

Inspection of One Sixth Form College

Inspection dates:

26 to 29 April 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

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

Information about this provider

One Sixth Form College (One College) is a non-selective sixth-form college based in Ipswich, Suffolk. The college is a part of the Suffolk Academy Trust sponsored by West Suffolk College. The college teaches a range of A level, technical and vocational qualifications at levels 2 and 3, including beauty and motor vehicle.

At the time of the inspection, there were 2,098 students, most of whom were aged 16 to 18 years old. Most students study on level 3 programmes, with a very small proportion studying Foundation Art qualifications in year 14. Approximately half of level 3 students study A-level programmes, with the remaining students divided equally between those studying vocational programmes and those studying a mix of vocational and A-level programmes. There were 112 students with high needs at the college. Most students with high needs study programmes at entry level or level 1. A smaller proportion were taught within mainstream lessons.

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

Students feel valued at One College and say that they are treated respectfully by teachers and their peers. They appreciate the calm environment around the campus and feel privileged to have access to excellent learning spaces. Students identify One College as a very welcoming and friendly place to learn, where they grow in confidence and improve their self-esteem.

Students believe that staff at the college help them to develop their independence. They enjoy the productive working atmosphere in lessons and in study areas. Many describe it as a relaxed, fun but professional environment. Students feel that there is a high level of mutual trust between staff and students. They feel confident to speak to staff about any concerns that they have and feel that staff strive to ensure that their learning experience is a positive one.

Students report that they learn in a safe environment. They know who to contact should they require support and say that staff genuinely care about their welfare.

Students feel that teachers support them very well within their lessons. They enjoy learning and believe that they are on the right programme to help them to move on to further education, training or employment. Students say that teachers help them to build on their existing knowledge and improve their understanding of their subjects. Students feel that they have useful guidance to move on to their next steps. Most students recommend the college as a positive place to learn.

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

Leaders and managers have very high expectations of staff and students. Leaders and managers have established an inclusive college, where all feel welcome, and which meets the needs of students and the community very well. Governors are experienced, highly committed to the college and take an active part in college life. They have a sound understanding and meet their statutory responsibilities. They challenge senior leaders confidently in order to secure improvements.

Leaders and managers have selected a broad curriculum that is highly relevant, and which reflects employment needs in the local area. Leaders review and adapt the curriculum frequently. Students with high needs benefit from high-quality and bespoke learning programmes, including independent living and progression to work.

Teachers adapt learning skilfully in order to enable students to achieve and progress regardless of their ability. Teachers use their expertise to consider the order in which topics should be taught. Consequently, students gain the basic knowledge and skills they require early in their course. Teachers subsequently introduce more complex topics so that students can build on the knowledge that they have gained. For example, in beauty at level 2, students learn techniques for applying day make-up

and then can apply this learning to more advanced techniques associated with bridal or evening make-up. In A-level psychology, students learn about cognitive development and then progress on to studying complex topics such as schizophrenia. As a result, students can apply their learning to increasingly complex concepts and develop sophisticated approaches to academic studies.

Teaching staff, including those working with students with high needs, are highly qualified and experienced in their subject specialisms. They use their knowledge and skills adeptly to explain topics to students and to inspire and motivate them. Managers ensure that teaching staff benefit from dedicated time to enhance their skills in classroom practice. Teachers take part in frequent discussions about teaching methods and engage in reflective practice. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching effectively across the college. As a result, the quality of teaching is very high, and students enjoy their learning.

Teachers assess students' skills in the subjects that they are studying thoroughly. Teachers use their knowledge of students' skills at the start of the course to provide additional support so that those students who need extra help make good progress. Teachers do not, however, routinely assess students' English skills thoroughly enough. Consequently, students do not always develop their spelling, punctuation and grammar beyond the requirements of the awarding body. In a few curriculum areas, teachers do not assess or develop students' mathematics skills sufficiently well.

Teachers use assessment carefully to identify what students have learned and to inform future teaching. Teachers use questioning techniques skilfully to challenge students, to check their deeper understanding and to extend their knowledge. In media, teachers use assessment highly effectively, to identify areas that students are less confident in, for example in critically analysing newspaper texts. Teachers then revise these topics and provide students with helpful strategies to achieve higher grades. As a result, students practise and reinforce new skills and knowledge so that they can apply them to future work.

Students produce practical and written work of a high standard. They learn to take detailed and accurate notes in lessons so that they can revise what they have learned very effectively. As a result, most students achieve their qualifications, and many with high grades. Most students progress on to their chosen destinations. Most A-level students progress to university, with many going to prestigious institutions. Students with high needs achieve exceptionally well and gain relevant qualifications so that they can progress on to further study, internships or apprenticeships.

Students, including those with high needs, make excellent progress. Teachers support students diligently to improve their work and to overcome barriers to their learning. Students with high needs benefit from specialist support, such as speech and language therapy. Personal tutors work closely with teachers to review students' personal and academic progress. Students attend tutorials where they take part in

discussions about issues such as mental health and well-being. As a result, they have a good understanding of how to stay healthy.

Students are prepared exceptionally well for employment. Managers and teachers work closely with employers so that students develop the relevant skills for future employment. For example, in engineering, employers contribute to the sequencing of the curriculum and set challenging tasks, such as determining the pressure tolerances of valves in pressurised pipes. Teachers provide students with a broad range of extra opportunities to extend their learning beyond the requirements of the curriculum. Motor vehicle students gain valuable additional qualifications in air conditioning and hybrid vehicle maintenance. Students in business, media and information technology take part in World Skills competitions to help them improve their skills to meet industry standards.

Students become responsible and respectful citizens. Students with high needs contribute fully to the student council and fundraising activities. Students on A-level psychology programmes discuss how to influence social change through campaigns, such as Black Lives Matter and Gay Rights. As a result, they learn to discuss and debate effectively, appreciating views that are different from their own. However, participation in many cross-college activities is not consistently high. Managers do not routinely monitor participation to ensure that students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, benefit from these activities. Managers have plans in place to improve the participation of all students, but it is too soon to judge the impact of these plans.

Students' behaviour is exceptionally good around the college, in classrooms and workshops. They have extremely positive attitudes to learning, and many students, for example those in biology and psychology, attend additional support and revision sessions. Attendance in most lessons is high and students attend their learning punctually. However, attendance at GCSE mathematics is too low.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have established a strong culture of safeguarding. They have put in place relevant policies and procedures to keep students safe.

The members of the safeguarding team are experienced and suitably qualified to carry out their roles. They have very good links with safeguarding experts within the community so that they keep their knowledge relevant and up to date. They have established appropriate training for staff so that they recognise and report any concerns. As a result, students feel safe and are safe in college.

Staff have a good understanding of health and well-being issues. They use their knowledge effectively, to support students to overcome problems such as anxiety and stress.

Provider details

Unique reference number	142283
Address	Scrivener Drive Pinewood Ipswich Suffolk IP8 3SU
Contact number	01473 556603
Website	www.suffolkone.ac.uk
Principal	Jake Robson
Provider type	Sixth-form college
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	Not applicable

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy head of centre, 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

Lynda Brown, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Shane Langthorne	Her Majesty's Inspector
Catherine Richards	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Winchcombe	Ofsted Inspector
Georgina Ager	Ofsted Inspector
Rochelle Saneria	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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