

Inspection of Tameside College

Inspection dates:

5 to 8 March 2024

Overall effectiveness**Good**

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Education programmes for young people

Good

Adult learning programmes

Good

Apprenticeships

Good

Provision for students with high needs

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Information about this provider

Tameside College is a general further education college based in Ashton-Under-Lyne, Greater Manchester. The college has four main sites in Tameside. At Clarendon Sixth Form College, students aged 16 to 18 study from a choice of 20 A levels and level 3 certificates and diplomas in criminology, health and social care, entry to uniformed services, sport and physical activity, applied law, applied psychology, applied science, engineering graphics, fashion and clothing. Leaders also offer creative and digital courses taught in dance and drama facilities, art workshops and multimedia studios. At Tameside One, leaders offer hair, beauty, hospitality, catering, bakery, travel and tourism and business courses for adults and students aged 16 to 18. The Tameside Centre for Enterprise houses the Tameside Adult and Community Education team, who merged into the college in 2022 from the local authority. The Beaufort Road campus staff provide technical courses and the apprenticeship provision. These include health and social care, early years, sport and trades such as bricklaying, carpentry and joinery, and engineering. Leaders offer a range of vocational courses studied by adults and 16 to 18 year-old students which include, animal care, health and social care and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), and access to higher education (HE) courses.

At the time of the inspection, there were 3,561 young people aged 16 to 18 years on education programmes for young people. Students were enrolled on a range of academic and vocational courses, in most subject areas, from entry level to level 3. Just under half of the students study level 3 courses. These included T levels in health and design, surveying and planning for construction. Just under half of students studied at level 2, with around 2,000 students studying GCSE English and mathematics. A small number of students studied courses at level 1 or below. There were 78 students for whom the college receives high needs funding. Most students with high needs followed a specialist 'aspirations' programme.

There were 2,655 adults in learning. Just over half were on entry or level 1 courses, primarily ESOL and construction. A further third of students studied at level 2 on courses in hair, beauty, construction, engineering and supporting teaching and learning. There were 237 students on level 3 courses, primarily studying access to HE in nursing midwifery and allied health professions and counselling. Most of the remainder were on level 4 courses studying counselling.

There were 500 apprentices following apprenticeship standards from level 2 to 4, of which 329 are aged 16 to 18. Most apprentices study at levels 2 and 3 with the highest enrolments in construction and engineering apprenticeships.

Tameside work with two subcontractors. One subcontractor provides training for young people up to the age of 24. The remaining subcontractor provides training for pre-ESOL adult students at community venues.

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

Students and apprentices benefit from a highly effective personal development programme that develops their employability skills, confidence and resilience. They take part in a range of activities which includes participation in skills competitions, sports clubs, language clubs, museum visits and projects in the community. Participation in competitions and cross-college activities is high. For example, 13 curriculum areas entered students and apprentices into world skills competitions. Level 3 fashion students support the local community by making 'Angel Gowns' for deceased infants from donated wedding gowns. Students with high needs attend activities such as building with blocks, relaxation, and IT club. This results in students building their communication, social and fine motor skills.

On education programmes for young people, students benefit from studying in a calm and respectful environment where teachers have high expectations. Students are motivated to achieve and display positive attitudes and professional behaviours. Many students undertake additional qualifications to support them with their next steps. Animal care students complete an animal first-aid course. T level health students complete the care certificate, so that they are familiar with manual handling and end-of-life care.

Adult students progress well on their courses and enjoy their studies. They feel very well supported by their teachers who they say help them to improve. ESOL students explain how their English skills have improved. They are proud that they can now speak in their children's schools, make appointments at the doctors and ask questions in shops. Students on access to HE courses benefit from attending careers fairs and talks by universities to research the career opportunities available to them. As a result, all these students have received university offers.

Apprentices develop the knowledge skills and behaviours that employers need because of their apprenticeship. They use their newly acquired knowledge and skills to contribute positively to their businesses and the wider college community. Dental apprentices learn about the importance of healthy lifestyles and benefit from guest speakers from the NHS Oral Health Educational Team. They use this knowledge to promote healthy eating and drinking with their patients and, as part of National Smile Week, promote oral hygiene within the college.

Students with high needs enjoy coming to the college. They appreciate the greater responsibility that they have developed, compared with school, and feel proud of what they have achieved. Many students develop their independence and travel to college and/or work placements independently. They organise themselves independently and manage their time such as knowing when to return to lessons after breaks and lunchtimes. During class sessions, they develop team building and leadership skills by helping others with their work. However, in a few work experience sessions, students with complex needs on the aspirations A programme do not always receive sufficient accessible resources to develop their independence.

Students and apprentices feel safe across all the college sites. They are aware of who to report any concerns to and say that staff deal with incidents and concerns swiftly. Students and apprentices speak positively about the student hub where they feel comfortable to talk to members of staff and seek support. In tutorial and personal development lessons, students and apprentices discuss a range of topics such as healthy relationships, keeping safe at festivals and staying safe online. For example, art and design students learn how to safely manage social media accounts to showcase their work. Pre-entry ESOL students learn how to report hate crimes in their local community.

Contribution to meeting skills needs

The college makes a strong contribution to meeting skills needs.

Leaders have highly effective links with a wide range of relevant stakeholders. They understand and prioritise local and regional skills needs, and use this information well to strategically plan their curriculum offer. Leaders work closely with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and job centre plus to respond to skills shortages and support the borough's wider recruitment needs. For example, leaders offer courses in ESOL, bakery, and information technology that are aimed at supporting those students who are hardest to reach, to help them to progress to further learning and enter employment.

Leaders collaborate exceptionally well with a wide range of employers and other relevant stakeholders. As part of the Greater Manchester Colleges Group, leaders are part of two innovation projects to ensure that the future needs of key industries such as the digital sector are met. They explore new technology available, such as augmented reality, and include this in the curriculum to ensure that students and apprentices learn up-to-date skills.

Staff skilfully work with employers to develop tailored training and education programmes. They use the expertise of employers and key stakeholders to inform and endorse their curriculums and provide students and apprentices with the future skills they require. For example, staff in painting and decorating work with employers to adapt the curriculum to include innovative technology in spraying. This provides students with relevant industry skills in preparation for employment. Teachers and employers work together to provide training in partnership. In health programmes, employers support training in the dementia awareness suite to provide students with the skills required when they are out on work placements.

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

Most apprentices and students attend well. Leaders are relentless in their pursuit of high attendance and have put in place a range of strategies to support apprentices and students to improve their attendance. However, in a small number of

programmes for young people, attendance is not yet high enough. Leaders take account of students' prior experiences and barriers to learning in the context of high persistent absence rates across schools in the local area. They set realistic individual targets for all students and apprentices. This means that most students and apprentices make rapid progress in improving their attendance. Students on GCSE mathematics are proud of their improved attendance since starting at the college.

Leaders develop ambitious curriculums that meet most students' and apprentices' needs. They are passionate about providing opportunities to students and apprentices, some of whom need extensive support to enter the labour market, to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours to move on to further study or employment. Leaders work with employers, community organisations and higher education providers to design curriculums that provides students and apprentices with the knowledge and skills that they need for their next steps. For example, sociology teachers include research into the education of subcultures so that students develop the research skills required for undergraduate social science degrees. Teachers in engineering work with aerospace and tool manufacturing businesses to provide apprenticeship training that meets the training needs for their sector. Carpentry and joinery apprentices learn about environmental sustainability and current and future technology. As a result, apprentices receive relevant industry skills that lead to meaningful long-term employment in hard to recruit positions.

Leaders ensure that curriculums are planned in a logical order so that students and apprentices build their knowledge gradually over time. Access to HE students learn about cells in the body. They apply this knowledge confidently when discussing genetics. Counselling students learn about ethics in counselling before moving on to advanced counselling skills, such as enhanced communication, and how to use supervision safely and effectively.

Teachers and skills coaches are suitably experienced and qualified to carry out their roles. They maintain their subject expertise through participation in activities including conferences, industrial updating placements and specialist training. Teachers and support staff of students with high needs receive bespoke training to support students' individual needs. For example, where students have a specific diagnosis or need, staff receive specific training to enable them to support the student before they enrol at the college, such as unusual forms of epilepsy.

Most teachers provide opportunities for students and apprentices to understand and develop their skills through discussion and class activities. Manufacturing operations engineering technician apprentices learn how to align and test a three-speed reduction system. They apply this learning in the workshops before honing these skills in the workplace. However, teachers of students with high needs on the aspirations A programme do not always provide sufficient opportunities for those students with lower cognitive levels to develop their skills. As a result, these few students do not always make the progress for which they are capable.

Most teachers and skills coaches use assessment effectively so that students and apprentices become fluent in their knowledge and skills over time. They use a range

of different activities such as questioning, reflection, mock assessment and scenarios to check that students and apprentices understand topics before moving on to the next topic. Apprentices complete mock tests throughout their apprenticeship to identify gaps in their learning. They benefit from additional training sessions to rectify gaps in knowledge and support them to achieve the highest grade available in their apprenticeship.

Most teachers and skills coaches provide useful feedback to students and apprentices that help them to improve their knowledge and skills. Access to HE students produce work that increases in complexity over time. As a result of feedback, they now use statistics to explain key concepts in their work. Animal care students correctly complete healthcare checks on animals. Art and design students benefit from individual feedback. This supports students to further develop their ideas and produce work of a high standard. However, students on sociology and GCSE mathematics do not always receive useful feedback. GCSE mathematics students answer questions incorrectly in their workbooks which is not revisited. This means that students continue to make the same errors in their work.

Students and apprentices benefit from unbiased, well-planned careers education, information, advice and guidance. They attend industry specific careers fairs, careers talks and events where guest speakers explain their career journey. Adult students discuss career opportunities during weekly personal development sessions and share each other's aspirations. For example, counselling students consider employment opportunities in private practice, the national health service or employee assistance programmes.

Students and apprentices are well prepared for their next steps. They successfully progress to positive destinations. The majority of apprentices continue in employment, gain promotion or gain additional responsibilities at work. Students with high needs progress to supported internships, paid or volunteer work or high-level courses. Adults and young people successfully progress to a range of destinations, including further and higher education, training and employment.

Leaders have an effective oversight of the quality of education that students and apprentices receive. Leaders identified systemic issues in the apprenticeship provision which resulted in too many apprentices leaving their apprenticeship early and not achieving on time. They used highly effective performance management procedures to improve the quality of training that apprentices receive. This resulted in managers and skills coaches exiting the organisation or improving rapidly the training that they provide to apprentices. Leaders carefully monitor the progress that all apprentices make and identify swiftly those that are falling behind. They put in place robust action plans, that ensures apprentices catch up and achieve their apprenticeship. Leaders have stopped recruiting to plumbing and electrical apprenticeships.

Governors have appropriate expertise and experience to carry out their roles. They receive high-quality reports that provide them with clear information on the college's strengths and areas of improvement. Governors use this information to effectively

support and challenge senior leaders and hold them to account. Governors carry out activities such as visits to apprentices' lessons and scrutinise action plans to ensure that senior leaders swiftly improve the apprenticeship provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Improve the proportion of apprentices who achieve and ensure that more apprentices remain on their apprenticeship.
- Improve the accessibility of resources in work experience settings for students with high needs who have complex requirements.
- Improve feedback following assessment on programmes for young people, so that students know what they need to do to improve their work.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130516
Address	Beaufort Road Ashton-under-Lyne Greater Manchester OL6 6NX
Contact number	0161 908 6600
Website	www.tameside.ac.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Jackie Moores
Provider type	General further education college
Date of previous inspection	24 to 27 April 2018
Main subcontractors	Groundworks The parochial church council of the ecclesiastical parish of the good shepherd

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy 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 students' work, seeking the views of students, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Alison Humphreys, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Joanne Stork	His Majesty's Inspector
Robert Marshall-Slater	Ofsted Inspector
Michelle Fletcher	Ofsted Inspector
Alex Lang	Ofsted Inspector
Janine Archer	Ofsted Inspector
Sonia Stirling	Ofsted Inspector
Suzanne Wainwright	His Majesty's Inspector
Jane Young	Ofsted Inspector
Maura Cummins	Ofsted Inspector
Andrea Machell	Ofsted Inspector
Jaqui Scott	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Cameron Brandwood	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 students 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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024