

Short inspection of Long Road Sixth Form College

Inspection dates:

11–12 December 2019

Outcome

Long Road Sixth Form College continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

Long Road Sixth Form College was previously inspected in January 2017. It is situated in the heart of Cambridge. It has one main site and approximately 2,250 students on 16-19 study programmes, including 21 students with additional learning and/or high needs and six adult students. The college does not have any subcontracted provision.

The largest subject areas the college provides learning in are science and mathematics, social sciences, creative arts, and languages, literature and culture. The college offers a small number of vocational level 2 courses. Most courses offered are at level 3.

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

Students develop their wider skills and knowledge through participating in a wide range of interesting and effective extra-curricular activities, including volunteering. For example, students who join the volunteering group articulate the benefits to themselves and the people they help:

'The volunteering club is a great way to help others while meeting new people and forming new skills and knowledge. Most Tuesdays, a group of students visit a woman who lost her sight and now uses a guide dog. We may read out instructions and she will type what we say into her Braille machine. This is so she can use it later on.'

Students learn what it is like to work in their chosen careers through participating in employer-led projects. Industry mentors help students to develop work-ready skills, such as team-working, time management, communication and high-level technical skills.

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

Teachers prepare students effectively to cope with higher-level study, an apprenticeship or employment. As a result, students are resilient and focused on achieving their goals. Students successfully move on to high-level apprenticeships, including in chemical or aerospace engineering and accountancy. Most students choose to study at university. They complete their courses and gain high-grade degrees.

Teachers and learning assistants support students who have high needs very effectively. As a result, these students achieve at least as well as other students. Learning assistants help students to break down tasks into manageable chunks. For example, students learn how to better understand difficult theoretical concepts by using flashcards for revision. This helps them make good progress with their work.

Progress coaches provide students with very good support. For example, they help students to improve the quality of their written work. As a result, students improve their confidence and develop appropriate professional behaviours. Students are well behaved and respectful to each other and staff.

Most teachers provide good-quality and useful feedback. This ensures that students understand how to improve their work. Where this is most effective, students gain the high grades they aspire to. However, a significant minority of level 3 students studying geography and mathematics A levels do not achieve their target grades.

Advanced-level students receive effective impartial careers advice and guidance. Leaders and teachers have developed good links with local employers. Students take part in relevant work placements, visits and talks with employers. This develops their understanding of the careers available to them within these organisations. However, students studying level 2 applied qualifications receive careers advice from their subject teachers. As a result, these students do not discuss career options outside of their main subject areas.

The attendance of a significant minority of level 2 and GCSE mathematics students is too low. The attendance of these students remains significantly below that of higher-level students. Management strategies to improve attendance have had limited impact.

Leaders and managers closely monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies. For example, managers frequently review the purpose and quality of assessment activities. They ensure that teachers use this information to help students remember more over time. For example, a teacher now teaches all three subject modules simultaneously. This helps students to link different aspects of the subject. As a result, they improve their understanding of the whole subject.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Students feel safe and are safe. Students know whom to report issues to should they arise.

The safeguarding team are appropriately trained, for example in child criminal exploitation, suicide prevention training, lived experience of coercive control and mental health first aid.

The designated safeguarding officer is well informed of local issues by attending the local police's further education 'Prevent' forum. This forum highlights, for example, local activity by far right and animal rights groups.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers need to ensure that the attendance and punctuality of some level 2 students and those studying GCSE mathematics improve to the same high level as students on other programmes.
- Leaders need to ensure that all students, particularly those studying level 2 applied courses, receive impartial and relevant careers advice from specialist staff to help them make informed choices about the full range of careers available to them.
- Leaders need to ensure that students at all levels and subjects, such as GCSE English and mathematics, achieve their minimum target grades.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130616
Address	Long Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB2 8PX
Contact number	01223 631100
Website	www.longroad.ac.uk
Principal/CEO	Yolanda Botham
Provider type	Sixth form college
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2017
Main subcontractors	Not applicable

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since the college was judged to be good in January 2017.

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. 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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