

# Inspection of Scarborough Sixth Form College

Inspection dates: 21 to 23 March 2023

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|--|--------------------|
| <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>        |
| Provision for learners with high needs       | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good               |

## Information about this provider

Scarborough Sixth Form College is small college located on the outskirts of Scarborough on the North Yorkshire coast. Students are recruited from the local area and from other coastal towns such as Bridlington, Filey and Whitby. At the time of the inspection, there were 915 students on programme, of whom 14 had high needs and 10 were studying on programmes with a subcontractor. Most students study at level 3, with A-level courses making up around two thirds of the provision.

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

Staff create a positive culture at the college, which results in a high level of mutual respect between staff and students. Students value the support that they receive from their teachers. They display positive attitudes to their learning and are attentive in lessons. Students respond well to feedback from their teachers to help them improve, and are highly motivated to do their best.

Staff promote high expectations of what students, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities, can achieve. Students who have high needs significantly increase their confidence. They have high aspirations for what they can achieve when they leave college, and most progress to university or to an apprenticeship.

Students benefit from exciting enrichment opportunities that develop their interests. They are supported to improve their skills outside of the main curriculum by, for example, taking part in sports teams, driving theory lessons, Duke of Edinburgh's Awards, computer-aided design workshops, and art, gardening and Spanish film clubs. Graphics students benefit from participating in a project to update the college student portal. They research accessibility and design applications and content to make the site more user friendly. This increases their understanding of what it would be like to work in creative industries.

Sports staff promote opportunities for all students to stay fit and healthy. They support students' sporting aspirations even when these are not part of the college sports programme, such as surf coaching, weightlifting and cross country running. A high proportion of students take part in sporting activities, and many compete at regional and national level in kickboxing, golf, football and rugby.

Students, who come from a range of backgrounds, feel safe in college. Staff successfully celebrate diversity, allowing every student to be who they want to be. Students have a mature understanding of equality, diversity and safety, and feel confident to tackle inappropriate behaviour among their peers. They understand how to protect themselves online and know how to respond when people outside of college display concerning behaviour towards them or their friends.

Students do not attend consistently well in all subject areas. Staff have strategies in place to enable students to catch up on missed work, such as timetabling intervention sessions, accessing content online and additional support sessions during lunchtime and after college. Leaders and managers have recently employed additional staff to focus on improving attendance further. However, it is too soon to see the impact of this.

## **Contribution to meeting skills needs**

The college makes a reasonable contribution to meeting skills needs.

Leaders and managers have developed an inclusive curriculum with an effective balance of academic and vocational pathways to align the college's provision with local economic and skills priorities. They are responsive to the needs of other local education providers and work collaboratively to ensure effective transition into college and onward progression of students. They ensure that young people in the area have access to a broad education offer to equip them with the skills needed for their next steps in employment or education, without duplicating provision offered by other providers.

Leaders and managers liaise well with employers and stakeholders to understand the skills needs that are relevant to their students. They work with a number of universities locally and nationally to help students understand the offer and expectations of the universities to which they seek to progress. Staff organise successful higher education careers fairs with significant numbers of higher education institutions in attendance. As a result, students form links with the universities of their choosing and are able to understand better the requirements and expectations of their preferred institutions and courses.

Leaders and managers work with employers and business professionals to design and deliver activities for students as part of their programmes. They use these subject experts to develop content for vocational courses such as live briefs, business proposals and workplace visits. In most curriculum areas, this is well established, and students benefit from the skills they develop through activities such as flight attendant workshops, music projects to create soundtracks for local leisure services, and visits to a power station for engineering students to learn about biomass. However, in a small number of programmes, staff rightly recognise that they could do more to enhance and increase stakeholder involvement in the curriculum.

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

Leaders and managers are ambitious for their students. They plan a successful A-level and vocational curriculum that provides students with a local place to learn and broaden their choice of next steps. Leaders and managers have carefully considered the combination of courses on offer to improve progression opportunities. As a result, most students progress to positive destinations, including further learning, and many move on to prestigious universities.

Teachers make sensible choices about the A-level syllabuses, vocational courses and modules that they teach so that the curriculum successfully equips students with the knowledge and skills that they need for their next steps. For example, in health and social care, staff teach optional science units to enable students to gain the knowledge that they need to progress on to courses such as nursing.

Teachers sequence the curriculum well to develop students' knowledge and confidence in the application of skills. They increase the complexity of topics that they teach over time and develop students' competence in applying their knowledge

to examination and assessment tasks. In psychology, teachers introduce foundation approaches to the subject in the first year. They start with the social approach as it is easily relatable to students' experience, and then teach more challenging approaches such as cognitive psychology later in the programme, as this includes concepts such as memory, which are more challenging for students.

Teachers are well qualified, and are experts in their subjects. They skilfully develop students' creative skills, knowledge and behaviours to help them produce work that is of an excellent standard. Teachers are supportive, working effectively with students in class to check their work and giving useful critical feedback to help students understand how they can improve. Teachers ensure that students practise and sharpen their skills through a range of different projects. For example, in textiles, students learn a range of techniques such as crochet, weaving and embroidery, which they apply in more complex ways in each successive project that they complete.

Teachers use assessment effectively in order to test students' knowledge and identify whether they can apply this knowledge successfully in their work and in examinations. They help students to understand gaps in their knowledge and where they have lost marks in examination questions. Most teachers adjust teaching activities to fill knowledge gaps and support students to improve their work quickly.

Staff ensure that most students understand their career choices. They support students to research universities thoroughly and make contact with them to understand their requirements before they apply. Staff help students who aspire to an apprenticeship to find a work placement. They organise careers fairs to help students learn about broader options and make informed choices about what they want to do next. However, in a few instances, staff do not analyse fully enough information about student destinations, such as the specific degree that former students are taking, to identify whether programmes are successful in supporting students to realise their aspirations fully.

Students who have high needs make excellent progress in developing the knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need to achieve their qualifications and progress to highly positive destinations. Students in music performance develop more complex drumming skills and learn to play in a band for the first time in front of live audiences. Staff help students to increase significantly their confidence and self-esteem, and as a result, students who have high needs develop resilience and improve their communication, independent study skills and teamworking skills.

Most students progress to university, gain an apprenticeship or move into employment. In art and design, students achieve high grades and most go on to relevant art-based degrees. A high proportion of students achieve their qualifications. On most A-level and vocational courses, students make good progress from their starting points. However, in a few subjects where results are less positive, students do not reach their full potential.

Leaders and managers have a good awareness of the strengths and areas for improvement of the education that they provide, including at the subcontractor. They conduct effective evaluations of the quality of education through visits to lessons, discussions with students, interactions with parents and carers, and scrutiny of assessment and achievement information. They use the outcomes of these activities to identify accurately areas that need to improve. As a result, they have successfully made improvements to the curriculum in areas such as health and social care and GCSE mathematics.

Leaders have recently strengthened the board through, for example, the appointment of local business leaders. Governors are experienced in a range of areas, such as finance, law, business networking and safeguarding, which adds validity to their roles and improves the effectiveness of challenge. They question middle leaders appropriately using frequent curriculum reports and presentations to the board. This enables them to hold leaders, managers and department heads to account for their actions. Governors value the range of sources of information that they can access, which gives them a fair representation of the college's strengths and any issues or concerns.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Designated safeguarding staff work closely with social services, mental health services, local support agencies and the police to provide helpful additional support for students who need it. They successfully involve parents and carers in their interactions, where appropriate, to ensure that students have a breadth of support to overcome any safeguarding issues.

Managers and staff implement appropriate recruitment checks to ensure that staff, volunteers and casual staff are safe to work with students. Designated safeguarding staff are well informed about local and regional risks. They use their local intelligence well to provide training for staff and students on current issues. For example, a recent incident of spiking vapes with drugs in the area led to an update for staff and students on how to be vigilant and protect themselves. However, in a few instances, students are unable to articulate how local risks, such as drugs and gang activity, might be relevant to them in their everyday lives.

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

- Improve student attendance to ensure greater consistency across curriculum areas and reduce the need to implement catch-up interventions.
- Ensure that employers and relevant stakeholders are involved in the planning and delivery of the curriculum across all subject areas to broaden the understanding that students gain about the world of work and future career options.

- Further analyse the impact of the curriculum in supporting students to realise their aspirations, by making better use of student destination information across all subjects.
- Ensure that when students make slower progress from their starting points, teachers are supported to identify how they can improve their skills to help students reach their potential.

## Provider details

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>      | 130593  |
| <b>Address</b>                      | Sandybed Lane<br>Scarborough<br>North Yorkshire<br>YO12 5LF |
| <b>Contact number</b>               | 01723 365 032   |
| <b>Website</b>                      | <a href="http://www.s6f.org.uk">www.s6f.org.uk</a>          |
| <b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b> | Phil Rumsey   |
| <b>Provider type</b>                | Sixth-form college  |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b> | 8 to 10 October and 6 December 2019                         |
| <b>Main subcontractors</b>          | The Academy of Hair and Beauty                              |

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the assistant 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

|                                |                         |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Sarah Lonsdale, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Jacque Brown                   | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Rachel Angus                   | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Sarah Seaman                   | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Linnia Khemdoudi               | Ofsted Inspector        |
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