

# Inspection of Chesterfield College

Inspection dates: 15 to 18 November 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
<hr/>	
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</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>
Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Provision for learners with high needs	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Information about this provider

Chesterfield College is a general further education college. Leaders offer education programmes for young people, adult learning programmes and apprenticeships. Students study at one of two sites: in Chesterfield or in the workplace. At the time of the inspection, there were 2,453 young people, 870 adults, 920 apprentices and 76 students with high needs.

Young people study a range of full-time vocational courses or A levels. Almost all of them study at level 1, 2 or 3. Students with high needs study pathway courses at entry level or join a vocational course.

Adults study at level 1, 2, 3 or 4. Around half of the adults at level 1 and 2 study English, mathematics or English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses. At level 3, around half of adults study access to higher education courses.

Apprentices study at level 2, 3 or 4. Just over a quarter study apprenticeships in engineering. Construction and business are the next largest subject areas.

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

Students and apprentices highly value the support and encouragement they receive from staff. Learning, engagement, achievement and progress (LEAP) mentors have a very positive impact on students. They help them to develop useful strategies to manage their physical and mental health. Students are right to value how the LEAP mentors assist them to deal with and overcome personal issues.

Most young people, adults and apprentices develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to pass their qualifications and take their next steps. Young people set career goals and plan how to achieve them. Apprentices often secure permanent roles following their studies. Adults develop valuable life skills or gain qualifications to help them progress to higher education. Students with high needs have clear progression routes to develop their independence or gain employment.

Teachers set clear expectations for students' behaviour. Classrooms are calm and productive environments. Most students and apprentices demonstrate good behaviour, collaborate confidently and value each other's views and opinions. Students and apprentices attend their classes well. However, a few young people do not always attend GCSE English and mathematics classes at the same high level.

Leaders and managers successfully support students to be responsible and respectful citizens. Students, including those with high needs, have access to a wide range of clubs and societies, and many volunteer in valuable community activities. For example, students participate in a clothes swap that promotes sustainability and design clothes with school children that promote inclusivity.

Students and apprentices feel safe at college or at work. They have access to a well-being hub, where they can receive specialist advice and support. Staff are vigilant, and students and apprentices are confident that any concerns that they raise will be dealt with effectively by staff.

## **Contribution to meeting skills needs**

The college makes a strong contribution to meeting skills needs.

Leaders understand very well how they contribute to meeting the skills needs of the local and regional area. They establish several highly beneficial partnerships with relevant stakeholders to support economic recovery and regeneration. For example, leaders play a particularly active role on the local town boards and the local enterprise partnership. This has led to significant investment and the development of a digital skills academy and a construction hub to meet the demand for these skills.

Leaders and managers involve employers and universities very effectively in curriculum design and implementation. Managers are encouraged and actively supported to undertake frequent and purposeful engagement with stakeholders.

Managers use the outcomes of these activities to inform the curriculum. For example, sports courses include a licence to practice qualification to increase the number of qualified fitness instructors. During their studies, sports students undertake frequent and useful real-work activities that relate to the industry.

Leaders are very proactive in seeking advice on new sector developments and the latest industry standards. They make good use of funding to update premises and purchase industry-standard equipment and resources to meet future skills needs. This equips students very well with the skills they need for their future careers.

Leaders are highly responsive to the changing needs of the local community, which is rightly valued by their partners. For example, managers quickly adapted the ESOL curriculum as a direct response to the growth of Ukrainian refugees in the area.

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

Leaders, working with governors and staff, have taken effective action to resolve the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Leaders and managers use a wide range of approaches to develop teachers' skills. This includes communities of practice, teaching triangles and targeted training and development. Teachers understandably value the support they receive. It encourages them to try new things in the classroom and learn from their peers. As a result, most students and apprentices benefit from good teaching.

Leaders and managers use a well-considered range of approaches to evaluate and improve what they do. This includes termly GOAL (go out and listen) reviews that evaluate the curriculum, teaching and student experience well. These reviews link into effective termly performance monitoring boards. Leaders have additional processes to quickly address any areas for improvement that they identify.

Leaders and managers plan the curriculum with a strong focus on progression and employment. For example, there are clear progression routes from entry level pathway courses to vocational courses. Students are well prepared to make the transition because of the subject taster sessions they complete.

Teachers are suitably qualified and experienced. They benefit from a range of opportunities to keep their subject-specific knowledge and skills up to date, such as on-site visits and shadowing activities in industry. They use this experience to enhance the curriculum for students and apprentices. For example, carpentry and joinery teachers receive training on sustainable kitchen fitting and share this with students.

In most cases, teachers plan the curriculum effectively to gradually develop students' and apprentices' underpinning knowledge and skills. For instance, ESOL teachers improve students' knowledge of skills such as deduction and inference in more simple texts before they apply these skills to more complex texts over time.

Media students benefit from weekly technical skills sessions that start with the basics of camera use for different genres and moods, through to the use of complex editing software.

Most teachers use lesson time productively to help students understand key topics and grasp key concepts. They use a variety of appropriate activities, provide clear explanations and design good-quality resources. Teachers make good links between theory and practical activities. However, a few teachers do not think as carefully about how to use lesson time. As a result, they rush activities or do not introduce new topics at the right level, which hinders a few students' learning.

Most teachers provide students with helpful opportunities to practise what they have learned. This means students can apply their new knowledge more fluently and consistently. For example, hairdressing teachers plan increasingly demanding practical activities so students reach industry-standard cutting times quickly. In catering, teachers identify what entry and level 1 students find hard to remember, such as cooked food temperature ranges. They carefully plan to revisit and embed this knowledge so students remember it over time.

Teachers prepare apprentices well for their final assessments. Early years apprentices practise professional discussion questions at the end of each topic. This is a useful revision tool to help apprentices remember more. Teachers use the outcomes well to revisit any topics apprentices need to know. Apprentices frequently complete multiple-choice questions, and they become familiar and confident with the style of questions they will be asked.

Most teachers provide students with good-quality written or spoken feedback. Students understand their strengths and how to improve their work. However, GCSE English teachers do not consistently support students to improve their use of grammar, punctuation and spelling in their written work.

The written and practical work that students and apprentices produce is mostly of a good standard. For example, A-level students' work shows strong critical analysis skills and the ability to understand and analyse complex information. Level 2 health and social care students demonstrate high levels of empathy and maturity in their practical work.

Young people benefit from good opportunities to undertake a range of work-related activities. This includes work experience, guest lecturers, work-related projects and visits and trips. Students with high needs, who study vocational courses, benefit from these high-quality opportunities. A few students on entry-level pathway courses do not benefit from enough work-related activities.

Many students and apprentices achieve their intended qualifications. However, young people who retake GCSE mathematics and English pass but do not always achieve high grades.

Students with additional needs are identified quickly, and appropriate support is put

in place to meet their needs. Teachers support students with special educational needs and/or disabilities who move from pathway courses into vocational courses well. They ensure learning support staff are consistent and that any ongoing support strategies are understood by teachers.

Teachers hold meaningful discussions to ensure that students explore each other's opinions respectfully and can link British values to their subject. A large majority of students have an appropriate understanding of the values, such as mutual respect and tolerance. However, a few adult students do not have a full and secure understanding of the values and what they mean in their daily lives.

Most students and apprentices benefit from well-structured careers education, information, advice and guidance that prepare them well for their next steps. Careers staff work very closely with curriculum teams to help students, adults, apprentices and students with high needs understand the potential routes available to them.

Governors have a good range of experience and know the college well. They receive detailed and up-to-date information on key indicators that they use well to hold leaders to account. All governors participate in a link-governor scheme. This enables them to gain first-hand experience of the college and see for themselves the impact of leaders' actions for improvement. Leaders and governors place a strong emphasis on support for staff well-being and development.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers understand their responsibilities for safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty. Policies and procedures help staff to deal with, and report, any concerns that they have. Staff receive comprehensive annual safeguarding training from the designated safeguarding lead.

Managers ensure that students and apprentices have access to a wide range of help and support. They work well with local agencies and charities to provide this. Where referrals are made, staff record these in detail and take timely and appropriate actions to support students. The safeguarding team is diligent, reflecting on and developing approaches to supporting students and apprentices.

Managers follow safer recruitment practices. All appropriate pre-employment checks are undertaken.

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

- Leaders should ensure that young people attend their GCSE English and mathematics classes well. They should support teachers to provide consistent feedback on students' written work to help them achieve high grades.
- Leaders and managers should support the few teachers who do not use lesson time as well as they could do to develop their approaches to planning and assessment.
- Leaders should ensure that all students on entry-level pathway courses benefit from appropriate work-related activities.
- Leaders should support teachers to better develop adults' understanding and awareness of British values and how they impact on their daily lives.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130638
<b>Address</b>	Infirmary Road Chesterfield Derbyshire S41 7NG
<b>Contact number</b>	01246500500
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.chesterfield.ac.uk">www.chesterfield.ac.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Julie Richards
<b>Provider type</b>	General further education college
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 to 28 November 2019
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	N/A

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy principal, as the nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report, 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

Emma Woods, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Saul Pope	His Majesty's Inspector
Janet Cannon	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Gibson	Ofsted Inspector
Nikki Brady	His Majesty's Inspector
Kathryn Townsley	Ofsted Inspector
Graham Baker	Ofsted Inspector
Franki Williams	Ofsted Inspector
Angela Twelvetree	His Majesty's Inspector
Vicki Locke	His Majesty's Inspector
Ian Higgins	His Majesty's Inspector



The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022