

# Inspection of Chesterfield College

Inspection dates:

25–28 November 2019

## Overall effectiveness

## Requires improvement

The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Education programmes for young people	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Adult learning programmes	<b>Good</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Provision for learners with high needs	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Information about this provider

Chesterfield College is a large further education college with three main sites in Chesterfield and three satellite apprenticeship centres in Derby, Manchester and Nottingham. It offers programmes from entry level through to higher education in all subject areas apart from agriculture, horticulture and animal care. At the time of inspection, the college has almost 2,400 learners aged 16 to 18, 900 adult learners and 1,500 apprentices. Most learners come from the local area. Qualification levels for adults across Derbyshire are lower than the national rate, with fewer people qualified at level 4 and above.

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

Learners do not always receive high-quality training. They are not always clear about where they are doing well and where they need to further improve.

Learners with high needs do not receive personalised training that meets their learning needs. They are not actively encouraged to learn to live independently.

Learners and apprentices do not always benefit from high-quality impartial advice about different employment sectors at the college.

The majority of learners and apprentices learn from teachers who use their subject and sector knowledge well to deliver engaging teaching.

Learners and apprentices behave very well. They respect their peers and staff. They enjoy their learning environment and show positive attitudes.

Learners and apprentices benefit from training on specialist professional standard resources to develop their understanding. For example, engineering learners and apprentices have access to a diverse range of specialist industry-standard equipment, such as CNC machines and hydraulic machines.

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

Leaders have not improved the quality of education for young people rapidly enough. For example, in construction, English, mathematics and A-level provision, achievement rates have declined. Leaders have taken appropriate actions to tackle staff shortages and recruitment issues. It is too early to measure the impact of these on learner experience.

Teachers provide effective sector-specific support. However, learners do not understand what other career options they could access outside of their subject areas. As a result, they are unable to apply all the information that is available to help make decisions for their next steps.

Many teachers provide learners and apprentices with accurate and precise feedback to enable them to improve their work. However, this is not consistent across all areas. Learners and apprentices often receive oral feedback from their teachers which they are later unable to remember to help improve their work.

Teachers do not consistently ensure that learners and apprentices produce work that is of a high standard. For example, too many construction apprentices and computer programming learners do not pass their courses. However, adult learners and a small proportion of young people studying hair and beauty produce high-quality work of a professional standard.

Teachers do not ensure that learners understand how to improve the standard of their written work. For example, teachers in areas such as construction, art and design and GCSE English do not focus on improving learners' and apprentices' writing skills. Learners continue to make the same spelling and grammatical mistakes. As a result, they are not equipped with effective writing skills needed for their current and future employment.

A majority of learners do not benefit from good-quality and relevant work experience. For example, learners in engineering and art and design do not have access to sector-specific work experience activities. As a result, learners do not develop detailed knowledge of the industries in which they aspire to work.

Not all learners with high needs benefit from effective support. In a minority of curriculum areas, specialist support and vocational staff do not work closely to provide highly effective support for learners with high needs. As a result, these learners with high needs do not develop the new skills and knowledge necessary to live independently. Managers have recently developed plans to improve this but the impact is not yet evident.

Learners and apprentices are unaware of the local and regional risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. They are unable to relate them to their personal and professional lives. As a result, they do not know what actions they need to take and how to keep themselves safe outside the college.

Leaders and managers work very well with local employers to develop relevant courses and meet local skills needs. For example, the area has a shortage of skilled bricklayers and site carpenters. Managers and teachers developed appropriate courses to meet this need.

The majority of teachers plan learning logically to help learners build on previous learning effectively. Learners articulate what they have learned and how it relates to more complex theories. For example, biology learners begin with topics that relate to the human body. Once they have mastered the basics of human biology, they move on to more complex topics, such as genetic engineering.

Most teachers in subject areas such as health and social care, engineering and access to higher education use effective teaching strategies. For example, in level 2 engineering, learners improve their research and independent study skills and learn about the dimensions of casing. Once completed, they receive detailed and individualised feedback which helps them to know what they have done well and what they need to improve. This ensures that learners and apprentices learn and remember more.

The majority of teachers provide patient and effective support for learners and apprentices who struggle. They also provide more challenging work for most-able learners. As a result, most learners and apprentices are engaged in their learning and progress quickly.

Teachers help apprentices develop their specialist knowledge through additional and relevant qualifications. For example, health and social care apprentices receive additional training in epilepsy care, autism spectrum disorder, suicidal awareness and Prader-Willi syndrome. This enables them to take on extra responsibilities and become effective members of their workplace team.

Teachers in subject areas such as health and social care and engineering help learners to develop the knowledge they need to make successful progress in their career aims. For example, staff check learning frequently and effectively with health and social care apprentices. However, this is not consistent across all curriculum areas. For example, in construction theory and GCSE English lessons, learners struggle to recall topics they have previously studied.

Governors provide good support and challenge to the senior leaders of the college. They use accurate performance reports effectively to hold senior leaders and managers to account. As a result, they have a clear understanding of the college's main strengths and weaknesses.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Learners and apprentices feel safe and are safe. They are fully aware of who to contact at the college should they have any concerns. Leaders have good relationships with relevant external agencies to ensure that learners are supported well.

Managers meet mandatory pre-employment checks before staff start. Staff and governors receive appropriate training on all aspects of safeguarding.

Safeguarding incidents are dealt with effectively and quickly. These are reported and discussed with senior managers and governors regularly. Leaders and managers promote learners' health and well-being well through an extensive tutorial programme and 'Well-being Champions'.

## **What does the provider need to do to improve?**

- Leaders and managers should ensure that all young learners receive high-quality training which would help them achieve their qualifications and career aspirations.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that all learners with high needs receive high-quality training through better coordination of vocational and specialist support staff using appropriate adaptive technologies.
- Leaders and managers should work with staff who teach in underperforming areas, such as construction, A levels and art and design, so that they make rapid progress and improve achievement rates.

- Teachers should provide high-quality developmental feedback to help learners and apprentices improve their written work.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that all learners and apprentices receive clear, relevant and impartial careers guidance to help them with their future options.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that all learners receive high-quality and relevant work experience to support their next steps.
- Leaders and managers need to ensure that all learners understand how to contextualise the dangers of radicalisation and extremism within their daily lives and their workplace environment.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130638
<b>Address</b>	Infirmary Road Chesterfield Derbyshire S41 7NG
<b>Contact number</b>	01246 500 500
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.chesterfield.ac.uk">www.chesterfield.ac.uk</a>
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Julie Richards
<b>Provider type</b>	General further education
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13–16 February 2018
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the chief operations officer, 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

Sambit Sen, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Russ Henry	Her Majesty's Inspector
Julie Gibson	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Ingle	Ofsted Inspector
Rebecca Gater	Ofsted Inspector
Saskia Niderost	Ofsted Inspector
Penny Fawcus	Her Majesty's Inspector
Allan Shaw	Ofsted Inspector
Jai Sharda	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

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