

RNN Group

General further education college

Inspection dates

19–22 March 2019

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	Requires improvement	Apprenticeships	Requires improvement
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement	Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not previously inspected	

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Senior leaders and governors have presided over a period of significant decline in the quality of education and training following the two mergers.
- Quality assurance arrangements have been ineffective in maintaining a high quality of education and training across the group.
- The proportion of apprentices achieving their qualifications is too low, and too few apprentices achieve within the planned time.
- Staff do not take apprentices' existing skills, knowledge and behaviours into account well enough when they develop apprentices' training plans.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment on study programmes varies too much by site, subject and level, and is not good enough.
- Teachers and workplace tutors do not check students' and apprentices' learning effectively enough in lessons and training sessions.
- Students on study programme make slow progress in developing their English and mathematics skills. Too few apprentices achieve the English or mathematics qualifications required to succeed on their programmes.

The provider has the following strengths

- Governors and the newly constituted leadership team have taken significant improvement actions in the last six months. They are beginning to tackle the weaknesses in the quality of education and training across the group.
- The large majority of students and apprentices develop good practical and work-related skills. Adult students greatly increase their knowledge and understanding, which supports them in their lives and careers.
- Managers are quickly developing positive relationships with apprentices' employers; this is having a positive impact on improving the quality of apprenticeship provision.
- Students who have high needs make good progress as a result of teachers' use of creative and innovative teaching, learning and assessment activities.

Full report

Information about the provider

- RNN Group was formed following a merger between Rotherham College of Arts and Technology and North Notts College in 2016 and a further merger with Dearne Valley College in 2017. The group also wholly owns a subsidiary company, Aston Recruitment and Training Limited, which delivers 16 to 19 study programmes, adult learning programmes and apprenticeships in the Northampton area. The group works with 12 subcontractors. RNN Group aims to transform the lives of its students and communities.
- The rate of unemployment in the Rotherham area is higher than that seen nationally, and the proportion of young people leaving school with a grade 4 in both GCSE mathematics and English is below the national average. In Worksop the rate of unemployment is around the national rate and slightly more young people gain a grade 4 in GCSE mathematics and English in the local area than nationally.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of apprentices by:
 - accurately measuring their starting points and using this information to develop their training plans
 - improving their induction into the apprenticeship programme so that they can begin to make progress quickly
 - continuing to monitor their progress closely and ensuring that staff intervene quickly if apprentices struggle or fall behind
 - increasing the proportion of apprentices who achieve mathematics and English qualifications for those who need them.
- Continue to strengthen the quality assurance arrangements across the group so that governors, leaders and managers use accurate information to implement precise improvement actions where performance is not good enough.
- Quicken the pace of improvement in teaching, learning and assessment on study programmes by:
 - developing teachers' skills in questioning and assessing students' knowledge and understanding in lessons
 - ensuring that students complete activities that are matched to their level and ability so that they are challenged to reach their potential and motivated to take pride in their work
 - ensuring that mathematics and English teachers provide teaching and learning activities that enable students to make good progress and achieve the qualifications that they need.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- In the period following the two mergers, management structures and processes were ineffective in maintaining a good quality of education and training across the group. Senior leaders were too slow to respond to the declining quality of provision across all sites. This was particularly evident at their wholly-owned subsidiary companies, Charnwood Training Group Limited and Create Skills Limited. Quality assurance of these companies was ineffective. The companies were not subject to sufficiently rigorous reviews or due diligence procedures. As a result, the quality of education at these companies was inadequate. The companies have now closed, and all students enrolled prior to closure are taught within RNN Group.
- The newly constituted executive and senior leadership teams now have an accurate awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They use accurate information, gathered from managers' quality reviews and their monitoring of students' progress, to identify areas for improvement rapidly.
- Leaders and managers have implemented a broad range of well-focused quality improvement actions in the last six months to address key areas for improvement. As a result, outcomes for students are beginning to improve. An increasing proportion of students remain on their courses and attendance is improving. Apprentices are making better progress. However, the full impact of managers' actions has yet to be seen.
- Senior leaders now ensure that curriculum managers and staff are held to account for, and supported to improve, their students' progress and achievements. New curriculum management arrangements, with clearly identified curriculum managers at each site, have facilitated greater oversight of curriculum quality and enabled curriculum managers to monitor progress and intervene when necessary.
- Leaders and managers work closely with a range of external partners, including local enterprise partnerships, to design the curriculum. This is closely tailored to meet local skills needs for each campus. The geographically dispersed campuses are encouraged to maintain strong local identities and serve the interests of their own communities. The adult curriculum is well planned to meet the needs of the local community, including the most disadvantaged residents. RNN Group has recently taken over responsibility for the delivery of community learning in Rotherham; managers oversee this provision effectively and have improved its quality.
- Leaders and managers ensure that students who have high needs benefit from well-structured, tapering support that helps them to increase their confidence, independence, knowledge and skills well.
- Leaders and managers provide staff training that responds well to areas for development arising from new curriculum developments. For example, they now provide appropriate training to apprenticeship tutors to prepare them for the delivery of new apprenticeship standards. However, several areas for improvement in teaching, learning and assessment, such as teachers' poor use of questioning in learning sessions, are not effectively rectified, and so too many teachers fail to improve their practice in these aspects.
- Leaders and managers now ensure that subcontracted provision and the one remaining

wholly-owned subsidiary company, Aston Recruitment and Training Limited, are well managed. The subcontracting management team now deploy robust and reliable procedures to identify areas for improvement and put in place appropriate interventions. When subcontractors do not improve, their contracts are terminated. As a result, more apprentices achieve within planned timescales. However, it is too early to see the full impact of recent improvements to management.

The governance of the provider

- Governors presided over a period of significant decline in the quality of provision. They were too slow in taking action in relation to considerable weaknesses in the provision, especially in apprenticeships and in two wholly-owned subsidiary companies. Their attention was distracted by issues relating to the college mergers, the concurrent expansion of higher education provision, and the financial health of the college.
- In the last six months, governors have started to receive accurate reports about the quality of provision that enable them to challenge and support senior leaders effectively to bring about improvements. They now receive reports from a wide range of senior leaders, which helps to develop a new culture of transparency, accountability and openness throughout the group.
- Governors have very recently implemented rigorous performance management processes to hold the executive and senior leadership teams to account more effectively for the quality of provision. They proposed and supported a restructure of curriculum management, which is beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of provision across the group.
- The board now has the right expertise and experience to fulfil its functions, support operational improvements and guide the strategic direction of the group.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and managers ensure that recruitment of staff follows safe recruitment guidelines and that appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out. Managers keep accurate records of the safeguarding checks and references for all staff. This helps to keep students safe.
- Leaders and managers ensure that staff receive appropriate training in relation to safeguarding, including updates and bulletins about the risks of radicalisation and extremism, county lines activity, knife crime and significant local concerns such as child sexual exploitation. Staff understand warning signs relating to these issues and know how to report any concerns that they may have.
- The designated safeguarding lead has received appropriate training for the role. A team of deputy safeguarding leads operate at the different sites and ensure that effective safeguarding support is provided across the group.
- Managers ensure that students receive appropriate information that they use well to keep themselves safe from general risks. However, students have limited understanding of key local risks in relation to radicalisation and extremism.

- The designated safeguarding lead and team respond appropriately to any safeguarding concerns. They ensure that any concerns are followed up and monitored to a suitable conclusion. They work closely with external agencies, including social services and the police when necessary, to ensure that students, including those who leave their courses before the end, are safe. They communicate well with other local providers so that information about at-risk students is shared appropriately.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are not of a consistently high standard. Adult students and students who have high needs benefit from high-quality teaching, learning and assessment but provision is less effective for students on study programmes and for apprentices.
- Teachers and workplace tutors do not check students' and apprentices' learning effectively enough in lessons or training sessions. As a result, teachers are not clear which students have developed their knowledge and understanding and which require further explanation and clarification. Teachers' use of questioning is not probing enough and teachers too often allow confident students to dominate when giving answers. This slows the progress of a substantial minority of students.
- In too many study programme lessons, teachers do not use activities that challenge students to make the progress of which they are capable. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what students can achieve. Work is often too easy and the most able do not reach their full potential.
- Students on study programmes and those who have high needs do not receive sufficiently helpful feedback on their written work from their teachers. Consequently, students are not clear how to improve the quality of their work, including how to improve their written communication skills. Adult students receive useful feedback and therefore are more able to make improvements to their work. Workplace tutors provide effective guidance to apprentices about how to improve their skills.
- Teachers and workplace tutors do not promote students' and apprentices' understanding of equality and diversity well enough. In study programme lessons, teachers rarely address or discuss these issues. Workplace tutors ensure that apprentices understand equality policies as they apply within their workplaces but do not extend their learning to cover diversity in modern Britain. Teachers of courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) place a strong emphasis on tolerance and respect for people of different cultures, faiths and beliefs.
- Teachers provide students with effective one-to-one coaching and demonstrations to develop their skills when they fall behind or need further help. For example, a teacher coached students to remove complex eye make-up successfully. In carpentry, a helpful demonstration to a small group enabled students to improve their skills rapidly in producing joints. Students on courses in ESOL are guided well by their teachers to develop skills that are valuable in their everyday lives.
- Teachers and learning support assistants ensure that students with learning difficulties and disabilities benefit from effective learning support both in class and outside of lessons. Most learning support assistants work well with students to ensure that they

work as independently as possible and take responsibility for their own learning. Learning support is less effective for the small number of apprentices who require it.

- Teachers on adult learning programmes and on provision for students who have high needs plan and deliver teaching, learning and assessment that enables students to develop knowledge and understanding well. As a result, students on these programmes enhance their personal lives, improve their employment opportunities or gain greater independence.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

- Students take insufficient pride in their work and teachers do not challenge students to present work of a high standard. Their expectations of students are too low. Students' work displayed in classrooms is often not presented well. Folders are often disorganised and poorly presented, and this is reflected in the work that students produce for their courses. Adult students take pride in their work.
- Students on study programmes make slow progress in the acquisition of mathematics and English skills. Teaching of these skills is not effective in mathematics and English classes or in vocational lessons. Apprentices make slow progress in developing the mathematics and English skills that they need to achieve qualifications in these subjects. Teachers develop adult students' mathematics and English skills well; as a result, adult students are well prepared for their examinations.
- Although the majority of students on study programme take part in work experience, too many current students have yet to undertake a work placement. In a minority of cases, the work experience is not directly related to the course or to students' career aspirations. Managers recognise that work-related learning needs to be strengthened and there are now plans for students on level 1 programmes to take part in a social action project to enhance their work skills. This project is new, so it is too early to evaluate the impact.
- Too few students and apprentices understand how to keep themselves safe from the threats of radicalisation and extremism. Apprentices are unable to outline what action to take if they hear someone expressing extremist views. Most students say that they feel safe and know to whom to report any concerns that they may have about safeguarding in the college or their workplace.
- Staff have taken effective action to improve attendance and although it has not yet reached the ambitious college target set for study programmes, it is improving substantially in most subjects. Attendance is low in a few lessons and this hinders students' progress.
- The large majority of students behave well both in class and around the college sites. They are polite and show respect for their environment, their teachers and peers.
- The large majority of students and apprentices develop their technical and practical skills well. Students are well prepared for employment as a result.
- Managers have improved the quality of initial advice and guidance that students receive at the beginning of their courses and it is now effective. Managers hold early 'progress boards' to identify any early concerns with student progress that staff need to follow up. These arrangements have improved the proportion of students remaining on their courses. Staff have also taken effective steps to ensure that adult students are placed on the appropriate levels of mathematics and English courses based on their starting points.

- Leaders and managers have invested in additional resources to provide a range of good support and guidance for students about future opportunities and careers. Many students take advantage of these opportunities and are well informed about their future options.
- Staff ensure that students have access to a broad range of enrichment opportunities. Students who participate in opportunities such as volunteering, health and fitness activities and mental health training broaden their experience and develop their skills well. During the inspection, a large group of students participated in an inter-college skills competition. They benefited considerably from this opportunity to demonstrate and practise their skills.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- The achievement of apprenticeships declined over the previous three years and is low for all age groups and levels. Achievement is low for the apprenticeships delivered by the colleges and the group's subcontractors and subsidiary companies. Managers suspended recruitment of new apprentices in October 2018 and, from December 2018, have started gradual and carefully planned enrolment of new apprentices. Newly recruited apprentices are making expected progress.
- The proportion of students on study programme who stay on their courses and pass their vocational qualifications is not high enough. Only around three quarters of students in health and care achieve their qualifications, and this is the largest vocational area in the group. Achievement in visual and performing arts is high. Managers' recent actions have ensured that an increased proportion of students remain on their courses and that students attend their lessons more regularly.
- Students aged 16 to 18 make slow progress towards achieving a high grade in their GCSE mathematics and English. Achievement of level 1 qualifications in mathematics is low but high in English.
- Students on study programmes at level 1 and 2 make expected progress in their vocational courses and develop a range of useful practical skills. Students studying at level 3 make slower progress and too many do not reach their potential. This is particularly true of students at North Notts College studying sport, public services, business and information technology courses.
- Almost all adult students who study courses by distance learning achieve their qualifications. Courses such as the certificate in safe handling of medication, the certificate in understanding autism and the certificate in fall prevention awareness have very high achievement.
- The proportion of adult students who achieve their qualifications is high at most of the subcontractors. At Create Skills Limited, too few students achieved their qualifications; this company has now closed.
- A high proportion of adults achieve grades 9 to 4 on their GCSE mathematics, and achievement of other level 2 mathematics qualifications is high. Adults' achievement of qualifications in English and mathematics at entry and level 1 is too low. Staff have significantly improved the way in which they assess students' starting points. They therefore guide students more accurately to the most appropriate course and, as a result, students now make better progress in the development of these skills.

- The small number of apprentices at Aston Recruitment and Training Limited and Intertrain UK Limited make good progress and a significantly higher proportion achieve their apprenticeships in these two companies than in the rest of the group. Achievement in rail infrastructure, warehousing and storage, health, clinical and healthcare support, improving operational performance, plumbing and heating and engineering maintenance are high.
- A high proportion of students progress from lower-level to more advanced courses. Most apprentices who complete their training remain in employment and benefit from the positive impact of the apprenticeship on their work. For example, they make a positive contribution by suggesting improvements within the business or promoting a positive team spirit.
- The large majority of adult students on courses that prepare them for higher education progress to university. Community learning courses, such as those offered in schools, make a significant contribution to building positive relationships between the schools and the communities they serve. The proportion of adults on employability courses who progress into employment requires improvement overall. However, the number of students on the specialist stevedoring essentials course who gain employment is good. Many of these students face significant barriers to employment, such as criminal convictions.
- Almost all students who have high needs remain on their programmes and a high proportion achieve their qualifications or make progress in developing the skills that they need for successful adult life. The majority progress to higher-level courses and a small number progress to supported internships.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- At the time of the inspection, 2,574 students were enrolled on 16 to 19 study programmes in most subject areas from entry level to level 3. The largest subject areas are health and social care and construction.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are not of a consistently high standard on study programmes. In too many lessons, content, tasks and activities are pitched at a low and undemanding level, and students have the opportunity to use only low-level skills. Therefore, they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not set helpful or aspirational targets when they review students' progress. Reviews often lack specific actions that challenge students to improve and accelerate their progress.
- Teachers do not develop students' understanding of fundamental British values well enough. As a result, not enough students understand the importance of these values to life in modern Britain.
- Teaching of mathematics and English is not good enough. As a result, students make slow progress towards achieving a high grade in their GCSEs or achieving alternative qualifications. Teachers promote students' use of technical language well in practical sessions. For example, plumbing students develop detailed knowledge of building regulations and the technical and legal terminology contained in them.

- In the vast majority of practical vocational sessions, teachers foster a professional and productive learning environment. Students, particularly at levels 1 and 2, make good progress in developing the technical skills required for their careers. Plumbing students complete challenging real-time tasks such as fitting a bathroom. Carpentry students' work constructing a door frame was at a higher level than expected for their qualification.
- Most students enjoy their courses. They talk confidently about the personal and social skills that they develop as result of attending their courses. Students work well together and exhibit good teamwork skills.
- A small minority of students develop their employability skills particularly well as a result of employer-set assignment briefs and master classes from industry specialists. Students on study programmes with Huddersfield Giants Community Trust Limited benefit from coaching a range of different client groups in golfing skills. Those students who have undertaken relevant work experience benefit from the positive impact that it has on their decision-making for next steps. However, too many students have yet to undertake work experience.
- Teachers on a small minority of level 3 courses develop students' independent learning skills well. They encourage students to research topics outside lessons and make good links between theory and professional practice in lessons. For example, in beauty therapy, students applied their research well to case studies in the salon.

Adult learning programmes

Good

- RNN Group has 3,056 students on adult learning programmes. The largest number of enrolments are on distance learning courses, ESOL provision, courses that prepare students for employment, and mathematics and English courses. Around one tenth of adult learning takes place with subcontractors.
- Teachers make effective use of their knowledge of students' starting points and prior attainment to plan and deliver learning. For students on courses in ESOL, students learning in the community and students on courses for the unemployed, staff have significantly improved the way in which they determine starting points. They use this information well to ensure that students enrol on courses that meet their needs and aspirations.
- For students on courses that prepare them for progression to higher education, teachers use challenging activities to ensure that students fulfil their potential. They use discussions very effectively to deepen students' understanding. For example, in a session on the access to healthcare professions course, the teacher facilitated an extensive discussion of the role of healthcare professionals in protecting children. Teachers on courses that prepare students for employment use their knowledge of students' backgrounds and interests to develop their communication skills by facilitating discussion of relevant and interesting topics.
- Teachers on most courses for adults provide accurate and helpful feedback to students that enables them to improve their work, attain higher grades where relevant and make good progress. Students use this feedback well to improve the quality of the work that they produce for future assessments.
- Most students produce work that is of a high standard and provides evidence that they

develop their knowledge and understanding well. Students who undertake distance-learning courses produce high-quality work that provides them with a thorough understanding of key topics that is required in their jobs. For example, they deepen their knowledge of how different religious and cultural groups approach end-of-life care.

- Students develop good personal and social skills which build self-confidence and self-esteem. On community learning programmes, students are supported to develop mathematics and English skills, which benefit their everyday lives and equip a few to succeed in competitive recruitment and selection processes to gain employment.
- Adult students feel safe at the locations at which their studies take place. Many teachers discuss important safeguarding topics with their students. For example, at one location the subcontractor's students on an employability course discussed the impact of knife crime on their local community.
- Managers have successfully developed adult learning courses that meet the needs of the communities that the group serves. Staff who provide community-based learning work very effectively with students with poor previous experiences of education and who are not yet ready to attend one of the college campuses for their training. Community-based learning includes courses in beauty therapy, warehousing and employability, many of which are run by subcontractors. Managers have also developed sector-based work academies, such as in warehousing, which enable students to develop quickly the skills that they need for employment.
- Managers have formed a very effective range of partnerships with external agencies to provide opportunities for the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach students. They have developed a number of courses in partnership charitable organisations that aim to improve students' lives. For example, with the support of a foodbank and charity for the homeless, staff have developed cooking courses for homeless people.
- Most students attend learning regularly. Attendance at ESOL sessions is high. Adult students who attend courses with younger students do not attend as well as other students and, on a small number of courses, too many students repeatedly miss lessons, which hinders their progress
- In a minority of lessons, teachers do not check students' understanding sufficiently, or they too readily solve problems or provide answers without providing enough opportunity for students to find the solution for themselves. In these lessons, teachers do not use questioning well enough to probe and extend learning or they allow certain students to dominate. As a result, students make slow progress in developing their knowledge and understanding.

Apprenticeships

Requires improvement

- RNN Group has 1,822 apprentices, of whom four fifths are on apprenticeship frameworks and the remainder on standards-based apprenticeships. Around a tenth are on higher level apprenticeships and the remainder split equally between level 2 and level 3 apprenticeships. A third of apprentices are aged 16 to 18. Significant numbers of apprentices follow programmes in engineering, health and care, hair and barbering, construction, and business and management. The subcontractors and subsidiary company provide training to just under a tenth of apprentices.

- The leadership of the apprenticeship provision has been significantly strengthened very recently. New managers have rapidly identified their ambitious priorities to secure necessary improvements to reverse low levels of apprenticeship achievement. The closer scrutiny of apprentices' progress, with more timely interventions to help those who fall behind to catch up, is beginning to have a positive impact on the progress of current apprentices. However, it is too soon to measure fully the impact of managers' actions.
- Too many apprentices do not have a helpful induction to enable them to understand the requirements of their programmes. Apprentices experience poor coordination of their training and, as a result, they are not clear what is expected of them. This slows the progress that apprentices make at the beginning of their programme. Improvements that managers have made to improve this part of the course have not yet been fully effective.
- Workplace tutors do not identify apprentices' existing knowledge, skills and behaviours well enough when apprentices start their programmes. As a result, the off-the-job training that apprentices receive does not cover quickly enough the skills, knowledge and behaviours that apprentices need to develop as a priority for their workplace.
- In off-the-job training away from the workplace, tutors do not link learning well enough to apprentices' workplaces and job roles to deepen their understanding of how theories are relevant to them. Too often, tutors do not check sufficiently well that learning has taken place and they move on without allowing apprentices time to reflect on what they have learned. For example, apprentices shown new functions in software were not provided with the opportunity to use them to secure their understanding fully.
- Most apprentices receive helpful feedback from their workplace tutors about the progress that they are making on their course and what they need to do to improve. Workplace tutors coach apprentices to improve their knowledge and, where necessary, to become better prepared for vocational examinations.
- Managers' improved relationships with apprentices' employers ensure that employers contribute well to the much-needed improvements to the apprenticeship provision. Employers are more closely involved in the implementation of new standards-based apprenticeships to ensure that apprentices receive the training that they need to become valued employees with the required skills and behaviours. Employers of apprentices on standards-based programmes are more closely involved in planning the off-the-job learning to enable apprentices to make good progress.
- Workplace tutors use their expertise well to ensure that vocational learning sessions that take place in the workplace develop apprentices' skills, which they can apply within their job roles. Most apprentices acquire new skills and knowledge as a result of their training. Level 3 design apprentices develop helpful skills in using software to design and produce tickets for live music and entertainment. Welding apprentices successfully weld complex joints and business administration apprentices learn advanced communication, reporting and presentation skills to support their work.
- Workplace tutors ensure that apprentices are well informed about their career opportunities. As a result, apprentices have realistic plans for the future. Most apprentices who complete their apprenticeship remain in employment.

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

- RNN Group provide education and training for 198 students who have high needs of whom 194 have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Over half are enrolled on courses preparing students for employment or independence, including a small number on supported internships. The remainder study vocational courses ranging from entry level to level 3.
- Teachers use their expertise to develop creative and interesting activities which enthuse students and enable them to develop good levels of skills and knowledge. Teachers use 'glow in the dark football' to motivate students who have high needs to participate in physical activity to improve their health and well-being. Teachers enable students on childcare courses to develop science experiments that are appropriate to use with young children.
- Most teachers use probing and well-targeted questioning to check learning. They allow students time to consider their answers, which is helpful to students who have difficulty processing information.
- Teachers and learning support assistants work together well to provide highly individualised support for students. They use their considerable knowledge of their students to assign tasks appropriate for students' individual needs. As a result, most students make good progress and develop their skills and independence.
- Teachers skilfully introduce students to sensitive topics such as recognising and taking action around mental health issues and the dangers of knife crime. Teachers ensure that students consider diversity in lessons, such as cultural differences in attitudes to personal debt.
- Safeguarding arrangements for students who have high needs are effective. Staff produce good-quality risk assessments for students with challenging behaviour or medical conditions such as epilepsy that put them at greater risk. Students can articulate how to keep themselves safe.
- Teachers ensure that students develop their written communication skills well. Students develop new vocabulary and the ability to write persuasively. They use dictionaries in order to spell accurately.
- Staff ensure that the arrangements for the transition of students into college, including at the subcontractors, are well organised and effective. They ensure that students settle into their course well and make progress quickly.
- Students on courses that prepare them for employment develop a good range of skills to equip them for their future. They learn how to prepare curriculum vitae and develop effective interview skills. Most teachers use their vocational experience to provide helpful advice to students about future options. Teachers also direct students to impartial careers staff for further helpful guidance. A minority of teachers do not provide reliable advice to students. As a result, a minority of students have unrealistic plans for the future.
- Too few teachers set targets for students that relate closely to students' desired outcomes contained in their EHC plans. Students make good progress in developing their vocational skills but the progress that they make in meeting their personal objectives is not captured fully.

- Feedback that teachers provide is often very positive and encouraging but very general. It does not provide students with sufficient help to improve the quality of their work to the standard of which they are capable.
- Too many students who are capable do not complete external work placements which means they do not reach their full potential in developing their skills. Students benefit from working in internal work environments such as cafes located in the college.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130527
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	14,925
Principal/CEO	Jason Austin
Telephone number	01709 362111
Website	www.rnngroup.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)	675	711	804	1,774	1,040	92	55	479
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	386	409	146	638	3	240		
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	198							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Back 2 Work Complete Training Limited Essential Site Skills Ltd Fresh Training Services (UK) Limited Huddersfield Giants Community Trust Ltd Intertrain UK Ltd Manatec Training limited Rotherham Borough Council Rotherham United Community Sports Trust Serenity (South Yorkshire) Community Interest Company Ways2Work (Doncaster) Limited							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the acting vice-principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the report on the subcontracted provision. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of students 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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