

Havering Sixth Form College

Sixth Form College

Inspection dates		12–15 February 2013
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Requires improvement-3
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- Outcomes for students at AS level are poor.
- Teachers do not focus enough on students' learning in lessons and, as a result, too few lessons meet the full range of students' individual learning needs.
- Feedback and target setting for students are insufficiently detailed.
- Leaders, managers and governors do not have sufficient impact on raising the quality of provision.

This provider has the following strengths:

- Many students progress to higher education and employment.
- Good support and guidance help students to develop confidence and independence.
- Effective procedures for safeguarding students are in place.
- The college has a well-developed culture of respect and dignity.
- Strong partnerships with local schools and colleges provide a broad and balanced curriculum and relevant progression opportunities for students.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that teachers always plan appropriate activities that focus on students' learning and progress in order to improve students' achievements especially at AS level.
- Ensure that best practice is shared and embedded more widely by focusing staff development more sharply on those areas and teachers most in need of improvement.
- Improve the promotion of equality and diversity, numeracy and employability skills in lessons.
- Increase the skills and effectiveness of leaders and managers so that improvements are achieved more quickly and clear links are established between the quality improvement plan and curriculum management.
- Review and improve the range of qualitative and quantitative information available to managers and governors to enable them to track and monitor quality improvements more rigorously.
- Ensure that governors pay sufficient attention to tracking and monitoring progress against quality improvement plans in order to challenge managers more effectively.
- Implement fully the proposed developments to accommodation and teaching resources and improve the consistency and quality of displays around the college.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Outcomes for students require improvement. The proportion of students successfully completing their courses in 2011/12 declined slightly and was just below national averages for all colleges. Success rates for students on AS courses were below national averages. Those for A level courses and students taking foundation and intermediate programmes were broadly satisfactory. ■ Most students complete their courses and, in 2012, the number of students completing their courses improved to around national average for similar colleges. In-year college data show that retention has improved slightly in the current academic year. Students' attendance and punctuality are generally satisfactory and there is little persistent lateness to lessons. ■ Students' pass rates at A level were broadly at the national averages in 2012 and 35 of the 61 subjects had 100% pass rates. Pass rates on AS courses were inadequate and 24 of the 55 subjects had pass rates below national averages. Attainments for students on vocational programmes were at or above national averages. ■ In 2012, students' A* to C grade pass rates for GCSE mathematics and English were around the low national averages. Students' attainments in functional skills mathematics and English were better, but not significantly above national averages. However, pass rates for adult numeracy qualifications were good. ■ Students from some minority ethnic heritages did not achieve as well as the rest of the student body in 2012. Teachers and managers have put in place strategies to support these students. There are some indications of improved performance, but is too soon to judge the full impact. ■ The attainment of male students is slightly lower than that of female students. Students who receive additional learning support and those who identify themselves as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities show attainments at or above that of the rest of the student body. 	

- Each year, a high proportion of students on intermediate programmes progresses on to the wide range of advanced courses. In addition, many students successfully progress from AS courses to A-level programmes.
- The progress made by students, as demonstrated by added value measures, is satisfactory, but declined in 2011/12. Students taking A-level and AS programmes achieved outcomes around those predicted from their prior attainment. Those on vocational programmes make better progress and achieve at or above that predicted from prior attainment.
- A high proportion of students on advanced courses go on to higher education and into employment. A high proportion of students, especially those from Black and minority ethnic heritages, progress to prestigious universities each year. Staff work hard to encourage students from relatively deprived backgrounds and those who need specific support for learning, to take part in nationally organised activities aimed at raising aspirations and providing challenging work placements.
- Students successfully develop personal skills by taking part in a wide range of social, recreational and competitive sports activities. In addition, the students' representative body is active and many students take part in raising money for national charities each year. Students work safely in laboratories, workshops and studios.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
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- In many lessons experienced and well-qualified teachers plan learning well. Students enjoy their studies and work conscientiously in class. However, too many learning activities are aimed at the whole class and do not take into account the full range of students' needs. While teachers successfully enable most students to work hard and achieve satisfactory standards, students are not always encouraged and challenged to achieve beyond this.
- In the best lessons, students are enthused and inspired to learn. For example, in a computing lesson, high expectations, coupled with differentiated levels of support, led to impressive levels of achievement. Students in a philosophy lesson engaged in high level debate, drawing on a good understanding of different philosophical positions. Students made good progress in an A-level mathematics lesson and an AS history lesson because the tasks were effectively differentiated and individualised according to their progress and ability.
- The quality of assessment varies across the college and students' learning is not consistently checked in a minority of lessons. Where assessment is highly effective, assignments and tests are regularly set and marked; students routinely take part in peer and self-assessment, and teachers track and monitor students' progress rigorously. However, in a minority of courses, assessments lack rigour and do not support students in making the progress they should.
- All students receive initial assessment of additional learning needs on entry to the college. Close communication with partner schools ensures that students make a smooth transition to the college. The results of initial assessments are not consistently used by all curriculum teams to inform students' choices or learning support needs. However, a number of curriculum teams conduct diagnostic assessments and use the results to provide their students with additional workshop support.
- The quality and usefulness of students' targets are inconsistent. In the best courses, students are confident that their targets are challenging and realistic. However, in a minority of others, students do not know their current grades and targets, or how to improve further. An electronic action planning system is currently being developed and piloted, but it is too soon to judge its impact on target setting.
- Students benefit from, and value, a comprehensive range of additional help including specialist learning support, counsellors, learning mentors and subject facilitators. In addition, a care team

provides further confidential support and students speak positively about the impact both on their success and their emotional well-being.

- In order to bring greater cohesion and careers focus to pastoral arrangements, tutor groups with a specific subject or interest focus have been piloted this year. Students in the groups with a medical or Oxbridge focus find these arrangements helpful. However, it is too soon to measure the full impact of this initiative. Support for university applications is good, although opportunities for students to develop employability skills are too limited.
- Monitoring of at risk students has been improved, and pastoral staff are now routinely alerted to causes for concern so that appropriate interventions can be put in place. Teachers and personal tutors follow up absences more rigorously; interventions and support for students are given high priority and early indications are that attendance has improved.
- Students make good use of the college virtual learning environment (VLE) across most subject areas. A student website in English language and literature and blogs in art are amongst a number of innovative ways in which electronic media are used to capture students' interest. However, the VLE is much less developed in a minority of subjects.
- The college has recently revised its enrichment programme and offers a wide range of opportunities to students. These include competitive and recreational sporting activities, book clubs, music groups and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. It also includes charity and community work. Opportunities to develop literacy skills are well developed in lessons, although the development of numeracy skills is inconsistent.
- A culture of respect and tolerance is obvious throughout the college. Equality and diversity are well promoted in the best lessons, although not consistently so across the whole college. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to explore equality issues or to respond spontaneously to matters that arise in class.

<p>Visual and performing arts</p> <p>16-18 learning programmes</p>	<p>Requires improvement</p>
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- Teaching, learning and assessment in visual and performing arts require improvement. Students' attainments are broadly satisfactory, but many students do not achieve the grades expected based on their qualifications on entry. This is due in part to the lack of course planning necessary to prepare students effectively for their qualifications.
- The standard of students' work is satisfactory. A minority of students' work across the whole subject area lacks creative development and higher-level analysis to support those aiming for the highest grades. In art and design, students' sketchbooks show research and experimentation leading to successful outcomes.
- Performing arts students successfully direct their own warm-up routines to good effect. Media students produce interesting videos and develop good technical skills. Dance students demonstrate good professional practice mastering a range of different techniques.
- Students value the ethos of mutual respect and support evident in all their lessons. Although the teachers are well qualified, some lack the necessary skills and confidence to structure students' learning effectively. Recognising this, teachers have recently implemented well considered strategies for improvement. For example, teachers are now helping students to make stronger connections between musical theory and the practical aspects of mastering technique. Art and design teachers have changed schemes of work to spend more time helping students to understand and meet awarding body criteria.

- In the best lessons, students work cooperatively to develop and extend their ideas. In art and design, teachers stimulate learning by exciting curiosity and imagination. In graphics, a contentious video of artists’ work aroused productive debate and spurred students’ interest to explore the issues for themselves. In three dimensions, students make highly individual products for clients and demonstrate great pride in their work.
- However, many lessons are only satisfactory because teachers do not sufficiently challenge students’ learning. Progress is sometimes pedestrian and the students lose interest. Teachers do not always check that students have grasped concepts before moving on to other topics.
- All students are set target grades for achievement based on their GCSE score on entry and students and parents are regularly informed of their progress. Teachers maintain ‘blogs’ rich in resources and provide prompt feedback to electronic queries received from the students. However, written feedback on standards and progress is inconsistent, lacks detail and some students hold unrealistic expectations about their progress.
- Students are now routinely interviewed before entry by visual and performing arts staff in order to ensure that they are recruited to the right courses. Students enjoy a range of trips and creative industry assignments which broaden their horizons. For example, students in three dimensions were commissioned to design and build a high specification aircraft fuselage to train aircrew students.
- Most teachers effectively integrate numeracy and literacy skills into lessons. However, whilst relevant terminology is explored well, not all students develop appropriate written skills. Students in fashion and textiles develop good measuring, scaling and numerical skills. Many studios and classrooms fail to reflect a professional working environment, lacking visual stimulation and pride in their appearance.
- Teachers do not sufficiently exploit opportunities to widen students’ understanding of equality and diversity. However, in film studies, the teachers effectively extended students’ social and political understanding by exploring contrasting viewpoints represented in the media.

English and modern foreign languages	
16-18 learning programmes	Requires improvement

- Teaching and learning require improvement, which broadly reflects the variation in students’ achievements. Standards of students’ work and progress are good in modern foreign languages. While success rates in English are at national averages, the students do not always make the progress expected of them from their prior attainment.
- Teachers are well prepared and make sure that the students understand clearly the objectives of the lessons. The pace of lessons is brisk, learning is regularly reinforced and the students are busy and interested. Modern foreign language students develop good listening and speaking skills as the teachers conduct the lessons almost entirely in the target languages. In the best English lessons, students very quickly grasp difficult concepts. For example, in GCSE English, students used complex linguistic terminology when exploring a contemporary poem about Medusa.
- In the less effective lessons, energy levels are low, the students all work at the same pace and learning is not consistently checked. In these sessions, schemes of work and lesson plans are sketchy, fail to plan for the individual and teachers tend to check students’ completion of tasks rather than their learning.

- Support for students is good and builds confidence. Initial assessment in modern foreign languages courses identifies students who require additional support and students speak positively about the additional language classes. Speakers of other languages attend conversation classes which encourage them to think conceptually in their mother tongue. For example, a student from Ecuador was challenged to compare English and Ecuadorian health services. In English, students value one-to-one support from their teachers.
- Teacher use peer- and self-assessment very well to develop students' critical thinking skills and to encourage the students to aim higher. In the less effective lessons, students are not clear about their progress or what they need to do to improve. The quality of written feedback is inconsistent, ranging from useful assessment grids and comprehensive comments to less detailed, brief notes and single word comments.
- In the best lessons, students use mobile phones and online resources for research. Students in A-level language and literature accessed a 'student surfer' website and used Twitter to communicate with each other. Students studying A-level Spanish successfully prepared for a lesson by electronically posting ideas prior to the start of the session. However, in other courses, electronic media and information technologies are not used to engage students' interests and encourage students to incorporate them into their learning.
- Teachers work hard to develop students' English language skills through constant reinforcement in class and clear annotations on written work. Students wishing to progress to university receive good advice and guidance from their subject teachers. However, teachers do not put enough emphasis on developing employability skills for those students progressing to work.
- Teachers and students are courteous to each other and there is an ethos of respect and dignity in all lessons. However, teachers do not always exploit naturally occurring opportunities to discuss cultural diversity in lessons. Not all teachers feel confident to challenge and debate issues that arise.
- A strong culture of professionalism has been developed in the curriculum teams, coupled with a good understanding of the need to improve teaching and learning. Staff have enthusiastically implemented recent quality improvements, especially in focusing on students' learning and progress, but it is too early to judge whether these have been successful.

Social sciences and psychology

16-18 learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, which reflects the mixed picture of attainment in psychology, anthropology, sociology and citizenship courses. While much teaching is good, opportunities are not always exploited, in course materials or in discussions, to encourage students to achieve the highest grades.
- Most lessons are well planned and are taught with enthusiasm, pace and structure. Teachers respond well to students, carefully monitoring their learning and supporting those who are finding activities challenging. In all lessons, students were clear about what is required of them in terms of behaviour, disposition and endeavour and lessons move smoothly between different learning activities.
- With few exceptions, teachers do not focus on extending and challenging the understanding of all the students. In all subjects, teachers make use of pre-structured note-taking materials which enable students to keep good records of their work. However, the materials are rarely challenging, do not promote wider reading or help students to reflect deeply on the implications of what they have learned.

- Teachers structure theory lessons well and students usually make useful records of facts and ideas. However, a minority of theory lessons lack depth and attention to historical and social context, and students' understanding is not sufficiently developed. All subject teachers make additional reading materials available to students electronically, but the students do not always use them. In contrast, anthropology students enthusiastically seek out and read the extension texts.
- Teachers regularly and thoroughly assess students' progress in all subjects. They provide useful support to prepare students for assessment tasks, and, in the best cases, structured feedback leads to purposeful action planning. Where teachers use directed questions well, the students show good understanding of material covered in the lessons. However, in a significant minority of lessons, students struggled to recall and define key concepts and terminology.
- Teachers recognise and celebrate equality and diversity in their lessons. In GCSE sociology, students sensitively explored appropriate ways to use language in a discussion of the link between ethnicity and crime. In other lessons, students discussed how notions of abnormality vary from culture to culture, looked at how rites of passage create gender identities and discussed civil partnerships from a number of points of view.
- Managers are realistic about student achievement on those courses where student outcomes need to be improved. The recognition that students studying both health and social care and sociology often struggle to meet the competing demands of the courses has led to the creation of a dedicated class for these students. These students are now making better progress and report that they are very well supported.
- Learning resources and specialist equipment are satisfactory, but resources are not consistently allocated to support areas of greatest need. New course booklets and revised schemes of assessment in sociology are now in place and have been well received by students.

Business administration, economics and law

16-18 learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement, as do students' achievements on both advanced and vocational programmes. Teachers and managers have put in place well considered actions to improve students' attainment through closer tracking of their progress.
- Teachers monitor students' attendance and retention carefully in order to encourage them to achieve to their potential. Key messages displayed about the correlation between attendance and success rates are understood well by students and are reflected in high attendance in most subjects.
- The majority of lessons are planned well. Law teachers carefully plan activities to make sure that the students can recall key facts and concepts and have opportunities to apply them in new contexts and to solve relevant legal problems. Well-planned assessment calendars and schemes of work also ensure that students experience consistent standards and quality of expectations.
- Students develop good examination skills. In an accounts lesson, students used awarding body mark schemes successfully while marking each other's work. The teacher had skilfully matched students in pairs so that they were able to support each other to gain full marks.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers do not always plan activities that meet the needs of all the students. For example, the language register used in some written materials for intermediate business students is at too high a level for all to understand and respond appropriately. In a

number of lessons, students completing written tasks researching theories and their applications became bored and made only slow progress.

- Learning support staff offer effective guidance and support to students, especially in intermediate business programmes. Across this subject area, teachers regularly refer students who are falling behind, or not making enough progress, to additional subject support sessions. However, they do not always provide the same level of support for those aiming for the highest grades.
- Most students receive accurate and helpful initial guidance to make sure they are on the right courses. However, in the current academic year, a number of students started on AS business studies and transferred to BTEC vocational programmes.
- Students are well aware of the progress they are making and teachers and tutors help them to set appropriate, measurable targets for themselves. Those on BTEC business studies programmes successfully use the college intranet to track their progress in completing assignments. This has proved particularly useful to advanced business studies students when applying for higher education places.
- Teachers give students helpful verbal and written feedback. Students know how to improve and progress in their studies as the feedback they receive focuses directly on how to improve their analytical and evaluative skills. However, teachers do not routinely correct spelling and grammar errors.
- Teachers use information and learning technology well to promote equality and diversity. Images of Victorian thinkers skilfully introduced discussion of work values and helped students discuss changes to, and the development of, equality issues in the workplace. Customer service students successfully produced interesting promotional leaflets addressing the needs of disabled customers.
- Students on vocational programmes enjoy carefully planned visits to the law courts, accountancy firms and the Bank of England. The visits focused on employability and career aspirations, together with the application of classroom learning to the workplace. A-level students do not always benefit from the same range of interesting visits. In addition, not all students have the opportunity to undertake work experience placements where they can put their learning into context.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The number of students enrolled at the college over the past two years has increased, which has helped strengthen the financial position of the college. However, there has been a decline in the overall quality of provision during that period. Staff and students actively support the college values of honesty, responsibility and independence, but there has been insufficient emphasis from managers and governors on achieving the college mission to be the outstanding provider of full-time education for 16- to 19-year-olds in the area.
- Managers accurately assess that a significant proportion of provision across the college requires improvement. The grades in the college self-assessment report are broadly accurate and curriculum team reports identify most of the key areas that require improvement. However, priorities in the quality improvement plan do not always link with the curriculum action plans which makes it difficult for managers to track and monitor improvements. There are some early indications that improvements are beginning to take place.
- Strong and long-standing partnership arrangements between the schools and colleges across Havering help young people make informed choices about post-16 education and training. This partnership also ensures that the colleges provide a suitably coordinated curriculum across the borough.

- Most curriculum managers demonstrate a sound understanding of quality assurance and strategic and improvement priorities. They communicate effectively with their teams and manage operational matters well. However, a minority of managers are less successful in putting improvements in place.
- The quality and rigour of governance requires improvement. While governors help to ensure that the college remains financially secure, they pay insufficient attention to the overall quality of provision. The reports they receive do not enable them to monitor accurately the impact of quality improvement initiatives, achievements of students or quality of teaching and learning. While governors act as a critical friend to the executive team, they do not always probe and challenge proposed management strategies sufficiently.
- Staff performance management processes are effective. Managers recognise and reward high performance and tackle poor performance, utilising college policies and procedures. Senior managers analyse information from staff reviews to identify staff development priorities and arrange valuable staff development and support initiatives. They are, however, unable to confirm that colleagues most in need of staff development regularly attend these training activities.
- The college lesson observation scheme is valuable to teaching staff. It enables them to reflect on their practice, to share best practice, and develop appropriate strategies to improve the quality of teaching. Students have suitable opportunities to develop their English and speaking skills in lessons. However, they have fewer opportunities to develop mathematics and employability-related skills.
- The quality of accommodation and resources varies across the college. Some of the best accommodation enhances the learning experience, with good access to a very high standard of up-to-date teaching resources and technologies. Other teaching areas, such as the prefabricated classrooms, are untidy, poorly decorated and cold, with few displays and insufficient access to teaching facilities. Many of the study, common room and canteen areas are cramped at certain times of the day.
- Managers are in the process of implementing several phases of building and refurbishment, which will bring about significant improvements to the quality of teaching accommodation available in many areas. Students are actively engaged in the design of these developments.
- Promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum varies significantly. In the best areas, such as social sciences, teachers recognise and celebrate equalities. However, there is insufficient promotion in other areas such as English and modern foreign languages, visual and performing arts and science and mathematics.
- Staff and managers are successful in ensuring the safety of students. Appropriate safeguarding employment checks are in place and staff and governors receive suitable induction and training. Governors receive timely and detailed reports on the performance of different minority groups and fulfil their statutory responsibilities to review related policies and procedures annually. The college is particularly successful in recruiting students from a Black and minority ethnic heritage in significantly higher numbers than the local demographic profile.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Havering Sixth Form College

<p>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</p> <p>1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate</p>	Overall	16-18 Learning programmes
Overall effectiveness	3	3
Outcomes for learners	3	3
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	3	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	3

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Visual and performing arts	3
English and modern foreign languages	3
Social sciences and psychology	3
Business, administration, economics and law	3

Provider details

Havering Sixth Form College	
Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	16–18
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 2,529
	Part-time: 0
Principal/CEO	Mr Paul Wakeling
Date of previous inspection	April 2009
Website address	www.havering-sfc.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)								
Full-time	0	0	156	0	2560	5	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of learners aged 14-16	1							
Number of community learners	0							
Number of employability learners	0							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ None 							

Additional socio-economic information

Havering Sixth Form College is a large college in Hornchurch, set up to serve the population of Romford, Hornchurch and Upminster. The college has a long-standing relationship with the secondary schools in Havering, most of which do not have sixth forms, and provides guaranteed progression places for their pupils. Currently, the college has around 2,700 students, almost exclusively 16- to 18-year-olds. The vast majority of the students take AS, A-level and advanced vocational courses with a view to progressing to higher education and employment. The college offers advanced courses in a wide range of subjects in ten subject areas and a much smaller provision for students at foundation and intermediate levels. Over the past few years, student numbers have grown and around 4 out of 10 students travel from London boroughs such as Barking and Dagenham and Newham to attend the college. Just under half of the students are from Black and minority ethnic heritages, a proportion considerably higher than that in Havering. GCSE attainment in local schools is around national averages.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Alex Falconer HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the Vice Principal as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on students' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of students and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

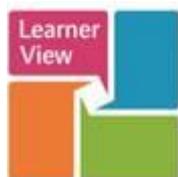
What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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