

Selby College

Inspection report

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Background information

Inspection judgements

Grading

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

The descriptors for the four grades are:

- *grade 1 – outstanding*
- *grade 2 – good*
- *grade 3 – satisfactory*
- *grade 4 – inadequate*

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body; and where appropriate the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits or quality monitoring inspection; and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:

- overall effectiveness of the organisation and its capacity to improve further
- achievement and standards
- quality of provision
- leadership and management.

Provision at the 1811 learndirect centre in Selby was also assessed.

Description of the provider

1. Selby College is a general further education (GFE) college and the main provider of post-16 education and training in the Selby area. In addition to the main site just to the south-east of the town the college operates from three other centres, in Selby, York and Tadcaster. The college draws most full-time students from eight secondary schools from Selby and parts of the East Riding, two of which have sixth forms. There are two sixth form colleges and two general FE colleges within travelling distance. Adults are drawn from a wide geographical area including the East Riding and South Yorkshire.
2. The most recent census data show that Selby district has a population of 76,500 of whom 99.3% are white, 16% have a limiting long-term illness/disability and 10% provide unpaid care. The area is mainly rural and has been greatly affected by the closure of the coal mining pits. Income in many families is low. Schools in Selby achieved between 32% and 57% five A* to C grades including English and mathematics at GCSE against a county average of 53.5% in 2006.
3. Recruitment has risen from 803 full-time students in 2001/02 to 1018 in 2007/08, a rise of 27%. Education and training opportunities range from entry to higher education and from 14-year-olds to adults and include work-based, distance and e-learning. Most adults are enrolled at level 2. Significant numbers of learners aged 16-18 are recruited to all three levels with the largest number studying at level 3. More female learners are recruited than male.
4. The college offers provision in all sector subject areas, the largest being health, public services and care. It holds several national quality service standards, is an Investor in People (IiP), and a Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) in information and communication technology (ICT) for business and the rural community.
5. The college's vision is 'to be the college of first choice for individuals and organisations within the area we serve, as one of England's top performing colleges'. Its mission is 'to be a Centre of Excellence in the provision of education and training by ensuring access to learning for all through quality and innovation'.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Capacity to improve	Outstanding: Grade 1
Achievement and standards	Outstanding: Grade 1
Quality of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding: Grade 1
<i>Equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Good: contributory grade 2</i>

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

6. The effectiveness of provision is outstanding. There is a strong focus on ensuring the needs of all learners are met so that they have an enjoyable and successful experience at college. Achievement and standards are outstanding. Success rates for learners aged 16-18 are consistently high. Success rates for adults have improved markedly over the three years to 2005/06 and are now very high. For learners aged 14-16, success rates are also very high. In a few areas of provision, such as apprenticeship frameworks and learndirect, success rates are satisfactory but improving. Progression rates to higher levels of study and employment are high. On advanced level programmes the majority of learners make at least the progress expected of them.
7. The quality of provision is outstanding. Teaching and learning are excellent, ensuring learners make outstanding progress in developing their knowledge and skills and produce high standards of work. Lessons are well planned and there are high levels of challenge. The college has a clear view of the quality of teaching and learning. Provision to meet the needs and interests of learners is outstanding. The curriculum offer is extensive and diverse. The curriculum contains clearly identified pathways which help promote progression. Employer engagement is excellent. Effective partnerships with other training providers have resulted in a cohesive part-time programme. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is outstanding.
8. Support, information and guidance for learners are exemplary. Information, advice and guidance services are coherent and initial and diagnostic assessment are systematic and robust. Many learners, particularly those with additional learning needs or disabilities, exceed their expectations as a result of the support provided. The college has excellent strategies to involve learners in the decision making process.
9. Leadership and management are outstanding. The college has established effective strategies to improve provision and quality assurance systems are comprehensive and robust. The promotion of equality of opportunity is very good; however further work is needed to promote awareness of different cultures among learners. Governance is outstanding, resources are very good; staff are highly motivated and communication is excellent.

Capacity to improve

Outstanding: Grade 1

10. The college's capacity to improve is outstanding. The principal and senior managers provide a clear strategic direction for the college which has been instrumental in bringing about significant improvements in success rates. Governors provide very good oversight of the quality of provision and accommodation developments. All staff are very focused on the needs of

learners. Middle managers respond well to their delegated duties and are empowered to make decisions.

11. Quality assurance processes and improvement arrangements are very good. All staff are involved effectively in self-assessment and the self-assessment report is accurate. Quality improvement plans are monitored regularly. Senior managers provide close support and scrutiny to improve areas identified as performing below the college's very high standards.

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

12. The college has made outstanding progress in most of the areas identified as needing improvement at the last inspection. The range of curriculum provision has improved to meet local priorities. The college has expanded its literacy and numeracy provision. It has improved its accommodation and provides a welcoming and safe learning environment. Middle management restructuring and training have had a very positive impact on raising the high standards at the college.

Key strengths

- very high success rates
- excellent standards of work
- outstanding teaching and learning
- responsive and wide ranging provision
- strong involvement of learners in college decision making
- exemplary advice, guidance and support
- excellent leadership and management
- outstanding governance
- highly effective quality improvement strategies
- high standards of learner experience.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- success rates on apprenticeship and learndirect courses
- learners' progress on a small minority of A-level courses
- the promotion of cultural awareness among learners.

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Outstanding: Grade 1

13. Inspectors agree with the college view that achievement and standards are outstanding. In 2005/06, success rates for both learners aged 16-18 and adults were high. The overall success rates at levels 1, 2 and 3 and for all short courses placed the college in the top 10% of colleges nationally. For learners aged 16-18 success rates at all levels are well above national rates and have been so for the last 3 years. For adults, overall long course success rates have improved more than 30% from 2003/04 to 2005/06 and are now within the top 10% of colleges nationally. College data for 2006/07 show that these high levels have been maintained for both age groups and, at some levels, have improved. Retention and pass rates are high.
14. Many learners aged 14-16 study at the college. These students achieve high success rates. Train to Gain success rates are high. Overall, apprenticeship framework success rates are satisfactory and have improved to be broadly in line with national rates, however timely success rates are low. Advanced apprenticeship overall success rates, and timely success rates, are high. In the college's small learndirect provision success rates are improving and are satisfactory overall, although they are low on ICT courses. Key skills success rates have improved to above the national rate.
15. The college analyses information relating to achievement and standards thoroughly, showing that there are no differences in the performance of different groups of learners. Progression rates into higher levels of study and employment are high. At advanced level the majority of learners make at least the progress expected of them based on their prior attainment at GCSE and many make very good progress. In a small proportion of subjects expected grade outcomes are not met. Overall, the college is highly effective in supporting learners in progression on their chosen career pathway.
16. Learners thoroughly enjoy their studies and their behaviour is excellent. They are confident, enthusiastic and highly motivated. They produce work of a very high standard, use complex terminology effectively and develop a good understanding of abstract concepts. They make excellent progress in their lessons and develop high levels of skills. Attendance is monitored closely and levels of attendance are high in all programme areas. Individuals who have problems with attendance are identified quickly and issues are dealt with supportively and effectively.

Quality of provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

17. The quality of provision and teaching and learning are outstanding. Lessons are very well planned and contain an excellent range of stimulating methods and activities to meet the different needs of learners successfully. Learners are enthusiastic about their courses, thoroughly enjoy their lessons and make excellent progress. The excellent resources in many areas, such as

hair and beauty, and creative arts, support high levels of practical skill development well. In a few classrooms some group learning activities are constrained by the size of the room. Teachers use praise and encouragement well, while providing very good levels of challenge. Learners respond particularly well. Teachers display good levels of knowledge, give clear explanations and use questioning effectively to check learners' understanding and extend their knowledge. The teaching of key skills is integrated into most vocational areas and is being extended to the rest. It is supplemented by well attended discrete key skills lessons. Information and learning technologies are used well. Tutorials make use of a good range of activities and are well organised. Work-based learners are given good coaching and support but do not have access to separate tutorials. Teaching and learning in learndirect provision is satisfactory and improving.

18. A very thorough system of lesson observations is in place which supports the accurate evaluation of teaching and learning in the self-assessment report. The moderation processes for observations are excellent and include joint work with other colleges and specialist consultants. Subject learning coaches work well with staff to help them improve. Sharing of good practice arising from lesson observations is very effective. Joint observations carried out by inspectors and members of the college's internal observation team showed very close agreement.
19. Assessment strategies are very good. Internal verification is well planned. Teachers mark work promptly. Extra sessions are provided for learners where assessments show gaps in knowledge. Learners know how well they are doing and receive clear guidance on what they need to do to improve. However, progress review reports do not always contain targets which are sufficiently clear. The organisation of key skills and the teaching of technical certificates in work-based learning is good and improving.
20. The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners and employers is outstanding. Curriculum planning takes close account of strategic reviews, regional and local market information, employer and learner evaluations and requests. The extensive curriculum offered to 14-16 year olds covers nine sector subject areas. Responding to the needs of an increased migrant workforce the college has extended the English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) provision, providing some programmes in the work place. Collaborative working with other providers is excellent. It includes the sharing of staff expertise to extend and enhance provision. Employer engagement is excellent. The college is very responsive to the needs of employers providing, for example, distance and on-line learning, apprenticeships, Train to Gain and employer specific programmes. Employers are positive about the improved skills of their learners and the flexibility of college staff.
21. The college values learners' opinions and has excellent strategies to act on their views. Termly liaison meetings involve senior management, the student union and governors. Learner focus groups meet twice each term. The principal meets with learners weekly and learners are represented at many

meetings, including those of the governing body and equal opportunity committee, and also at senior management recruitment interviews.

22. A diverse and highly appropriate enrichment programme is planned effectively to extend learners' occupational skills, promote healthy lifestyles and reflect learners' personal preferences. Learners' involvement in the community is encouraged. Relevant additional qualifications are linked to all full-time programmes. Learners benefit from appropriate trips and residential experiences. Enrichment information for remote learners is limited. The college recognises and celebrates achievements of all its learners through a 'student of the month' award and a high profile awards ceremony at Selby Abbey.
23. Support, information and guidance for learners are outstanding. The college has a coherent information, advice and guidance service. Contacts with local schools are excellent and include interviewing applicants on school premises. Applicants with self-disclosed additional learning needs receive additional individual guidance interviews where specialist tutors agree relevant support plans. Remote learners value the frequent email contact with assessors.
24. Initial and diagnostic assessments are systematic and robust. Learners have frequent contact with their support tutors and value the support they receive. Apprentices receive excellent support from assessors who arrange specialist support promptly when required. Pastoral support is highly effective and forms part of a well conceived tutorial system. Guidance and support tutors provide excellent individual support, acting as critical friends as they monitor each learner's progress. Learners are highly complimentary of the advice and support they receive. Parents and guardians receive detailed progress and attainment information.

Leadership and management

Outstanding: Grade 1

Equality of opportunity

Good: grade 2

25. Leadership and management are outstanding. The principal, ably supported by senior managers and governors, sets a clear strategic direction for the college. Staff are highly motivated and committed to the college's mission and values. An open and self critical culture has enabled the college to respond to challenges and significantly improve the quality of its provision and success rates. Since the last inspection middle management arrangements have been restructured, improving accountability. Middle managers are appropriately empowered to carry out their roles. The management of work-based learning and learndirect provision has improved greatly, impacting positively on learners' experiences. A rigorous system of curriculum reviews is in place. Ambitious yet realistic targets on retention, attendance, and pass rates are set and mostly achieved. The college identifies areas where performance is not at the highest standard, and support and monitoring lead to improvements.

26. Communication is excellent. Staff at all levels are regularly consulted. The opinions of students and other stakeholders are a key aspect of quality assurance. All feel they have good opportunities to influence management decisions. The college's links with local schools and employers are very good and have helped the college develop a broad and relevant curriculum. Quality assurance systems are comprehensive and robust. Management data is accurate and available in an easy to use format and is used well to monitor progress and inform decision making. Self-assessment is accurate. The outcomes from the lesson observation process are closely linked to staff appraisal, inform professional development and enable staff to share good practice. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection.
27. The promotion of equality of opportunity is very good. The college provides courses for the recent increase in Eastern Europeans in the local area. Several initiatives have been successful in promoting the participation of males and females in non-traditional vocational areas. The college has responded well to legislative requirements regarding race relations and disability. Students learn about aspects of equality of opportunity through the tutorial programme, although there is insufficient attention given to promoting cultural awareness.
28. Resources to support learning are very good. Teachers are well qualified. Appropriate checks are in place to meet safeguarding requirements. The accommodation provides a safe and welcoming learning environment. Plans are in place to make further improvements. Governance is outstanding. Governors have a broad range of appropriate expertise. They are involved appropriately in validating the self assessment report. They are supplied with a good range of data in an accessible format and use it to ask challenging questions of college managers. Financial management is very strong. The college provides outstanding value for money.

Learner's achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age 2005 to 2007, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	16-18					19+			
	Exp End Year	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	04-05	271	69	65	4	464	58	62	-4
	05-06	272	83	69	14	409	77	65	12
	06-07	228	80			144	81		
GNVQs	04-05	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	05-06	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	06-07	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
NVQs	04-05	9	44	68	-24	38	74	66	8
	05-06	17	94	72	22	95	98	74	24
	06-07	22	91			24	88		
Other	04-05	262	70	64	6	426	57	62	-5
	05-06	255	82	69	13	314	70	65	5
	06-07	206	79			120	80		

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age 2005 to 2007, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	16-18					19+			
	Exp End Year	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
2 Long	04-05	628	63	61	2	1121	59	60	-1
	05-06	787	79	66	13	1513	82	66	16
	06-07	710	80			928	87		
GCSEs	04-05	92	74	64	10	56	70	63	7
	05-06	135	84	68	16	34	91	67	24
	06-07	199	77			25	92		
GNVQs	04-05	28	71	67	4	...	...	...	...
	05-06	15	87	69	18	...	...	...	...
	06-07	11	91			...	...
NVQs	04-05	103	52	57	-5	353	79	60	19
	05-06	154	71	65	6	740	86	67	19
	06-07	81	72			495	93		
Other	04-05	405	62	61	1	712	49	59	-10
	05-06	483	81	66	15	739	79	65	14
	06-07	419	83			408	80		

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age 2005 to 2007, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
3 Long	04-05	1181	80	68	12	373	65	58	7
	05-06	1401	84	70	14	354	82	63	19
	06-07	1502	85			342	77		
A/A2 Levels	04-05	262	95	86	9	4	25	69	-44
	05-06	311	96	87	9	11	91	72	19
	06-07	353	97			15	87		
AS Levels	04-05	601	77	66	11	13	85	52	33
	05-06	706	80	67	13	32	72	55	17
	06-07	700	80			9	67		
GNVQs	04-05	101	85	61	24	1	100	54	46
	05-06	42	79	66	13	...	...	...	...
	06-07	...	...	...		...	...	...
NVQs	04-05	21	81	63	18	169	73	56	17
	05-06	32	81	71	10	133	86	63	23
	06-07	15	80			46	72		
Other	04-05	196	67	60	7	186	56	59	-3
	05-06	310	80	65	15	178	79	64	15
	06-07	434	82			272	78		

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes managed by the Selby College 2005 to 2007

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/college NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider/college framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	11	27	48	27	34
		timely	10	20	31	20	21
	05-06	overall	26	85	54	85	44
		timely	26	73	34	73	27
	*** 06-07	overall	9	78	64	78	56
		timely	8	63	45	63	34
Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	34	47	50	47	38
		timely	47	32	29	30	22
	05-06	overall	49	59	58	43	53
		timely	43	37	38	37	33
	*** 06-07	overall	65	68	65	65	60
		timely	64	47	45	45	42

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

*** LSC data for 2006-07 has yet to be validated

Table 5

Success rates on work-based learning 'Train to Gain' programmes managed by the Selby College 2006 to 2007

Total Number of Starters - 221

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/college NVQ rate**
Train to Gain ***	05/06	overall		
		timely		
	06/07	overall	209	94%
		timely	188	85%

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

*** Includes 'Train to Gain' long course NVQ provision, but not 'Skills for Life'