

Kensington and Chelsea College

General further education college

Inspection dates

20–23 November 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	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good		
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Requires improvement	

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not taken sufficient action to address fully the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not of a consistently high standard. This is because not all teachers take into account learners' starting points, check their understanding frequently or provide feedback to learners so that they know how to improve.
- Learners' attendance and punctuality are not good enough, particularly in sports courses, access to higher education, English and mathematics.
- Leaders and governors do not have access to accurate or reliable data on attendance and punctuality, or from observations of teaching and learning, to help inform quality assurance and improvement.
- Teachers are not sufficiently aware of, and do not provide good enough assistance to, learners who require additional support to achieve their qualifications.

The provider has the following strengths

- Since the previous inspection, newly appointed senior leaders and governors have stabilised the college sufficiently so that they can start to address its weak financial position, develop strategic options and make informed decisions on its future.
- Managers have been resilient in maintaining the business of the college through a period of substantial instability and change.
- Staff and governors have significantly strengthened community links and established a more positive reputation for the college, so that it can serve the needs of the local community and promote community cohesion more effectively.
- Learners have good access to support from staff to help them resolve personal issues or deal with emotional or mental health concerns.
- A significant proportion of learners in the creative industries make very good progress, produce high-quality creative and imaginative work, achieve high grades and move on to prestigious universities.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Kensington and Chelsea College is a general further education college with around 2,600 learners. It is located within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and offers a range of full-time, part-time and evening courses from entry level to degree level. Most learners at the college are adults, many of whom are on part-time programmes. The college has two campuses, in Chelsea and in north Kensington. Since the previous inspection, the college has ceased to offer apprenticeships.
- The borough has a very diverse range of communities. A few of these experience high levels of social and economic disadvantage, while other parts of the borough are among the most affluent in London. The proportion of learners leaving school at 16 who achieve five or more GCSEs A* to C (or grades 9 to 4) including English and mathematics is well above the national rate.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and governors should establish greater financial stability and strategic certainty for the future by:
 - finalising the strategic and financial options that will enable the college to move forwards
 - agreeing the most suitable course of action to maintain learners' access to education and training in the borough.
- Leaders and managers should review data systems so that they can access reliable, accurate and timely information to help monitor progress and raise the quality of provision more effectively.
- Leaders and managers should increase the focus on strategies to raise the quality of teaching and learning. In particular, they should:
 - ensure that all staff receive timely and informative appraisals at which they discuss targets and priorities for professional development
 - review the lesson observation process and how managers use the information from observations to help identify priorities for staff development
 - focus staff development on those weaknesses around teaching, learning and assessment that this report identifies, as well as others that managers identify using their own lesson observation scheme.
- Managers and teachers should review the strategies they use to address learners' poor attendance and punctuality, and build on the early successes they have had in this area.
- Teachers should ensure that they are aware of those learners in lessons who require additional learning support, and consider how they will provide this when planning lessons.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- A recent period of uncertainty in the college's history led to a swift turnover of senior leaders and governors. This turbulence compounded the weak financial position of the college, the lack of clarity in its strategic direction and the slow progress to improve the quality of provision. Following an aborted merger with another college in January 2018, senior leaders and governors successfully established an interim management team. These managers have started to address the financial predicament. They have also begun to identify strategic options for the future, strengthened the capacity to make more cogent and well-informed strategic decisions and renewed the focus on quality improvement.
- Over this period of flux, managers and staff have remained highly motivated and resilient. They have kept a strong focus on maintaining a positive learner experience and improving outcomes for learners.
- The current governors and senior leaders are committed to creating a college that serves the local population and promotes community cohesion. This is particularly important in the aftermath of the tragedy at the nearby Grenfell Tower. The principal and governors have worked diligently to strengthen relationships with local community groups. These include the local Islamic Centre, the 'Save Wornington College' group and those working with learners not in employment, education or training. Many learners and staff recognise and appreciate the increased collaboration between the college and the community. They are positive about plans for a curriculum that improves opportunities and provides better progression routes for local residents.
- Notwithstanding their positive actions to stabilise the college's position, leaders and managers have not taken sufficient action to rectify many of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The proportion of learners who successfully achieve their qualifications has increased, and governance arrangements are now more effective. However, leaders and managers have not addressed key weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Attendance and punctuality have improved, but remain too low.
- Performance management of staff is not sufficiently rigorous. Managers only completed appraisals for two thirds of staff in the previous year. In their appraisals of teachers, managers do not always reflect outcomes from lesson observations. Consequently, they do not focus sufficiently on identifying actions for teachers to help raise the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Managers do not plan staff development activities well enough to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They do not analyse the outcomes of lesson observations in sufficient detail to help structure the staff development plan.
- Senior leaders do not gather or use data sufficiently well. For example, they do not have a good enough oversight of attendance, the quality of teaching and learning, or learners' destinations. As a result, they cannot easily identify strategies for improvements in these areas.
- Leaders and managers programme and manage new subcontracting arrangements well. They carry out robust due diligence of new subcontractors. Managers and subcontractors

have jointly developed projects that support the needs of different sectors and communities. For example, they run courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) for local highly qualified professionals from abroad who are new to the area. They also arrange employability courses, in conjunction with unions, to support people to secure employment, following their redundancy.

The governance of the provider

- Members of the governing body have an appropriate range of knowledge, skills and experience to fulfil the governance function effectively and to deal with the external challenges and opportunities they face. Governors meet frequently with curriculum teams and gather the views of learners. The chair of governors also holds weekly surgeries with staff. As a result, governors are attuned to the concerns of staff and learners, and able to respond accordingly.
- Due to poor data capture and reporting from managers, governors do not have access to suitably detailed, accurate and reliable data. This impedes their ability to provide timely support and challenge to managers to help raise standards.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Managers have in place a suitable range of safeguarding policies and procedures, including a 'Prevent' duty risk assessment and action plan. Managers have a sound understanding of the factors associated with safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty in the local area. They work effectively with external agencies in the local community and, as a result, can support learners well to help keep them safe. Learners know how to stay safe online and feel safe at college.
- Managers carry out thorough pre-employment checks on staff to ensure they are suitable to work with young people and vulnerable adults. Governors have a sound understanding of their statutory duties for safeguarding. They have received appropriate training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- There is too much variation in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and, as a result, not all learners achieve their potential. Too often, teachers do not plan lessons that take into account learners' starting points. For example, teachers do not cater for the most able learners or those who are struggling to grasp particular concepts. Instead, they often use the same lesson activities for all learners. As a result, not all learners make the progress of which they are capable.
- On occasions, teachers' expectations of learners are too low, particularly on study programmes in English, mathematics, sport and media. Teachers do not always explain activities with enough clarity. At times, learners become confused and struggle to make progress.
- Teachers often do not provide good enough verbal or written feedback to learners, to help them improve the accuracy of their English or to guide them in developing practical skills. Teachers' feedback tends to focus too much on what learners need to do to meet course requirements. It does not provide enough detail on the skills and knowledge

learners need to develop.

- Teachers do not sufficiently use the information on learners' additional learning needs to plan their lessons. A small minority of learners do not receive the support they need in their studies to reach their full potential and are at risk of falling behind on their programme.
- Teachers in creative arts, fashion and millinery use precise assignment briefs to set clear expectations of the standard of work they require. They also provide detailed and constructive feedback to learners. For example, teachers in fashion provide highly personalised guidance on how learners can improve. Learners value the feedback they receive from these teachers, make very good progress and demonstrate particularly high standards of work in these areas.
- Teachers and staff are well qualified and experienced in their subjects. They often use their expertise well to develop learners' industrial skills and knowledge, particularly in fine art, fashion, millinery and access to higher education courses. For example, in fashion, learners benefit from teachers' recent work in industry and the links they have to high-profile employers in the sector. This enables learners to develop a true insight into the standards and expectations of the industry. As a result, many learners progress into sector-related higher education courses and employment.
- Learners generally work industriously in lessons and are respectful of each other. For example, adult learners on ESOL courses develop their spoken English skills well in group discussions and activities. They extend their vocabulary quickly when they start new topics. Similarly, learners on arts courses collaborate well in groups to critique each other's work. These strategies help learners improve their communication skills and develop greater respect and confidence.
- Teachers develop learners' understanding of themes around British values, discrimination, prejudice and cultural backgrounds well. As a result, learners form measured, well-informed and insightful opinions on these topics.
- Learners have good access to high-quality e-learning resources. For example, learners on GCSE mathematics benefit from online learning packages which support them to develop their skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Learners' behaviour around the two centres is good. Teachers generate a positive air of industry in many lessons to help learners engage in lesson activities.
- Learners have good access to support from tutors and learning coaches to help them resolve personal issues, such as financial or housing concerns. Staff are particularly experienced in supporting learners with emotional or mental health problems. This has been especially important in helping learners and staff deal with the aftermath of the local Grenfell Tower tragedy. Several staff have received specialist training in mental health first aid. Support staff also have good links with more specialist external agencies, such as Mind. As a result, learners with personal and emotional issues receive the support they need to help them remain on the programme and succeed.
- Learners on study programmes take an active part in a broad range of work experience, work-related activities and vocational projects linked to their subjects. For example,

learners on fashion programmes take part in activities associated with London Fashion Week. This helps them develop a valuable insight into the world of work in their respective vocational fields.

- Learners also regularly engage in activities to complement their courses, such as visits to exhibitions, museums and art galleries. For example, ESOL learners visit local courts, to help them develop specialist vocabulary and understanding associated with British values, the rule of law, crime and policing. The college provides financial assistance to those learners who would not otherwise be able to attend these activities.
- Learners intending to apply for university receive good support and guidance with their applications. Advice and guidance staff arrange valuable events such as higher education fairs. These enable learners to explore and consider the potential suitability of a variety of higher education institutions and courses. They can then make informed decisions about their next steps.
- Learners have an influential voice with senior leaders through the learner council. This provides good opportunities for learners to express their views on a range of themes. For example, learners recently influenced the decision to introduce new security measures, to help ensure they feel safe around the campus.
- While learners' attendance and punctuality have improved slightly since the previous inspection, they are still not good enough. This is particularly so in sports courses, access to higher education, English and mathematics. Teachers do not take sufficient action to challenge absence or lateness.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications has increased, and is now broadly in line with national rates. The proportion of learners who achieve a grade 4 or better in GCSE English and mathematics has also increased, and is high. However, the proportion of learners who pass functional skills English at level 2 and mathematics at levels 1 and 2 at their first attempt is too low.
- In 2018, the proportion of learners from a minority ethnic heritage who achieved their qualifications was markedly lower than that of other groups of learners. Those learners who speak English as a second language also make slower progress than their peers. There is no significant difference in the performance of other groups of learners, for example by gender or level of study.
- In 2018, the weaker-performing curriculum areas included accountancy and online health and social care courses. The stronger-performing curriculum areas, with the best results in examinations, included childcare, fashion and millinery.
- A minority of learners make slow progress over time, relative to their starting points. This is particularly the case in subjects where teachers do not set sufficiently aspirational targets.
- Those learners who have education, health and care plans receive suitable support and make the progress expected of them.
- A significant proportion of learners in the creative industries make exceptionally good progress and produce imaginative work to a very high standard. Many of these learners achieve high grades at the end of their courses. Several learners have also achieved

significant accolades for their work, and have received invitations to display their work as part of national exhibitions.

- A high proportion of learners who aspire to move on to university secure places, many of which are at prestigious universities. For example, in 2018 four learners on access to higher education courses secured Oxbridge places. The destinations of learners on many of the creative courses at levels 3 and 4 are also particularly good. A very high proportion progress to the most desirable design- and art-related university programmes. Many alumni, for example from the millinery course, have progressed to very successful careers, often working for high-profile employers, celebrities and royalty.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- At the time of inspection, 361 learners were on study programmes, from entry to level 4. Most courses are one-year duration, with the exception of a two-year level 3 programme in fashion and photography. Adult learners study alongside learners aged 16 to 19 in many of these lessons.
- Too often, particularly at levels 1 and 2, teachers do not demonstrate a consistently high quality of teaching, especially in English, mathematics, sport and level 1 media courses. For example, teachers often do not consider learners' knowledge and skills at the beginning of their course, when they plan teaching. As a result, lesson activities are, at times, too complicated for learners. This is because teachers do not break them down sufficiently into manageable or sequential tasks.
- For the most able learners at levels 1 and 2, the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow. Teachers do not challenge them sufficiently. Extension activities are too often more work at the same level.
- In contrast to the weaker-performing areas, the teaching in fashion, millinery, fine arts and music is very effective. The work in learners' portfolios is of a high standard. It frequently links to topical issues such as cultural identity or international events. For example, a group of learners worked imaginatively on a design project to produce a present for President Trump, in order to remind him of the impact of global warming.
- Teachers ensure that learners on level 3 and 4 courses develop independence and learn how to work autonomously. For example, in a fashion lesson, when preparing for a photo shoot, learners had to consider a range of factors. These included the style of clothing, the views of the model and the approach of the photographer. They worked well with minimal support from the teacher. They developed skills and knowledge that will help them make progress and succeed.
- Study programmes meet the Department for Education requirements. Learners take part in a suitable range of work placements and work-related activities as part of their programme. For example, students on the fashion pathway gained valuable insight into the world of work when they helped out on activities as part of London Fashion week.
- Teachers provide good initial advice and guidance to learners when they consider starting a study programme. This helps ensure that they recruit learners whose prior skills and knowledge are appropriate for their chosen level of study. However, the rationale for the

allocation of learners to English and mathematics classes is not effective enough. This is because learners sometimes take courses below their existing level of attainment.

- During their courses, learners receive thorough advice and guidance on careers and higher education opportunities. A high proportion of learners, particularly on the creative courses, progress to high-profile degree courses.
- Learners feel safe in the college, and most receive good information about the 'Prevent' duty and the risks associated with extremism and radicalisation. Learners value the presence of security staff. They feel safe and know who to go to if they require support or advice.

Adult learning programmes

Requires improvement

- At the time of this inspection, around 2,250 adult learners were on adult courses, ranging from entry level to level 4. Most adult learners are on part-time programmes, with around 280 learners studying on full-time courses, often alongside learners on study programmes. A high proportion of learners were studying on employability courses through subcontracting arrangements outside the borough. The curriculum includes a broad range of arts-related short courses, such as photography, fashion and jewellery, as well as a significant number of courses in ESOL, mathematics and English. It also includes full-time access to higher education courses, with a small number of adults on the full-time study programmes.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment on adult courses is too varied and, as a result, not all learners maximise their potential. For example, in a significant minority of access to higher education courses, although teachers have detailed profiles of their learners, they do not make use of this information to inform the planning of lessons. As a result, lessons are sometimes too challenging for learners, who are slow to develop their confidence.
- Teachers occasionally do not check in enough detail if learners understand a topic, before moving on to new material. For example, teachers' questioning is often superficial and does not cover the whole group in sufficient detail. As a result, teachers are not always clear about those learners who are less confident about a topic.
- Teachers do not always maintain sufficiently detailed records of the progress of each learner. For a minority of learners, teachers' feedback does not provide enough detail. Although feedback celebrates strengths and how learners have met their outcomes, it does not always advise learners on how to improve their work. It is therefore unclear to learners what actions they need to take to improve.
- Learners' attendance and punctuality across the adult provision are generally not good enough; however, they are good in ESOL lessons. Learners feel safe at both sites.
- Most teachers have high expectations of their learners. Many adult learners produce work of a high standard. For example, learners on creative arts courses produce detailed research in their portfolios and display their work with pride around the college.
- The majority of adult learners develop the relevant knowledge and skills they need to ensure they make good progress. For example, childcare learners develop valuable knowledge of how health and safety in the workplace link with relevant legislation, by participating in a domino activity. In ESOL, teachers draw on learners' diversity, culture

and experiences by asking them to give examples of music that connects with their home countries. This provides a suitable context for speaking and listening activities and helps enrich the breadth of the discussions for all learners to ensure they make good progress.

- Teachers create good opportunities to embed British values into lessons. For example, ESOL learners develop useful vocabulary while discussing the role of local councils in recycling, and its importance in helping to preserve the environment.
- Staff provide good support to learners on access to higher education courses and encourage them to apply for high-quality courses at various universities. A significant majority of learners are successful with their applications.
- Managers are strengthening their partnerships with local communities by initiating a number of projects with them. They take courses and projects out to residents to increase their engagement in education and to provide employability skills to those who struggle to find work.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130410
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	4,893
Principal/CEO	Andy Cole
Telephone number	0207 573 3600
Website	www.kcc.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	25	1,083	75	808	204	279	57	84
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Academy 1 Sports British Academy of Jewellery DA Training and Consultancy The Rhythm Studio The Goldsmith's Centre The Skills Network							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the vice principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, 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

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