufficiently straightforward for staff to understand and implement, and take up as little time as possible so that teachers and managers can dedicate as much time as possible to improving teaching, learning and assessment.
- Examine processes for improving the performance of teachers and work-based tutors so that they more accurately identify areas for development and lead to training and development that have a measurable impact on learners' experiences.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The new principal, governors and leadership team have redefined the college's strategic priorities and raised their ambitions for learners, the town of Chesterfield, and the region. They have partially addressed weaknesses identified in the previous inspection, and have identified key emerging weaknesses. They have appointed new staff and developed new approaches to deal with these weaknesses, but improvements are not yet sufficient. In particular, the progress of learners on 16 to 19 study programmes is not good enough, and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement.
- Managers' actions to improve the performance of their staff, through annual performance and development reviews (PDRs), are not sufficiently effective. Reviews are extremely detailed and difficult to interpret. Managers do not use the information gained from lesson observations, learning walks, and achievement and progress data to inform reviews. Although they link staff objectives to college priorities, targets are not sufficiently focused, lack ambition and often have outcome measures that are unrelated to the action.
- The impact of continuing professional development (CPD) is unclear. Managers identify training needs through the PDR process or through regular meetings with their staff. They provide a significant amount of training to develop teachers' and work-based tutors' skills. However, they do not assess the impact of CPD on teaching, learning and assessment. Despite managers' strategic aim to improve the development of English and mathematics, they have not yet put sufficient training in place to help teachers gain confidence to develop learners' skills in these areas.
- The self-assessment report is too descriptive, detailed and difficult to read. While the document provides a broadly accurate view of the quality of provision, managers have not used data analysis well to aid their evaluation. The report places too little emphasis on the progress that learners make from their starting points. The associated quality improvement plan is unwieldy and contains too many actions, many of which managers have failed to implement. Too few of the actions relate to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Managers do not use lesson observations effectively to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Managers observe teachers and work-based tutors annually. Observation reports detail the activities observed, but do not define robust or ambitious targets and actions to help teachers and work-based tutors make improvements. Managers do not cross-reference the outcomes of observations with achievement, attendance and retention rates, or learners' progress data.
- Managers make effective use of performance management arrangements to deal with underperforming staff. In the last year, managers identified 16 staff for interventions. Of these, seven have left the college, and five have improved their work. Managers continue to support the remaining four. Coaching for underperforming staff works well, and benefits most staff.
- The quality assurance of subcontracted provision is rigorous and effective. Leaders and managers intervened swiftly to halt the decline in achievement rates and the current progress of apprentices is good.

- The principal, leaders and managers make effective use of labour market intelligence and skill priorities to develop progression routes from pre-entry level to higher education in a broad range of subjects. They use well their very strong links with stakeholders, such as employers, local councils, local community groups, schools, and the two local enterprise partnerships to inform curriculum planning. For example, managers have responded well to the needs of Jobcentre Plus to develop bespoke sector-specific courses that prepare the unemployed for work.
- Leaders and managers have responded well to the reforms in apprenticeships and recently introduced carefully planned apprenticeships for the new standards.
- Prudent financial management has enabled leaders and managers to improve the college environment. Learners benefit from good learning resources and professional equipment.
- Senior leaders have instilled a strong ethos of mutual respect and tolerance across the college. Staff promote equality and diversity themes well within sessions.

The governance of the provider

- Governors have the skills and expertise required to oversee the performance of the college. They are experienced, knowledgeable and committed to raising standards. The principal and the search committee have worked hard to address the gender imbalance and bring further commercial expertise to the board.
- Termly board meetings ensure that all governors are involved in corporate decision-making. Senior leaders provide detailed reports on all aspects of college performance. They send governors a helpful monthly data summary. This, and governors' recently established links to curriculum areas, increases their knowledge of the curriculum, and sharpens their focus on quality improvement. As a result, they know the college well, and recognise that the rate of improvement in 16 to 19 study programmes is too slow.
- Governors provide good support to the senior leadership team. Better reporting arrangements mean that governors can challenge senior leaders more easily. While this challenge is evident, minutes of governors' meetings do not capture it well.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and managers have established comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures that they update at appropriate intervals.
- The human resources team adheres to all safer recruitment processes and maintains a comprehensive and accurate single central record of staff. They conduct thorough checks on new staff to ensure that they do not pose a risk to learners.
- All new employees undertake safeguarding training as part of their induction. This training uses compelling case studies that help staff understand important topics. All staff receive regular update training. A culture of safeguarding permeates the college.
- All governors undertake training in safeguarding and take their duties very seriously. The link governor is very knowledgeable and supports college leaders and managers well.

- An appropriately trained safeguarding team has an impressive array of skills relating to, for example, suicide prevention, mental health, female genital mutilation, modern slavery and forced marriage that enables them to identify and support those who may be at risk.
- Leaders and managers have taken effective actions with regard to their 'Prevent' duties. They have trained all staff and governors and provide frequent updates.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment on 16 to 19 study programmes, the largest provision type at the college, requires improvement. Teachers do not challenge learners sufficiently to develop and extend their knowledge and skills in line with their full potential. Learners, especially those on level 3 programmes, make poor progress. Too often, teachers expect all learners to complete the same tasks at the same pace. The most able are not challenged enough; the least able find the work too difficult.
- In a minority of subjects within 16 to 19 study programmes, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is particularly poor. Managers are aware of the serious issues in information and communication technology, business and A-level programmes. Action to date has had little impact.
- Teachers on 16 to 19 study programmes rely heavily on the use of oral questioning to check that learners understand topics, but they do not use it well. The majority do not adapt questions to reflect the starting points of learners, allow small groups of learners to dominate discussions and rely too much on a single type of question. As a result, they do not identify misconceptions, or increase the pace of learning when they could. In a minority of adult learning courses, teachers do not pose challenging questions for learners, or check what they have learned. Work-based tutors check learning effectively through high-quality questioning of apprentices during progress reviews.
- Teachers of 16 to 19 study programmes and a minority of apprenticeship work-based tutors do not provide sufficiently detailed feedback on learners' and apprentices' written work. As a result, learners and apprentices do not know how to improve subsequent pieces of work, and make less progress than they might. Adult learning tutors provide detailed feedback and support that enables learners to progress rapidly.
- Teachers do not help learners to improve their writing skills enough. For example, they identify spelling, punctuation and grammar mistakes, but often fail to check that learners improve in subsequent pieces of work. Learners struggle to produce high-quality extended written work because staff do not help them to improve the structure of their writing or use the appropriate tone or formality.
- The large majority of teachers and work-based tutors use their subject knowledge and professional experience to develop apprentices' and learners' practical skills well. Teachers of these subjects place an emphasis on making learning relevant to the workplace. Learners develop their understanding of professional occupational standards in their chosen industry well.
- Work-based tutors and teachers use a variety of stimulating and challenging learning and assessment activities to support the effective development of learners' skills and knowledge on apprenticeships and adult learning programmes.

- Managers and teachers work effectively with learning support staff and external professionals to ensure that learners who have special educational needs progress well in lessons.
- Learners and apprentices make effective use of the good quality online learning resources to catch up on, and reinforce, their learning. Adult learners develop their independent learning skills well.
- Staff improve learners' understanding of the challenges and opportunities of living in a diverse community through well-planned tutorials. These incorporate events on such topics as gender, sexuality, race, religion and mental health.
- Staff challenge stereotypes and use of derogatory language in college and the workplace effectively. They promote equality and diversity well through learning activities. Apprentices know how to apply this knowledge in their jobs. Vocational teachers ensure that learners understand how equality themes might affect their professional practice.
- The large majority of staff develop learners' and apprentices' mathematics skills to prepare them for future progression. Learners report a growing confidence and self-belief in their mathematical skills.
- The majority of learners with high needs develop their speaking, listening and writing skills well. The large majority of apprentices successfully improve their English and mathematical skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Most learners take pride in their work and grow in confidence because of their experiences at the college. They recognise that they have the ability to succeed in further study or employment. For example, one learner on an access to higher education course describes how, when she joined her course, she had only thought about progressing to a higher education programme at the college. Because of her growing confidence and support from tutors, she has now applied for a number of universities, and is confident that she can make a successful transition to higher education.
- The large majority of study programme learners take part in appropriate and purposeful work experience. Those for whom this is not appropriate participate in a varied selection of work-related activities that give them useful contact with employers and experience of real-world projects. For example, hairdressing and theatre makeup students participate in a project for a dance school where they plan the hairstyles and makeup for a dance performance and implement their designs.
- Learners' practical work meets the requirements of their qualifications and their industries.
- Staff provide good pre-enrolment advice and guidance that help ensure that students and apprentices enrol on the right course. Effective careers guidance from teachers and work-based tutors helps learners and apprentices to make appropriate plans for employment and further learning. A team of careers professionals provides good-quality careers guidance to groups of learners and individual specialist support for career planning.

- Learners and apprentices feel safe and are safe. They know who they should speak to in the event that they have a concern about themselves or others. They are well informed and know what to do with regard to bullying, harassment and cyber bullying.
- Learners and apprentices learn about the dangers of radicalisation and extremism through tutorials and reviews. Most understand the nature of radicalisation, and know the types of behaviours that might indicate that someone is being radicalised. They have a satisfactory grasp of British values and can relate these themes to the prevention of extremism.
- The college provides a wide range of valuable enrichment activities, in which a large number of learners participate. This includes a healthy lifestyle project that targets specific groups of sedentary learners, and helps to make them more active.
- Learners are well behaved. They participate well in lessons. They are respectful of staff and each other, and this contributes to a welcoming and friendly environment at the college. Staff deal appropriately and effectively with the rare instances of poor behaviour. However, too many teachers allow learners to eat and drink, or wear outdoor clothing, in lessons. This does not prepare learners well for the workplace.
- Learners' attendance is satisfactory. However, it is below the college's own target and, despite managers' actions, shows no sign of improvement. Too many learners arrive late to lessons, and teachers do not challenge them effectively.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- Learners on 16 to 19 study programmes make insufficient progress from their starting points, particularly those who study at level 3. Teachers' expectations of what these learners can achieve are too low and, as a result, they often fail to set challenging work that helps learners to achieve their potential.
- Too few of the small number of learners who follow AS- and A-level programmes achieve their qualifications. A-level students who do pass seldom achieve the grades of which they are capable. Too few learners aged 16 to 18 who take GCSE mathematics gain A* to C (9 to 4) grades.
- Learners on 16 to 19 study programmes often do not produce written work of a quality that matches their potential. Although their written work meets minimum requirements of their qualifications, too few achieve the higher grades of which they are capable.
- The proportion of apprentices who remain in employment at the end of their apprenticeship was low in 2016/17. The college's in-year data suggests that this has improved slightly but is still not high. A very low proportion of apprentices progress to a higher-level programme. A small minority of apprentices take on additional responsibilities at work at the conclusion of their apprenticeship and a further small minority gain promotion because of the progress they make.
- The proportion of learners and apprentices who complete their programmes and achieve their qualifications is in line with the rate for other colleges. The proportion of apprentices who complete their programmes within agreed timescales is similar to other providers nationally.

- Apprentices, adult learners and learners with high needs make good progress from their starting points. Most learners produce practical work that meets the requirements of their qualifications and the demands of their chosen industry. Learners with high needs become more independent in their lives.
- The proportion of adult learners who gain GCSE A* to C (9 to 4) grades in English and mathematics is substantially higher than at other providers. The proportion of learners aged 16 to 18 who achieve an A* to C (9 to 4) grade in English is higher than the low national rate.
- Managers have taken action to improve the proportion of apprentices in subcontracted provision who complete their qualifications on time. Because of their interventions, current subcontracted apprentices make the expected progress.
- Most learners progress to positive destinations at the end of their programmes. The large majority progress to further learning or apprenticeships, with a smaller number gaining sustained employment. Just over half of 16 to 19 study programme learners who complete level 3 programmes progress to higher education. A high proportion of unemployed adults receive job offers after undertaking short employability programmes.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- The college has around 2,500 learners on 16 to 19 study programmes. Learners follow programmes from entry level to level 3 across all subject areas apart from agriculture, horticulture and animal care, and teaching and learning support.
- Too few learners make the progress, or achieve the grades, of which they are capable, particularly at level 3. This is because teachers' aspirations for their learners are not high enough. They take too little account of learners' existing skills and prior attainment and do not plan lessons that are appropriately challenging for all learners. Many teachers lack the skills necessary to help the most and least able learners to fulfil their potential.
- In a minority of lessons, the teaching is dull and unimaginative, and consequently learners do not develop their knowledge and understanding as much as they should. Teachers pay too little regard to the varying abilities of their learners. Activities are often used that are too easy for the most able, leaving them with little to do while others in the group catch up.
- Teachers do not check learners' understanding frequently or accurately enough. As a result, they do not identify misconceptions or gaps in learners' understanding. Most teachers use oral questioning as their main tool for checking and extending learning, but they do not use it well. Questioning lacks variety, and a small group of more vocal learners often dominates sessions. As a result, a few learners become disengaged.
- Too much feedback on the subject content of learners' written work lacks the information necessary to help them improve their understanding. A small minority of staff do not routinely identify spelling, punctuation and grammar errors in learners' work and most offer little advice to help learners improve the structure of their writing. As a result, learners do not improve their writing skills as much as they should.

- Attendance is satisfactory. However, college data shows that for the year to date it is below the target set by managers, and shows no sign of improving. In the sessions visited by inspectors, attendance was low. In a minority of lessons, learners arrived late and teachers failed to challenge them. This does little to prepare learners for the workplace.
- The large majority of learners complete their programmes and achieve their qualifications. In GCSE English, the proportion who gain A* to C (9 to 4) grades is higher than in other similar colleges. However, the proportion who do so in mathematics is low.
- Most vocational teachers have good, up-to-date subject knowledge that they use well to help learners to develop their practical skills. As a result, learners often produce practical work that is of a better quality than their written work. Many vocational teachers successfully integrate English and mathematics within practical lessons and this helps learners to understand the importance of these skills in their occupational area.
- Teachers successfully include topics about equality and diversity in their lessons. As a result, learners develop a good understanding of these themes, and this contributes to the inclusive atmosphere at the college.
- A large majority of learners participate in well-planned external work experience. As a result, they develop their understanding of the workplace and the expectations of employers. Where work experience is inappropriate or impractical, staff provide a range of useful and productive work-related activities such as work in realistic working environments, visits to employers, and live briefs for project work.
- Students enrol on appropriate courses because of good initial advice and guidance. Effective careers advice, from teachers, tutors and specialist careers advisers, helps learners to make appropriate plans for employment and further learning. As a result, the vast majority progress to positive destinations, including employment, apprenticeships, and further study. The proportion of learners who complete level 3 programmes and progress to higher education is in line with similar colleges elsewhere.

Adult learning programmes

Good

- The college has around 1,300 adult learners, mostly in discrete part-time adult provision. Learners study short pre-employment courses, English and mathematics courses, full-time access to higher education programmes in health, humanities and policing, English for speakers of other languages and a wide range of part-time vocational and academic courses.
- Staff plan programmes well to meet the needs of employers, learners and local communities. Much of the provision meets the needs of unemployed people, those with low-level English and mathematical skills and those who speak English as an additional language. Courses provide good progression routes to both higher-level studies and into employment.
- Leaders and managers have developed strong partnership arrangements to provide a wide range of pre-employment courses. Collaboration with Jobcentre Plus has led to the development of successful short courses. Staff have worked with major employers to establish sector-based work academies in social care, food production and logistics to help those who are ready for work to secure employment. A high proportion of all learners

attending these academies gain an offer of employment. Very effective partnership arrangements with trades unions support a growing number of work-based courses in English and mathematics within the food and retail industry.

- Learners are highly motivated and very much enjoy their learning. Teachers plan lessons well to include a wide variety of activities that stimulate interest and support good development of skills and knowledge. As a result, learners make good progress both within lessons and over time.
- Learners produce work of a high standard. Access to higher education learners produce detailed and well-presented portfolios that demonstrate their pride in their work. In electrical installation lessons, learners work to industry standards and produce work that meets commercial expectations.
- Assessment, tracking and monitoring of progress is thorough and effective. Teachers mark work promptly with appropriate feedback. They make good use of electronic systems to monitor learners' progress and intervene quickly and effectively when difficulties arise.
- Teachers produce learning materials to a high standard. They prepare colourful, relevant slide presentations to enhance learning. Learners make very effective use of the virtual learning environment to continue their studies outside formal lessons, and to develop their independent learning skills.
- Learners develop good practical skills. For example, in motor vehicle lessons learners develop body-repair and spray-painting skills to a standard well beyond the minimum required for their qualification. In reflexology, learners have quickly developed sufficient skills to be able to treat external customers.
- Learners grow in confidence because staff support them to overcome barriers to learning. In functional skills mathematics, learners expressed growing self-belief, and, for example, gain the confidence they need to help their children with mathematics.
- A minority of teachers do not always make activities difficult enough so that learners can achieve their full potential. Teachers often prevent learners from finding solutions themselves by answering a question rather than encouraging learners to explore possible solutions.
- A minority of teachers do not adequately check learning in lessons. During activities, teachers too frequently need to explain concepts again as learners do not fully understand them. This slows the pace of lessons. However, GCSE English teachers check learning very effectively, and learners make good progress.
- Learners on courses other than English do not develop their English skills sufficiently. For example, teachers do not always correct inaccurate spelling in coursework and learners with limited writing skills are often allowed not to complete the written part of their learning logs.

Apprenticeships

Good

- The college has around 2,700 apprentices across a wide range of vocational areas. The largest numbers are in health and care, engineering and manufacturing and business and administration.

- Work-based tutors use a wide range of methods to assess apprentices' knowledge and skill development, including observations, professional discussion, competency-based tasks and written work. This helps apprentices to develop their knowledge and skills rapidly. Work-based tutors provide apprentices with detailed oral feedback following observations in the workplace. Most work-based tutors use highly effective and clearly focused questioning to check learning and understanding and this helps consolidate and extend learning.
- Work-based tutors provide good support during visits to the workplace. Between visits, work-based tutors make good use of technology to provide apprentices with support and this helps to motivate them to make good progress.
- The large majority of apprentices develop good English and mathematical skills. Work-based tutors understand apprentices' starting points and use this knowledge well to help them to apply and develop their skills further in the workplace. For example, apprentices enhance their English writing skills through the creation of invoices, and work-based tutors review spelling and grammar before the apprentice sends the invoice to the customer.
- Work-based tutors have high expectations and this helps apprentices to develop excellent attitudes to learning. Apprentices are proud of their achievements, and work hard to show their value to their employers. For example, one apprentice addressed a problem where a customer had received medication that had become frozen during transit by adapting packaging to ensure that complaints are minimised during cold weather.
- During progress reviews, work-based tutors help apprentices to develop their understanding of diversity themes both in the work context and in their lives outside of work. For example, in one review an apprentice and his work-based tutor discussed how to have a telephone conversation with customers who are hearing impaired.
- Apprentices feel safe and are safe both in college and in the workplace. Work-based tutors pay close attention to health and safety. Apprentices arrive at work well prepared and wearing the correct protective equipment.
- Apprentices develop their understanding of safeguarding themes, including radicalisation and extremism, well through resources available on the online portfolio system. At each review, apprentices answer specific questions to reinforce their understanding of British values. However, work-based tutors do not sufficiently explore or contextualise what these themes mean to apprentices in their personal lives.
- Managers now monitor subcontracted provision well so that apprentices on subcontracted programmes make progress in line with their college counterparts.
- Employers and work colleagues provide effective on-the-job support that links well to apprentices' off-the-job training and helps them to develop their skills. Employers and college staff work well together to plan learning so that apprentices make good progress.
- Most apprentices, including those following standards-based apprenticeships, complete appropriate off-the-job training. They log this activity within the online portfolio system. In a very few cases, the activities recorded do not match the time allocated to them, suggesting that these apprentices may not receive enough off-the-job training.
- Work-based tutors' use of targets is not fully effective because they do not always set clear developmental goals or review them to check the progress of apprentices. They do

not always identify activities for apprentices to complete between visits. Apprentices are not always clear about the aims and objectives of sessions with their work-based tutor, nor how sessions link to prior learning.

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

- The college has 61 high needs learners. Just under half of learners with high needs are integrated into mainstream provision.
- Staff use their sound subject knowledge and vocational experience to plan and deliver lessons that interest and engage learners. They use a range of teaching and assessment methods that are well adapted and aid the good development of knowledge, skills and understanding of the majority of learners. They set frequent homework activities that most learners complete. This helps them to make good progress.
- Staff ensure that learners have a basic understanding of equality and diversity themes in terms of differences, rights and responsibilities. This helps learners to keep themselves safe from bullying, harassment and discrimination and to identify, recognise and value differing cultures and beliefs.
- Transition arrangements with the two main feeder schools and the local authority are effective. Learners attend taster sessions during quiet periods in the summer term and a high proportion attend a further summer school. Staff use these sessions to assess learners' behaviours and abilities to ensure they place them on appropriate programmes.
- Staff use education, health and care plans well to determine learners' support and academic needs. Managers share these quickly with tutors and support staff, who use them to inform initial target setting, and to plan the deployment of support. Tutors manage in-class learning support well and support assistants update support plans after each session. Progress coaches provide regular one-to-one support that helps learners to progress and to prepare for their next steps.
- Staff make good use of their links with a range of professionals, such as speech and language therapists, to help learners make good progress. They have good working relationships with parents and carers that they use well to ensure that learners receive appropriate support at all stages of their programmes.
- Teachers routinely develop learners' English skills. They provide timely and constructive feedback on learners' written work. Learners develop speaking and listening skills well, and the majority show improvement in their writing.
- Learners in vocational classes develop their practical and social skills, and describe their work with confidence and enthusiasm. They gain wider skills in, for example, self-reflection, problem-solving and teamwork. Their work meets the required standards of awarding bodies and they learn to work more independently in preparation for their next steps.
- Learners work in an environment of mutual respect and courtesy and staff routinely make adjustments to maximise inclusion. Learners behave well, work co-operatively and are courteous and respectful to peers and staff. They are punctual and attend well. Learners enjoy their learning and have fun.

- Learners on foundation learning programmes access a range of enrichment activities that help them to develop their wider skills. These include, for example, climbing and swimming sessions at a local healthy living centre.
- Learners develop their employability skills well through a range of activities, including a programme of work experience that staff link to each individual's needs and progression aims. However, few learners progress into employment. Most move onto higher-level programmes within the college.
- Learners feel and are safe, including when using technology. They listen carefully, follow instructions, and adhere to college rules. They know who to contact if they have concerns. However, their understanding of how to keep themselves safe from radicalisation is limited.
- A minority of teachers do not pay sufficient attention to learners' individual targets when planning lessons. In these lessons, all learners complete the same tasks in the same time and this limits the progress of the most able.
- Teachers do not extend learners' mathematical skills sufficiently. They do not take sufficient account of learners' starting points or set clear improvement targets. As a result, learners only make limited progress in developing their mathematical skills.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130638
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	8,359
Principal/CEO	Julie Richards
Telephone number	01246 500500
Website	www.chesterfield.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+
	495	242	596	291	1,423	223	-	12
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	454	866	183	1,058	4	152		
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	61							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust Essential Learning Company Limited Kingswood Mercia College Limited One To One Support Services Limited Richmond Training Academy Limited SCCU Limited Stepping Stones Education and Training Limited							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy principal – learning, skills and innovation, 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, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

Russ Henry, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Julie Ashton	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Nicholas Sanders	Ofsted Inspector
Allan Shaw	Ofsted Inspector
Heather Cadman-Marks	Ofsted Inspector
Debra Forsythe-Conroy	Ofsted Inspector
Tracey Greenaway-Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Bev Cross	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Ward	Her Majesty’s Inspector

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Employer View

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