

WCG

General further education college

Inspection dates

13–16 March 2018

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	Good
Outcomes for learners	Good	Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Good

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- The principal and senior leadership team have set a clear strategic direction, centred on providing opportunities to improve learners' futures.
- Senior leaders managed the recent merger with another local college adeptly and sensitively.
- Leaders are highly effective at enabling the college to play a productive role in the local economy.
- Most learners and apprentices develop good skills, produce work of a high standard and consequently are well prepared for their next steps in education or work; almost all progress to further learning or employment.
- Managers, teachers and assessors monitor the progress of learners and apprentices well, and intervene to support them effectively.
- Most learners engage in appropriate, relevant work experiences or work-related learning activities that prepare them well for their next steps.
- Staff and learners use information technology effectively to support learners and keep those who encounter difficulties engaged in learning.
- Learners receive good careers guidance that they use well to make decisions about their next steps.
- Too few learners make good progress in developing their written English skills, and the proportion who improve their GCSE grade is too low.
- Attendance is not yet high enough at the sites of the former South Worcestershire College, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Teaching in a small minority of subjects does not provide the right level of challenge for all learners.

Full report

Information about the provider

- WCG is a large general further education college formed from the mergers of several colleges; the most recent of these was with South Worcestershire College in August 2016. It operates from nine sites across Warwickshire and Worcestershire. It offers programmes for learners aged 16 to 18 and adult learners in a wide range of subject areas. It also provides apprenticeships, with most apprentices following programmes in land-based or engineering subjects; smaller numbers are in health and social care, construction, information technology, hairdressing, accountancy and business administration.
- Warwickshire and Worcestershire have a mix of urban and rural areas. Both counties have lower unemployment than the rest of England, more people employed in managerial and professional roles and a greater proportion of individuals qualified to higher levels. In Worcestershire, pupils leave school with similar GCSE results to the average for England; those in Warwickshire achieve better.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Increase the number of learners who make good progress and achieve qualifications in English by ensuring that:
 - all staff who teach English have both the subject skills and the teaching skills to help all learners develop their knowledge and skills quickly
 - vocational teachers consistently include activities in their lessons that promote the development of good writing skills
 - vocational staff provide clear guidance on marked work that helps learners to improve their writing, and check that learners follow this guidance on subsequent work.
- Provide training for staff in underperforming subjects so that they:
 - take into account learners' existing abilities and plan lessons that provide appropriate challenge for all members of the group
 - plan for learning that provides an increasing level of challenge over time and equips learners with the skills they need to meet this challenge.
- Take firm action to improve attendance, particularly in English and mathematics lessons.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal and senior leadership team have set a clear strategic direction that builds astutely on the college's tradition of preparing learners for local and regional employment opportunities. It serves the local communities of each college in the group well. The strategy resonates with employers. Through clear targets, managers are accountable for the success of the strategy. Senior leaders frequently review the progress the college is making.
- Senior leaders managed the recent merger with another local college adeptly and empathetically. Leaders are visible at all sites, and staff at the recently merged college have embraced the change. The group includes nine geographically dispersed sites, and leaders focus well on retaining and developing each college's historical curriculum identity. Teachers and managers work well together to improve teaching practice. Staff morale and retention have improved. However, despite the strides forward, managers have not yet secured consistently strong performance across the group.
- Leaders are highly effective at enabling the college group to play a productive role in the local economy. Leaders respond quickly to employers' proposals and have been successful in developing beneficial partnerships with many of them. Across the group, the curriculum reflects the local economy and skills priorities. Learners gain the right skills and use industry-compatible resources, such as those required to secure work in the digital games industry in a local area known as the 'Silicon Spa'. Leaders have established strong partnerships with the automotive industry to develop effective apprenticeship programmes.
- Leaders evaluate provision thoroughly and the college group's self-assessment report is detailed and accurate. It highlights well the key strengths, and contains the salient information on the weaker aspects of quality. Teachers review the quality of their courses well. Heads of department use performance information proficiently. They present a clear overview of quality of the courses that they are accountable for at annual reviews. Senior leaders monitor reviews carefully.
- Leaders' quality improvement planning is effective. They focus well on the few weaker aspects of teaching, learning and outcomes for learners. Their plans also reflect their ambition to improve further the quality of those courses with better outcomes for learners and more effective teaching. Leaders review well the impact of actions against performance targets. They make effective use of a range of information, and act swiftly when this provides early warning of any risks of slippage in performance.
- Leaders have worked hard to ensure that learners receive good teaching across the curriculum. Leaders carry out detailed curriculum reviews to check the quality in different subject areas. Leaders have improved their systems to help them to identify poor performance earlier. They have managed poor staff performance effectively and support teachers and assessors well to develop their skills.
- Leaders have resolved areas for improvement since the previous inspection. For example, they have improved the college group's work-experience programme and the progress apprentices make. Although they have improved the progress of level 3 learners in most subject areas, problems persist in a few, most notably in business studies.

- Leaders have a clear strategy for improving outcomes for learners in English and mathematics. Their determined actions around teaching and recruitment have eliminated the poorest practice. Teaching in English and mathematics has improved. However, the implementation of the strategy has yet to be fully effective.

The governance of the provider

- Governance is strong. The governing body comprises a range of experienced professionals. They are fully committed to what the college group wants to achieve. They scrutinise financial performance and learning outcomes carefully. They contribute their skills well to support senior leaders on financial matters and academic standards.
- Governors have a detailed understanding of the quality and planning processes at the college group. They have a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. Members of the group's academic standards board check well leaders' views of learning outcomes and the quality of teaching. Members of the board make sure that managers focus on improving the areas that are a risk to outcomes for learners.
- The college's seven advisory boards consist of members with good business skills who provide effective support to each college in the group. They provide ideas for developing the curriculum. College leaders value their expertise and listen to their views. They help develop fruitful partnerships and initiatives to provide jobs and skills for learners.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Managers conduct background checks on new staff to ensure their suitability for work with young people and vulnerable adults. Staff receive up-to-date training in safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty. Teachers look after learners who have special educational needs (SEN) well.
- Leaders have carried out a full review of the college group's security processes. Staff carry out random searches of learners to make sure that they are not bringing prohibited items into college. Different types of visitor are required to wear specific, colour-coded lanyards, so that staff can see at a glance if they are doing anything inappropriate. These measures make learners feel even safer than they did previously. Staff follow health and safety procedures appropriately in all curriculum areas.
- Staff and governors carry out their responsibilities to keep learners safe well. They refer safeguarding concerns appropriately to the designated safeguarding staff. The manager for safeguarding has a clear oversight of the number of referrals and their outcomes. Staff work well in partnership with a range of local agencies. Staff support learners well when they get into difficulties.
- Governors receive appropriate training and have a good understanding of safeguarding. They are represented well by one board member with a great deal of knowledge and experience in this area. Governors receive an annual safeguarding report and know how many referrals staff make each year and what the outcomes are from these referrals.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of learners and apprentices. They are well qualified and have appropriate professional and industrial experience. They understand the standards that are required within their industries and develop learners' vocational and technical skills well. They develop good learning resources that reflect industry practice. As a result, most learners participate enthusiastically in learning.
- Teachers make use of a good range of effective teaching and learning activities to develop learners' and apprentices' knowledge and understanding. For example, beauty therapy teachers develop learners' understanding of the physiology of hair and skin through carefully crafted group activities. In arboriculture, learners work effectively as a team to keep each other safe as they skilfully reduce the canopy in a wood.
- Teachers make good use of the excellent resources available to help learners and apprentices develop the skills they need in their chosen industry. For example, they teach learners how to apply high-level design skills within the car industry, using the specialised software used by a local car maker.
- The large majority of teachers use the information they have about learners well to plan learning that provides the right level of challenge. Staff carry out comprehensive assessments of learners' and apprentices' existing skills and knowledge. They use the results from tests and details of prior attainment to develop clear and detailed learner profiles. However, a small minority do not use this information, and as a result their learners do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Staff work well with learners to establish whether they have a difficulty with which they may need extra help. They make good use of information contained within education, health and care plans. They plan well and provide learners with suitable assistance as soon as they need it. Staff work well with professionals, parents and carers to help those learners who have very specialised or complex needs to adapt well to life at college. Managers monitor closely the progress of learners and adult learners who have SEN. They intervene appropriately if it becomes necessary. Because of this work, these learners make good progress.
- Teachers and learners use information technology well to support learning. Staff use the online learning management system effectively to share schemes of work, issue learning activities and encourage learner discussions. Learners reinforce their learning, catch up on topics they have missed and occasionally read ahead. This supports the learning of most learners well.
- Teachers and assessors help learners to develop their mathematical skills well, particularly in engineering, motor vehicle maintenance, hairdressing, and construction subjects. Teachers and assessors develop learners' digital skills very effectively.
- Managers have refined the systems they use to monitor learners' and apprentices' progress. Staff check frequently and well the progress that learners and apprentices make. As a result, managers and staff intervene quickly and effectively when problems occur and keep the majority of learners on course to achieve well.
- In a minority of subjects, the written feedback on marked work that teachers and assessors provide is not sufficiently detailed or helpful. As a result, learners and apprentices do not know, or forget, what they have to do to improve the quality of their work.

- Vocational teachers do not make enough use of the results of early assessments of learners' and apprentices' English and mathematical abilities to plan learning activities that develop these skills. Although staff correct learners' mistakes and stress the importance of accuracy in spelling and grammar, learners do not improve these aspects of their writing. Staff do not consistently develop learners' and apprentices' extended writing skills.
- Staff develop good relationships with parents and employers that lead to improved progress for learners and apprentices. They inform parents and employers about learners' and apprentices' progress in relation to the standards expected. Teachers send parents helpful and detailed reports. They invite them to parents' evenings, and in a number of individual cases they involve parents well in the development of effective individual improvement plans. Managers and teachers work well with the parents of learners who have complex needs. Assessors hold regular progress reviews with apprentices, and during these they discuss progress with apprentices' employers.
- Most staff challenge stereotypes and use of derogatory language, including at work. Staff promote equality of opportunity and include diversity themes in their lessons. Learners and apprentices treat each other with respect and listen well to the views of their peers. Staff plan for and celebrate diversity. For example, in film studies, learners explored the theme of anti-Semitism with sensitivity and insight.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Learners are proud of their achievements and eager to show off the skills they have developed at college. For example, one learner on a furniture-making course was very keen to show her excellent marquetry work. Learners are confident about their future learning and employment.
- Almost all learners on level 2 and level 3 16 to 19 study programmes, and those on programmes for learners with high needs, participate in useful and relevant work experience. Staff help learners to secure placements that match their learning goals and career aspirations. They check placement providers to ensure that they provide safe environments and suitable experiences. They monitor the experiences of learners while they undertake work placements. Learners complete tasks and workbooks that help them benefit from their experiences.
- The large majority of learners on level 1 study programmes engage in work-related activity that prepares them well for employment and work experience. For example, hairdressing learners spend time working in the college's salon based at a local hospital, and construction learners participate in community projects. Personal learning advisers liaise with work-experience coordinators to ensure that those who are ready for work experience and would benefit from it have the opportunity to do so.
- Learners make good use of the information they receive on their career options. Academic tutors and personal learning advisers provide a programme of careers education via the college's tutorial system. Eight well-qualified careers advisers provide specialist advice for those who need it, and a substantial number of learners take advantage of this service. Level 3 learners who do not intend to progress to higher education are provided with useful support through whole-college events and a compulsory careers interview.

- The college provides a wide range of enrichment activities that help learners to develop their employability and explore personal and social issues. 'Get Set' and employability weeks include a number of activities to help learners prepare for further study, employment or self-employment. Learner representatives participate in democratic processes and discuss issues important to themselves and their peers. Other learners engage in community programmes, volunteering and sporting activities. A number engage, often successfully, in competition work that helps them aspire towards excellence.
- Most learners behave well, in and out of lessons. Staff deal appropriately with the rare cases of poor behaviour.
- Learners know, in broad terms, how to protect themselves from abuse, bullying, radicalisation and extremism. They know to whom they should report concerns. Staff and learners place a high priority on health and safety. Consequently, learners work safely and feel safe.
- Although staff introduce learners and apprentices to a range of topics related to British values, few learners can remember what they have been told. Outside of tutorials, staff rarely engage learners in activities that help them to understand these values, how they relate to their lives and work, and how an understanding of these themes can help them to become better citizens.
- Attendance is not high enough at the former South Worcestershire College sites. Although attendance rates have improved markedly on the previous year, they are still too low, especially in English and mathematics.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- The college has 4,101 learners aged 16 to 19, 1,949 adult learners and 2,597 apprentices, around 900 of whom follow standards programmes. Around 58% of its public funding is for study programmes, 18% for adult programmes and around 23% for apprenticeships.
- The very large majority of learners achieve their qualifications. The proportion of classroom-based learners who successfully complete their qualifications is similar to other colleges. In 2016/17, a major employer moved a number of apprentices to a different provider and this affected the college's published apprenticeship achievement rates. Excluding these apprentices, the proportion who completed their qualifications within agreed timescales was similar to other providers, and a greater number of current apprentices are on target to do so.
- Learners achieve well on the very small amount of subcontracted provision.
- Most current learners make good progress. The majority of learners aged 16 to 18 follow technical programmes, and these learners achieve grades that are in line with or slightly better than in other colleges. Current apprentices develop a range of skills and behaviours that serve them well in their employment. Most adult learners develop their skills and knowledge well.
- Learners produce work of at least the expected standard, and in a few cases produce work that exceeds the requirements of their qualifications and the expectations of their chosen occupational sector.

- Almost all learners progress to further learning or employment at the end of their programmes. Many progress directly into employment. The vast majority of adult access to higher education learners progress to university, as do a sizeable number of younger learners. Most learners who complete Prince's Trust programmes progress to further learning or gain jobs.
- Many learners gain supplementary qualifications that enhance their prospects of employment. For example, land-based learners undertake qualifications in chainsaw and pesticide use; hairdressing and beauty therapy learners undertake specific training in the use of proprietary hair and beauty products; sports learners gain coaching awards; equine learners take British Horse Society qualifications; and health and social care learners gain first aid certificates.
- Learners who have complex needs develop the skills they need to live more independently. They increase their employability and many secure paid employment because of their studies.
- Managers have successfully resolved the slow progress made by learners following programmes in health and social care and sport through better monitoring and early intervention. However, they have so far been unsuccessful in business studies; learners in this subject area do not make enough progress.
- The proportion of learners aged 16 to 18 who achieve GCSE grade A* to C (9 to 4) in mathematics is in line with the low national rate, and the proportion who improve from a grade D (3) is only slightly below the national rate. However, the progress made by learners with lower prior attainment is less than in other colleges. The proportion of adult learners who achieve GCSE A* to C (9 to 4) is below the national rate.
- Too few learners aged 16 to 18 make enough progress towards achieving GCSE grade A* to C (9 to 4) in English. The proportion who improve from a grade D (3) is well below the national rate. Young learners who take functional skills English qualifications also make less progress than those in other colleges. College data suggests that staff have made modest improvements in the current year, but it is too early to judge their impact.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The college has 4,101 learners on study programmes. The vast majority of them follow vocational courses in construction, engineering, motor vehicle, business, health, science, arts, sport, information and communication technology, catering, and travel and tourism. More than half study at level 3.
- Learners' programmes meet fully the requirements of 16 to 19 study programmes. All learners have individualised programmes that include a core vocational aim, English and mathematics, where needed, and additional elements. The vast majority of learners benefit from well-planned and useful work experience. This helps them to develop an awareness of employer demands, make decisions about their future careers and develop a range of skills and attributes that prepare them well for employment.
- Managers and teachers make increasingly effective use of electronic tracking systems to monitor learners' progress from their starting points. As a result, they are able to identify

potential problems and intervene to ensure that learners make good progress. The large majority of current learners make at least the progress expected of them on their primary qualification. However, the rate of progress in mathematics and English qualifications remains too slow.

- Most teachers use their specialist vocational knowledge well to make learning interesting, relevant and challenging for learners. They link theory and practical sessions well to industry standards and expectations. As a result, learners have a good understanding of what to expect in their chosen industry and produce work at least to the standard expected. They are justifiably proud of their work and achievements.
- Most learners develop their independent learning and work skills well, including the effective use of information technology. However, in some subject areas, staff provide too few opportunities for them to develop teamworking skills.
- Teachers and personal learning advisers skilfully introduce learners to a range of safeguarding themes, such as abuse, neglect, online safety, radicalisation and extremism. Learners know how to keep themselves safe. They have a less well-developed understanding of British values.
- Learners receive effective and impartial careers information, advice and guidance from teachers, personal learning advisers and specialist careers advisers. This helps them to make the right choice of course. Staff advise applicants of alternative programmes, including those offered by other providers, if they believe that these would suit them better. As they progress through their studies, learners receive useful help to choose appropriate next steps. Learners applying for higher education receive particularly good preparation for the application process and interviews.
- Most teachers on vocational courses such as engineering, construction and motor vehicle maintenance use effective methods to ensure that learners develop the mathematical skills they need for their chosen field. For example, plumbing learners calculate correctly the water flow rate and choose the right size of pipe for a range of different installations.
- In the large majority of subjects, teachers provide appropriately detailed feedback, both orally and in writing, which helps learners to improve their understanding and skills. Learners value the one-to-one support they receive from teachers that further supports their development. However, in a small minority of subjects, teachers' feedback on marked work lacks the clarity, precision and detail to help learners make substantial improvements.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not plan learning activities well enough. Activities lack structure and pace; more accomplished learners tend to lose focus while they wait for other class members to complete learning tasks. A minority of teachers are too accepting of superficial answers from learners and do not make good use of opportunities to confirm learners' understanding before moving on to the next topic. They do not make effective use of the results of learners' initial assessments in English and mathematics to plan for, or to develop learners' use of, English and mathematics.
- Managers' actions have not yet yielded consistently high attendance, particularly at the former South Worcestershire College sites, especially in English and mathematics classes.

Adult learning programmes

Good

- Currently 1,949 adults attend the college. Some 756 attend English or mathematics courses. Around 100 attend access to higher education courses in social sciences, humanities, health and social care, nursing and midwifery. Others study a range of vocational qualifications in subjects including hairdressing and beauty therapy, accounting, floristry, furniture making and veterinary nursing. Some 116 learners attend Prince's Trust courses.
- Managers have designed an appropriate curriculum to meet local employment and community needs. Advisory boards in each college provide information about the local economy and help plan provision to meet skills gaps, such as the expected increase in health-related jobs to support the new infrastructure being developed around housing developments in Rugby.
- Managers have developed good programmes to support adults who have significant barriers to learning. For example, 50 learners with acquired brain injuries attend a specialist facility at Evesham, where staff help them to maintain and improve their cognitive skills. At a commercial nursery near Malvern, 40 learners with mental or physical health difficulties grow vegetables under the expert guidance of a specially trained tutor. As well as improving their horticulture skills, they improve their general well-being and develop a network of friends. Prince's Trust courses re-engage disaffected young adults very successfully; referrals are taken from the probation service, Job Centre plus and housing associations. Learners grow in confidence and most move on to an apprenticeship, employment or further training.
- Most learners develop their skills and knowledge well, and this prepares them successfully for further study and employment. They work well together and confidently share suggestions and opinions. For example, art teachers at Malvern encourage learners to develop art groups to promote and sell their work, and learners have received commissions as a result. Learners enjoy their learning and often produce very good work.
- Teachers make good use of information technology to ensure that learning resources are available online for learners who are unable to attend due to family or work commitments. Learners make good use of this facility to keep up with work they have missed.
- Staff monitor learners' progress closely. They often mark work on a weekly basis and provide comprehensive feedback that helps learners to focus on the steps they need to take in order to achieve their qualification.
- Adult learners receive good careers information, advice and guidance that they use to make informed decisions about their next steps. Veterinary nursing learners have frequent contact with employers and benefit from a clinical coach who provides further advice and guidance.
- The vast majority of access to higher education learners who complete their programme progress to university. They receive useful study skills training to prepare them for higher education, but this does not happen until later in their programmes, depriving them of opportunities to practise their skills within their current programmes.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not challenge learners to develop their skills to the extent they could. In these lessons, the pace of activities is too slow.

- Staff do not consistently help learners to improve their spelling, despite useful materials being available for this purpose.

Apprenticeships

Good

- The college currently has 2,597 apprentices. Around 900 of these are on standards programmes, with the remainder following frameworks. There are large numbers of land-based and engineering apprentices, with smaller numbers following programmes in health and social care, construction, information technology, hairdressing, accountancy, and business administration.
- Apprentices benefit from good teaching in both the college and the workplace. Teachers are enthusiastic and plan sessions well, often using work-related scenarios well to inspire apprentices. During coaching sessions, most teachers and workplace supervisors give detailed verbal feedback to apprentices on their skill development, so that apprentices know what they need to work on.
- Leaders and managers are highly responsive to regional business and sector needs. Productive partnerships with employers have ensured that apprentices work with tools, plant and equipment that are up to date and reflect modern practices. Staff work closely with employers to plan and deliver well-coordinated on- and off-the-job training that helps most apprentices to make good progress.
- Apprentices develop good technical skills and produce good practical work. For example, engineering apprentices are involved in testing and developing prototype vehicle engine and transmission systems, including those for electric vehicles. Knowledgeable and experienced staff set high expectations and move apprentices on to more complex work as soon as they are ready. Much of the work completed in the workplace is subject to high levels of regulation, control and external scrutiny. Apprentices meet or exceed requirements.
- Apprentices' improving skills and behaviours enable them to contribute well to their workplaces. Employers report that apprentices have a positive impact on their businesses. For example, a business administration apprentice has taken on more responsibilities for invoicing tasks to allow the marketing team to focus on successfully increasing their sales.
- Teachers promote and integrate mathematics, digital skills and spoken English well in vocational classes. They draw out the relevance of these skills to apprentices' occupations. For example, horticulture apprentices work in teams to plan and cost projects in detail and present their designs to clients.
- Apprentices are safe and feel safe. Most understand how to protect themselves from the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- Staff provide useful advice and guidance to apprentices when they are recruited. As a result, apprentices have a clear view of the commitment needed to achieve their apprenticeship. The number who leave their programme early has reduced and is low. Staff give relevant information about workplace opportunities that helps apprentices to plan their careers. Most apprentices have a very clear and realistic view of how they want their careers to progress.
- Most apprentices behave well in the workplace and across the college. They are smart, polite and courteous, respect each other and show a willingness to learn. They display a

pride in their work and are keen to talk about what they are learning. Apprentices grow in confidence because of their studies. They represent their companies well.

- Staff manage framework apprenticeships well. They monitor apprentices' development carefully and most apprentices make good progress. The proportion of apprentices completing their frameworks is increasing and is now good, as are the numbers completing within planned timescales.
- In a minority of theory lessons, teachers do not ensure that all learners are secure in their understanding and ready to move on to a new topic. Plenaries at the end of these sessions do not reinforce or confirm learning.
- Apprentices do not develop their writing skills quickly enough. Staff do not provide enough guidance to apprentices about how they can improve the quality and accuracy of their technical reports or extended writing. They do not set improvement targets that require apprentices to practise their skills at work. Advanced-level apprentices are unaware how to reference their research sources and reading lists.
- A small minority of assessors do not mark work thoroughly enough. They accept incomplete or incorrect answers. A small minority of staff are too accepting of incomplete responses to questions asked in lessons.
- Arrangements to track and monitor improvements in apprentices' workplace skills, knowledge and behaviours are good in engineering programmes. However, in other standards apprenticeships, which make up around a third of the total, tracking and monitoring are less precise. As a result, managers do not know whether all apprentices are developing their skills and knowledge as expected, and they do not intervene quickly enough to secure improved progress.

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

- The college receives high-needs funding for 136 learners, funded by nine local authorities. Of these, 76 study on vocational courses from level 1 to level 3 and the remaining 60 study within the supported learning provision.
- Leaders and managers use high-needs funding well to provide good support and individualised programmes. This enables learners to build confidence, develop good communication skills and gain vocational experience and qualifications that prepare them for life and work. The majority of learners on vocational programmes achieve as well as, or better than, their peers. As learners improve their skills and independence, funding and support are reduced, recognising the significant progress they have made.
- Staff manage learners' behavioural needs very effectively. They adopt consistent approaches, following established strategies included on all learner profiles. They support learners to manage their own behaviour more confidently and successfully.
- Teachers and support staff know their learners well. They use education, health and care plans, their own assessments and information on learners' previous attainment to plan learning effectively. Learners benefit from personalised programmes that help them to make good progress. Staff help them to move from supported learning programmes onto vocational courses through taster activities and careful transition planning. They help learners to develop their independent living skills well in preparation for moving into independent or supported accommodation.

- Learners make good progress in developing skills for employment. The vast majority of learners access a wide range of work-experience placements relevant to their employment goals and vocational programmes. Those who do not participate in work experience take part in community projects that build employability skills to prepare them for their external placements. For example, catering and social care learners regularly prepare 'Bridging the Generation' lunches for elderly local residents. Learners gain skills in working as a team, preparing food and working to a deadline, and build social and communication skills.
- Learners feel safe at college. They know whom to contact if they are concerned and where to get help. Staff embed health and safety throughout sessions both in practical workshops and classroom-based activities. Learners understand and demonstrate safe working practices in lessons and clearly explain their own responsibility within work-experience placements. Risk assessments are in place for all activities and are clear, detailed and highlight any specific high-risk considerations.
- Learners understand British values and the risks of radicalisation and extremism at an appropriate level. For example, learners in animal care initiated a discussion around the news on the animal rights demonstration at Crufts. They discussed the legal requirements of dog ownership and illegal practices used in dog training.
- Learners grow in confidence and make progress because of the good support they receive. Leaders and managers ensure that staff receive specialist training to support and manage the specific medical needs of learners. Learners receive good-quality specialist support provided by speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, counsellors and mental health teams.
- Learners use well a wide range of resources and assisted technology to improve their independence and communication, to record evidence of their progress and to overcome barriers to learning. These include digital voice recorders that enable learners on supported learning programmes to record short instructions that they can play back as many times as required so that they can manage their own learning.
- Learners benefit from detailed oral and written feedback on their work that helps them to correct errors and identify how to improve further. However, a small minority of learners do not act on their feedback, and teachers do not revisit it.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not encourage learners to share their knowledge of topics to support development of their communication and independent learning skills. In these lessons, tutors do not check that learners have understood topics before moving on.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130835
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	10,176
Principal/CEO	Angela Joyce
Telephone number	01926 318150
Website	www.warwickshire.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+
	540	422	1,204	1,081	2,357	440	-	6
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	548	243	657	663	236	250		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	11		-		11			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	136							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Beepers Training The Academy Training Learning Curve Group Chesterfield FC Community Trust							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the group vice principal – quality, student services, teaching, learning, 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
Steve Stanley	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Lesley Talbot-Strettle	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Keenan	Ofsted Inspector
Jaswant Mann	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Griffin	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Bennett	Ofsted Inspector
Ralph Brompton	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Ward	Her Majesty’s Inspector

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Learner View

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Employer View

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