

# Inspection of The College of Richard Collyer

Inspection dates: 30 November to 3 December 2021

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Education programmes for young people	<b>Good</b>
Adult learning programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Outstanding</b>

## Information about this provider

The College of Richard Collyer is a sixth-form college based in Horsham, West Sussex. The college was last inspected in 2008, at which time inspectors found it to be outstanding in all areas except for achievements and standards, for which it was graded good.

At the time of this inspection, there were 2,175 students at the college, with almost all of them aged between 16 and 18. Of these, almost all study a broad range of A-levels, level 3 vocational subjects or mixed level 3 programmes. The college also offers a small number of level 2 vocational courses. There are also approximately 250 adult education students who study during evening classes across a small range of subjects. At the time of the inspection, there were six students in receipt of high needs funding. Of these, four were taught in partnership with a local specialist school. Students attend college from a wide geographical area. The college does not subcontract any provision.

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

Students are rightly proud of their college. They expect to achieve academic success, and the vast majority do. They value the strong community of mutual respect and tolerance that staff have developed. Students, including those with high needs, work maturely, positively and sensibly with their teachers and their peers. For example, students with high needs benefit from working closely with level 3 sports students in activities such as football and using the college gym.

Students are highly committed to their studies. They value their teachers' strong subject knowledge and their high standards of professionalism that help them to make rapid progress with their learning. Students feel confident to ask their teachers for help and support if needed. Students attend well and arrive at lessons promptly.

Most students develop detailed knowledge and understanding of the subjects they study. They acquire practical skills at a high level. For example, A-level mathematics students quickly improve their understanding of the connection between statistical analysis and probability. A-level government and politics students can explain the different impacts of geography on the political development of both the United States and the United Kingdom. Students with high needs rapidly learn skills that help them become more independent. For example, they learn the importance of healthy eating and so apply this to cooking nutritious meals. As a result, the very large majority of students, including those with high needs, make very good, and often outstanding progress in their studies. Almost all students go on to positive next steps after their courses, with many successfully studying at prestigious universities.

Almost all students become more confident in their subject knowledge and increasingly independent in their attitudes to work because of the careful support of their teachers. For example, adult students studying level 2 and level 3 teaching assistant courses describe their improved levels of confidence when working with children with challenging behaviours.

Students participate well in community projects. For example, level 3 health and social care students work closely with care home clients to help them enjoy and benefit from exercise. A-level product design students create Christmas decorations to raise money for charitable causes. Students across the college contribute to commissions for the College of Richard Collyer's heritage project.

Students, including adult students, feel safe in college. However, adult students cannot recall how to make a safeguarding disclosure should they feel unsafe.

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

All staff, including college governors, have a highly ambitious vision for all their students to achieve academic success. Experienced and knowledgeable staff

communicate these aspirations to students successfully, which students demonstrate in their commitment to their studies.

Leaders and managers use their strong links with local and regional partners to understand local priorities and inform the courses they offer. For example, they have introduced suitable qualifications for adult learners with little or no education to help them secure employment.

Experienced and appropriately trained governors challenge and support leaders effectively to make further improvements to the quality of students' experiences. For example, leaders and governors have worked closely together to plan a sensible programme to help students learn more about the dangers of sexual harassment and violence. Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of education within the college. Leaders' introduction of new quality assurance checks has yet to be fully realised as a result of the pandemic. Leaders acknowledge that they have been too slow in checking and improving the quality of teaching in a few areas of provision. As a result, a small number of staff do not receive the support they need to review and improve quickly their classroom skills to make them more effective teachers.

Managers and teachers design purposeful courses so that students develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need for the future. For example, students on level 2 travel and tourism benefit from teaching that helps them to develop their interpersonal skills and become better at customer service. Students on level 4 counselling become increasingly empathetic, better listeners and more confident to support their clients.

Teachers plan the order of teaching carefully so that students develop their initial knowledge and skills securely before moving on to increasingly complex topics. In A-level product design, students start their course by gaining mastery of industry-standard design software, which they then use to create complicated three-dimensional models of a professional quality. Teachers contextualise learning well. They apply theory effectively to familiar situations, which helps students understand key concepts. For example, in level 3 health and social care, teachers used current television and sports personalities to highlight the achievements of people with recognised disabilities.

Most teachers use assessment effectively to check students' understanding and correct any misconceptions. Teachers of GCSE biology use assessment skilfully to check and then resolve gaps in students' understanding of the differences between mitosis and diffusion. Most students understand what they need to do to improve their work as a result of the clear feedback that they receive from teachers. For example, A-level physics students use an innovative artificial intelligence system to identify and improve gaps in learning. A few teachers do not provide consistently useful feedback that enables students to improve their work and achieve higher grades.

Staff identify, support and monitor those who fall behind successfully. A-level students rightly talk positively about the useful and well-attended additional workshops that help them in their studies. As a result, the vast majority of students, including those with high needs, learn and understand topics quickly.

Teachers know their students well. They adapt their teaching successfully to help students with additional learning needs, such as those with visual disabilities. As a result, students with additional learning needs achieve as well, and often better, than their peers.

Students who move on to university receive useful and unbiased careers advice and guidance, and support with their application. Leaders acknowledge the need to develop further the careers advice and guidance for those not moving on to university. They have recently appointed a new head of employability and new employability staff who have sensible plans in place to develop these areas.

Prior to the pandemic, too few students undertook meaningful work experience. Leaders did not analyse students' participation in virtual work experience during COVID-19 restrictions. They do not evaluate the work-readiness opportunities within subject departments to assess the impact of these opportunities. Since the easing of restrictions, leaders have reorganised and strengthened the college's arrangements to help students experience the world of work. However, it is too early to judge the impact of these actions.

Leaders have revitalised and widened their enrichment programme in the wake of the pandemic. After a year of reduced enrichment opportunities as a result of COVID-19, increasing numbers of students take part in clubs, societies and departmental enrichment to help develop their skills beyond the purely academic. For example, students in A-level physics benefit from a 'Girls in Physics' enrichment group with female guest speakers. Leaders do not currently know the proportion of students who take part in enrichment activities and so cannot fully assess the impact of these programmes on students at the college. They have sensible plans in place to improve their knowledge of which students take part in enrichment, but these plans remain in their infancy, and so it is not yet possible to judge their success.

Staff have developed a sensibly planned and helpful tutorial programme that improves students' knowledge about topics such as health, safe driving, drugs awareness, organisational skills and next steps. Students attend useful sessions that increase their awareness about drugs and help them learn about consent.

Students and parents and carers are very proud of the college. Staff describe positively the supportive and professional relationships they enjoy with leaders and managers. Staff rightly value the way that leaders and managers consider their well-being and workload, particularly during the pandemic.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The appropriately qualified safeguarding team ensures that staff know how to keep students safe. They check that staff are safe to work with students. The safeguarding team works closely with external partners to understand and tackle important issues, such as teenage suicide. The team identifies, monitors and intervenes to resolve safeguarding incidents effectively.

The safeguarding team helps to develop students' knowledge of sexual abuse and harassment. It works with students to understand their concerns of these topics sensitively.

Students remember little from their college induction to help them recognise the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

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

- Leaders and managers should ensure that all teachers understand the strengths and weaknesses of their classroom practice, and support the few teachers who need to improve any weaknesses quickly.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that all students benefit from work experience and work-readiness activities.
- Leaders and managers should improve their tracking of students' participation in enrichment opportunities in order to understand the impact of these activities.
- Leaders and managers should check that all adult learners know and understand how to make a safeguarding disclosure.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130847
<b>Address</b>	Hurst Road Horsham West Sussex RH12 2EJ
<b>Contact number</b>	01403 210822
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.collyers.ac.uk">www.collyers.ac.uk</a>
<b>Principal</b>	Mr Dan Lodge
<b>Provider type</b>	Sixth-form college
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 and 27 March 2008
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the 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 visiting 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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