

Inspection of North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College

Inspection dates: 24–27 September 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Education programmes for young people	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College is a large general further education college formed following a merger in August 2016. At the time of the inspection, 3,224 learners were on education programmes for young people, 1,409 were on adult learning programmes, and 51 were in receipt of high-needs funding. A further 635 learners were in apprenticeships, and the majority of these were adults. The college offers courses in almost all subject areas, the largest being health and care, arts and media, and engineering. Courses are offered from level 1 to level 4, with 40% of learners studying at level 2 and a similar proportion at level 3. The large majority of apprentices are on frameworks, mostly at levels 2 and 3, the largest numbers being in engineering and manufacturing. A small minority are working towards standards-based apprenticeship programmes.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Learners and apprentices benefit from an enjoyable and highly inclusive learning environment; relationships between them and their teachers are exceptionally strong.

Behaviour and attitudes in and around the college are exemplary. Learners and apprentices routinely demonstrate high levels of respect and are extremely polite and welcoming towards visitors, those who train them, and each other. Attendance is high and improving, and lateness is rare.

Learners and apprentices benefit from a coherent and appropriate range of courses and local learning opportunities that are reflective of regional needs and employer demands.

In classrooms and workshop areas, learners and apprentices benefit from experienced teachers who plan well-structured and logically ordered activities that build on learning that has gone before. They deepen their subject knowledge and extend their academic and vocational skills.

A very high proportion of learners move into further learning or employment. They achieve as well as their peers, and the proportion of apprentices who achieve their qualifications in the planned time is high.

Learners and apprentices have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, such as when using social media and from the dangers associated with extremist ideologies or undemocratic behaviours. They have a secure understanding of the importance of healthy eating, exercise and correct lifestyle choices.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders make skilful use of a range of data to inform and shape how the curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of learners and employers and the priorities of local enterprise partnerships. This results in a range of courses and learning programmes that meet local and regional needs exceptionally well.

Learners and apprentices benefit from good-quality information, advice and guidance that ensure they are able to make well-informed choices about courses that are best matched to their individual needs and intended career aspirations.

Learners and apprentices are placed on an appropriate programme of study based on what they already know and can do. Most teachers use this information well to plan challenging learning. Learners with high needs and special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive early help and support to ensure that they are able to take an active part in lessons and planned learning activities. This has had a strong impact on their enjoyment of learning. Learners' attendance in lessons is high and they typically learn with high levels of enthusiasm, completing

activities that they are set with care and precision.

Most teachers use their subject expertise well to engage learners and apprentices in challenging and stimulating learning activities that enable them to make links to previously acquired knowledge. They ensure that learning activities are well crafted and logically ordered, and that learners' skills and knowledge acquisition are placed at the forefront. For example, on programmes for young people at levels 2 and 3 in travel, tourism and computing, teachers carefully plan learning activities to reinforce knowledge; they encourage learners to remember information from earlier sessions and how it links with what they are now studying.

Teachers set high expectations for learners and apprentices and the standard of work they produce. They systematically check understanding about key topics using a range of approaches, allowing them time to embed their learning through repetition, review and recall. They quickly address any misconceptions in learners' and apprentices' subject knowledge.

In most subjects, teachers often use good questioning techniques to create discussions that reinforce and extend independent learning and thinking skills. For example, on access programmes in humanities and social science, learners are encouraged to think deeply and respond with detail and fluency to complex ideas such as 'inference', 'cause and effect' and 'critical evaluation'.

Learners and apprentices make good use of the industry-standard resources across the college to consolidate their vocational learning and enhance their practical and performance skills. In music and performing arts, learners use rehearsal spaces to develop confidently the technical mastery of techniques such as 'improvisation', 'role characterisation' and 'caricature' and how to choreograph a musical arrangement. In vehicle engineering, learners and apprentices skilfully use specialist resources to hone their skills in service and maintenance work.

The large majority of learners and apprentices benefit from good-quality feedback from their teachers and assessors. This allows them to reflect on their learning and identify how they can improve. On academic courses, learners' writing is often evaluative, concise and analytical. Apprentices benefit from regular feedback from employers to improve their workplace skills.

Support for the most vulnerable learners and for those who need significant extra help is strong and embedded into the fabric of college life. Sensory, speech and language therapies enable learners to develop skills for work and independence that are meaningful and relevant to their future aspirations and personal development needs.

Apprentices benefit from well-planned learning activities that effectively link learning in the classroom to the workplace. They confidently develop the technical knowledge, skills and behaviours that enhance their effectiveness at work. As a result, they quickly become valued employees. The few apprentices on standards-based qualifications make assured progress towards end-point

assessment.

In classrooms and communal areas around the college, learners routinely demonstrate exemplary conduct and inclusive behaviours. Apprentices closely model and replicate the professional standards of industry. Almost all are punctual and arrive early for lessons.

Most learners on a programme of study complete meaningful work experience. They benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities that support their wider academic, cultural, artistic and sporting interests. Learners also benefit from participating in a broad range of volunteering initiatives, charitable projects and multi-cultural festivals. As a result, they quickly develop a well-rounded and insightful understanding of themselves, of their communities and of life in modern Britain. Learners quickly develop confidence, resilience and the ability to work under pressure. This is as a result of carefully planned learning and the high priority given to learners' participation in prestigious and high-profile skills competitions. A high and increasing number of learners are successful in gaining national awards.

The leadership of the college is good. Senior leaders have developed and successfully implemented a clear strategy that has resulted in sustained improvement across the merged institution. Leaders know the strengths and areas for improvement of their teachers well. Staff morale is high, and most teachers feel valued. Governors make a valuable contribution to the running of the college by providing good support and robust challenge to the senior leadership team. They have a good range of business and financial skills that enable them to monitor performance and standards closely.

A very small minority of teachers do not provide high-quality feedback to ensure that learners work to their full capability or inform learners of what they need to improve. A small minority of learners on courses for learners with high needs do not yet benefit from a supported internship provision that supports them to develop their independent and employability skills. The planning and coordination of additional learning support staff by a few teachers within the classroom are not consistently effective. Too few learners aged 16 to 19 who study towards GCSE English and mathematics qualifications achieve a grade 4 or above. Outcomes in a minority of subject sectors are too low and require improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff work well together to create a culture of safeguarding across the college. All receive appropriate training to ensure that they understand their responsibilities in keeping young learners and vulnerable adults safe. Staff know the signs of abuse and are diligent in ensuring that any concerns are swiftly reported. Systems for reporting a concern are robust.

Safeguarding leads have good relationships with outside agencies to ensure that learners identified as being at risk receive help in a timely manner. Leaders maintain

detailed and accurate safeguarding records. Procedures for checking the backgrounds of staff and governors when they are appointed are accurate.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that all learners know the progress they are making and are given clear guidance by teachers on what they need to do to improve.
- Ensure that all learners with high needs and SEND have access to purposeful and good-quality work experience through a supported internship programme.
- Ensure that teachers and learning support staff work closely together to plan effective and beneficial in-class support that meets identified learner needs.
- Improve the proportion of learners aged 16 to 19 studying GCSE English and mathematics who achieve grade 4 or higher.
- Leaders and managers should quicken the pace of improvement so that variations in learners' and apprentices' achievement across different subject areas reduce and that learners' and apprentices' achievements are all consistently high.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130836
Address	Hinckley Road Nuneaton Warwickshire CV11 6BH
Contact number	02476 243000
Website	www.nwslc.ac.uk
Principal/CEO	Marion Plant, OBE
Provider type	General further education college
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	There were no subcontractors at the time of the inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the vice principal quality, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including observing learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

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