



Scarborough Sixth Form College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Better
education
and care

Inspection report

Audience
Post-sixteen

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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Scarborough Sixth Form College
Type of college:	Sixth Form College
Principal:	Mr Tom Potter
Address of college:	Scarborough Sixth Form College Sandybed Lane Scarborough YO12 5LF
Telephone number:	01723 380 700
Fax number:	01723 367 049
Chair of governors:	Mr David Wormold
Unique reference number:	130593
Name of lead inspector:	Patrick Geraghty, HMI
Dates of inspection:	16 -20 January 2006

Background of the organisation

1. The population of Scarborough and Filey is approximately 106,000 of whom 99% are white. 79% of residents of working age are economically active with unemployment at 3.6%. The traditional skills base has been orientated towards service industries related to tourism and to the primary industries of fishing and agriculture. There are few professional jobs with promotion prospects and incomes are below the national average resulting in an out-migration of young people. Two wards experience problems more associated with inner city areas and are recognised to be within the 10% of most deprived wards of the country. Most schools reach the national average in terms of A*-C GCSE success rates but few approach the county average. The proportion of adults with level 4 qualifications is below both the county and national average and 34% of adults have no qualification.
2. The college was established in 1973 and has been an integral part of the secondary education system of Scarborough, providing the sixth form for six local schools. The college's aim is to raise young people's aspirations, widen participation and meet the needs of the 16 to 18 age group. In 2005/06 the college enrolled 943 full-time 16 to 19 year old students. Applications to the college have risen by 15% over the last five years. The proportion of enrolments relative to the number of 16 year olds in partner schools who gain at least five Cs at GCSE has risen to 87% in 2005 from 75% in 2004. The proportion of students with widening participation postcodes has remained constant at 16% over the last three years. The college offers some 30 A-level courses, 32 GCE AS courses and 3 AVCE single and double awards. Discrete courses at levels 1 and 2, and adult provision are also offered. There has been a significant increase in the number of students studying vocational subjects.
3. During 2005 the college was engaged in a flexibility study to explore merger with Yorkshire Coast College. This project has been the focus of much of the principal's time. The governors rejected the option of merger and chose to remain as a separate college.

Scope of the inspection

4. In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the college's previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits; and data on enrolments and learners' achievements over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:
 - overall effectiveness of the college and its capacity to improve further
 - achievements and standards
 - quality of provision
 - leadership and management

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Achievements and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Satisfactory: Grade 3

Note: Where contributory grades have been awarded, they are shown in the relevant sections of the report. Contributory grades represent the judgement of the team that the quality of the aspect of provision indicated by the grade differs from the grade overall.

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

5. The achievements of learners are good. Pass rates at level 3 are good and most learners make the progress expected of them. Pass and retention rates at levels 1 and 2 in 2005 were also good. The discrete provision for adult learners is excellent with success rates consistently above national averages. Retention rates at all levels are at or just above national averages. In a minority of subjects students do not make the progress expected and pass rates are below the national average. While the standard of student work is generally good, learners' oral competencies are not sufficiently developed in some lessons.
6. The standards of teaching and learning are good. The marking and assessment of learners' work is effective. Learners respond well to much lively and stimulating teaching. Resources are used effectively. Data is used well to track learners' progress. Initial diagnostic testing to identify support needs is limited. There are too few opportunities for learners to reflect on their work and progress.
7. The college's response to social and educational inclusion is good. There is a broad range of provision at level 3 and discrete provision at levels 1 and 2. Separate adult provision reflects the college's commitment to meeting community needs. The college has good and productive links with schools and community organisations. Student support and guidance are good. There is comprehensive pre-course information, advice and guidance. Attendance is systematically monitored. All students participate in an extensive enrichment programme. There are inconsistencies in tutorial provision.
8. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A well qualified teaching staff and good resources enhance student achievement. Curriculum management is generally good. A systematic lesson observation system feeds well into professional development. However, there is too much variability in the quality of the student experience both at subject level and within support and guidance services. Data is not used systematically to identify how well learners' needs are being met or offer an overview of college provision and services.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

9. The college demonstrates satisfactory capacity to improve the provision for students. Recent improvements to quality assurance have included the introduction of a more systematic teaching observation programme. Quality assurance procedures have not been used effectively to tackle weaknesses in some cross-college areas and in a small minority of subject areas. Self-assessment has become more rigorous and self critical. However, there

remains some variability in this, both in subjects and cross-college areas. Self-assessment of both leadership and management, and support and guidance remain underdeveloped.

The effectiveness of the steps taken by the college to promote improvement since the last inspection

10. The college has made some good progress in addressing the areas for improvement noted at the last inspection. Curriculum area management structures have improved. A more thorough lesson observation system feeds well into professional development. There is also better sharing of good practice between subject areas and this has enabled improved levels of challenge and differentiation in teaching and learning. Feedback and marking is more constructive and thorough.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- Good pass rates on most courses
- Much good and stimulating teaching
- Good range of courses which are responsive to local needs
- Extensive enrichment programmes
- Effective use of resources which promote teaching and learning
- Effective lesson observation system that informs professional development

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- Low value added and low pass rates in a minority of GCE AS and A-level subjects
- Lack of rigour in the arrangements to identify additional learning needs
- Insufficiently detailed learning plans to enable pastoral tutors to monitor individual progress
- Too much variation in the quality of students' tutorial experience
- Insufficient monitoring of some areas of the college's work

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Good: Grade 2

11. The achievements of learners are good. Pass rates at GCE A-level in 2005 are very good at 98%. GCE AS pass rates at 88% were slightly above the national average. There has been a significant year-on-year improvement in the success rate for key skills qualification at level 2. There are high pass rates for re-sit students on GCSE mathematics programmes. Retention rates remain at or just above the national average across all levels. However, there was poor retention on AVCE courses in 2005 which dropped to 69%. Success, pass and retention rates for adults are generally very good and were significantly above national averages in 2004/05. A minority of subjects continue to have low pass rates and a low profile of higher grades. In 2004/05 males performed as well as females on level 3 courses.
12. A number of courses demonstrate both high value added and high pass rates. These include English literature AS-level, and chemistry, psychology and religious studies A-level. Internal value added calculations in 2005 indicate that most students achieve the grade expected based on their GCSE results. A significant minority of subjects have low value added and these include art, English language, German and French at AS-level, biology, drama, theatre studies and sociology at A-level.
13. The standard of students' written work is generally good. However, learners' oral competencies are not sufficiently developed in lessons, an issue which is recognised in the college self-assessment. Punctuality and attendance are good with attendance above the national average for sixth form colleges. In 2004/05, 61% of level 3 students progressed to higher education with a further 13% choosing to opt for a gap year. A significant number of college students who progress to university are from families with no tradition of progression to higher education.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

14. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The college's self-assessment and observation reports accurately identify significant strengths. Most lessons are characterised by the use of teachers' good subject knowledge to interest and involve learners; the successful planning and structuring of lessons of varying lengths; and the use of high quality resources, including handouts and information technology (IT). Teachers have clear and realistic objectives for their lessons and take into account the different abilities, needs and learning styles of learners.

15. Learners respond well to much lively and stimulating teaching. These strengths reflect the college's recent focus, through professional development sessions, on active approaches to learning. The better lessons were distinguished by their use of pace, the enthusiastic participation by students and excellent use of a variety of resources. For example, in a sign language lesson on travel and food, learners energetically and with dexterity, demonstrated their newly acquired skills in describing recent travels and gastronomic experiences.
16. In a minority of the lessons observed, learners' answers to questions were too readily accepted by teachers. There were too few opportunities for learners to reflect on their work and take some responsibility for improving their knowledge, understanding and skills. The college has also identified the need for teachers to end their lessons with a review of the progress made.
17. Initial diagnostic assessment lacks a coherent approach. The college relies too heavily on information from schools, GCSE results and writing tasks set by subject specialists at the beginning of the year. While this information is useful, it does not provide college managers with an overview of learners' needs, nor does it help in matching them to key skills provision. Use of learning support is low.
18. Teachers mark learners' work accurately and constructively, providing valuable guidance on ways in which they might improve performance. Learners' progress is noted systematically on tracking and recording forms and there are sound moderating and standardising procedures. In most subjects, learners are encouraged to assess their own work and set targets, which are agreed with their teachers. Data on learners' progress is stored electronically and used effectively each half term, when learners' target grades are reviewed by subject teachers.
19. The library and resource centre is adequately stocked to support the college's courses and its study and computing facilities are used well by learners during the college day. However, the number of books borrowed to support learning at home is low.
20. The college's self-assessment report accurately describes the range of provision as good. The current range of courses reflects well the college's aim to raise young people's aspirations, widen participation and meet the needs of the 16 to 18 age group. There is a good range of GCE advanced level courses and in recent years the introduction of a small number of applied or vocational subjects.
21. The college's approach to social and educational inclusion is good. It has offered more level 2 courses and it successfully provides for learners who may need a three year route to level 3. A significant and growing number of learners combine applied or vocational and traditional academic subjects. The college makes good provision for adult learners through its lifelong learning

- programme. Courses in languages, art, IT and sign language are available during the daytime, in the evening and on Saturdays.
22. There are good links with local secondary schools, including the successful sharing of the teaching of applied science GCSE. The extensive and excellent enrichment programme is popular with learners. In addition, many learners gain useful experience and skills from their participation in voluntary work, the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, sports and work experience.
 23. The self-assessment report accurately identifies the need to engage more with local employers. There are adequate procedures for child protection and to ensure the safety and progress of learners on site.
 24. Support and guidance are good. College publicity materials are innovative, attractive and informative. College induction helps learners to settle quickly into college life and the number of students who have transferred from or left their course in the induction period has significantly reduced in the last two years. Attendance is good and arrangements to monitor and improve it are systematic and effective. The counselling service is popular and the hours available are being increased. A sexual health counsellor now contributes to this service. There is a strong focus on healthy lifestyles.
 25. All 16 to 18 learners have a pastoral tutor with whom they follow a structured tutorial programme. All students participate in an extensive CV+ programme which students value. Many continue with it into their second year. However, the tutorial experience of students is inconsistent. The college self-assessment report correctly identifies that quality assurance of tutorials needs to be improved. Subject tutors agree progress statements with learners on a half-termly basis and pastoral tutors review progress each term with their tutees. There are no individual learning plans and the action plans which students have are insufficiently detailed to enable close monitoring of their overall progress by their pastoral tutors.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

26. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Curriculum management is generally good and the adult provision is particularly well managed. Senior managers, however, are not systematically monitoring and evaluating the work of a number of areas of the college. Some senior managers who are new to their role are given regular support by the principal but they have received little or no management training to help them adapt to working at a more strategic level. Staff are well informed about operational issues but some teachers are less clear about the strategic priorities of the college.
27. Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory and success rates improved in 2005 on the majority of courses. There are effective arrangements to facilitate the sharing of good practice between teachers but there remain wide variations in quality between tutorial groups and different subject areas. Not

- all subject self-assessment reports are sufficiently rigorous and some action plans have targets which are not sufficiently clear.
28. Accurate learner achievement data is available on-line for staff and the reports are well used. The college does not make sufficient use of other management information and data, however, to monitor and evaluate performance. In some areas the information has not been collected, in others, the systems are not capable of producing the necessary reports.
29. Most accommodation is well maintained and learning resources are good. Teaching staff are well qualified in their subjects and almost all have a teaching qualification or are in training to acquire one. Staff appraisal is comprehensive and includes a review of lesson observations, training needs and performance against targets.
30. The college's response to the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 has been satisfactory. Access for those with physical disabilities is good and the college site is a safe environment for learners and staff. There is an appropriate child protection policy and all permanent staff, apart from cleaners, are subject to enhanced criminal record bureau (CRB) checks. Supply teachers are also checked through CRB.
31. The college has a committed governing body with a good range of relevant skills and experience. Clerking arrangements are effective and governors receive regular and appropriate reports. Governors have a good understanding of the key strengths and weaknesses of the college but recognise the need to become more involved in the strategic planning process. They have completed a skills analysis but have been slow to take up the resulting training that has been offered. Financial management and control are satisfactory but the college's financial position is weak. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2001/02 to 2003/04, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Table S-1: College success rate for level 1 long qualifications by qualification type, expected end year and age

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	01/02	44	89	60	29	46	89	51	38
	02/03	20	100	60	40	94	87	55	32
	03/04	41	56	67	-10	78	74	57	17
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	0		69		0			
	02/03	0		66		0			
	03/04	0		70		0			
NVQs	01/02	0				0			
	02/03	0				0			
	03/04	0				0			
Other	01/02	44	89	58	30	46	89	52	38
	02/03	20	100	59	41	94	87	55	32
	03/04	41	56	66	-10	78	74	58	17

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream Level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2001/02 to 2003/04, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Table S-2: College success rate for level 2 long qualifications by qualification type, expected end year and age

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
2 Long	01/02	234	78	67	11	92	46	50	-4
	02/03	243	82	70	13	54	76	52	24
	03/04	250	80	74	6	39	54	55	-1
GCSEs	01/02	172	78	72	5	3	100	56	
	02/03	177	84	74	10	3	67	58	
	03/04	193	80	77	3	0		62	
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	38	79	67	12	0			
	02/03	33	73	68	5	1	0		
	03/04	57	81	73	8	1	100		
NVQs	01/02	0		53		0		50	
	02/03	0		61		0		54	
	03/04	0		61		0		58	
Other	01/02	24	79	49	30	89	44	48	-4
	02/03	33	82	58	24	50	78	49	29
	03/04	0		68		38	53	52	1

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2001/02 to 2003/04, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Table S-3: College success rate for level 3 long qualifications by qualification type, expected end year and age

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
3 Long	01/02	3,372	78	78	0	41	68	52	16
	02/03	2,778	81	79	2	43	72	57	15
	03/04	3,302	78	80	-3	52	69	56	13
A/A2 levels	01/02	1,009	91	88	4	8	75	70	5
	02/03	1,051	90	89	1	19	84	73	12
	03/04	1,211	87	91	-5	17	100	75	25
AS levels	01/02	2,293	73	74	-2	13	85	50	35
	02/03	1,622	79	75	4	18	72	55	17
	03/04	1,992	73	76	-2	28	68	52	15
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	68	50	54	-4	0			
	02/03	67	40	63	-23	6	33		
	03/04	80	65	68	-3	0			
NVQs	01/02	0				0		48	
	02-03	0				0		46	
	03/04	0				0		48	
Other	01/02	2	50	44		20	55	49	6
	02/03	38	8	63	-55	0		55	
	03/04	19	0	63	-63	7	0	52	-52