

# Easton & Otley College

## Specialist college

|  |                         |                            |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Inspection dates</b>                      |                         | <b>25–29 November 2013</b> |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>This inspection:</b> | <b>Good-2</b>              |
|  | Previous inspection:    | Not previously inspected   |
| Outcomes for learners                        |                         | Good-2                     |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment |                         | Good-2                     |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   |                         | Good-2                     |

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This college is good because:

- A high proportion of students develop vocational skills very well, acquire a good understanding of their chosen industry and gain valuable experience which prepares them well for progression to employment or further education.
- Students' progression between all levels of study and into employment is very high.
- Students' success rates have increased and are high on most land-based courses.
- Teachers use learning resources, including the estate, livestock and the very wide range of other practical resources, very well to help students learn.
- Teaching of practical skills is good and students undertake a wide range of challenging practical projects which support their learning.
- The principal, governors and staff have worked very well together to form a new college where staff morale is high and everyone has a common purpose across the Norfolk and Suffolk campuses to make sure that students succeed.
- Partnerships with local and regional industries are highly productive and bring many benefits to students and employers as well as promoting the land-based sector within the region.

#### This is not yet an outstanding college because:

- Students' success rates in a few subjects are not high enough.
- Advanced level students' full academic potential is not maximised.
- The quality of target setting and feedback following written assessments varies and is not of consistently high quality.
- Leadership to improve teaching and learning has not enabled enough teachers to develop their skills fully to ensure all students make the very best progress.
- Teaching of English and mathematics varies in quality and students' achievements in mathematics require improvement.
- The quality of provision for apprentices remains satisfactory.

## Full report

### What does the college need to do to improve further?

- Provide clear direction and considerable emphasis on the importance of maximising students' academic potential. Support teachers to have consistently high expectations of advanced level students and develop their practice in teaching strategies that stretch and challenge students, particularly the more able. Make full use of prior attainment and value-added data as part of the drive to support improvement.
- Establish an uncomplicated and rigorous approach to target setting that is used consistently across subjects. Ensure that the quality of targets is monitored regularly.
- Ensure that self-assessment of teaching, learning and assessment evaluates all aspects of learning activities thoroughly and clearly identifies stronger and weaker features.
- Strengthen management accountability for work-based learning provision. Improve the quality of off-the-job training for apprentices.
- Ensure that target setting for staff arising out of appraisals is sharply focused on what teachers need to do to improve their practice.

### Inspection judgements

|                              |      |
|------------------------------|------|
| <b>Outcomes for learners</b> | Good |
|------------------------------|------|

- Students' development of personal, social and employability skills is very good in most subjects. Students learn very well in work environments which mirror industry requirements and they are very well prepared for employment. A high proportion is successful in securing employment in their chosen field. The broad curriculum and the range of specialisms within subjects mean that students develop an extensive set of skills and much useful experience.
- Students' success rates are high at foundation level. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities learn a wide range of life skills, such as communicating by email or basic cooking, very well, and have high success rates. Students' progression rates between entry, foundation and intermediate level are very high because they develop confidence and acquire the skills and knowledge they need to make good progress.
- Students' success rates are close to average at advanced level but below average, particularly for adults, at intermediate level. At both these levels of study, the previously inappropriate curriculum had a negative impact on students' potential for success. For example, a floristry course mainly for adults was set up over two years, over which period students lost interest and motivation to succeed. However, more than three quarters of intermediate level students move on to advanced level courses.
- Students' success rates are mostly high in land-based subjects, where the largest proportions of students study, with the exception of horticulture, where rates are below average. Success rates in construction and sports studies are below or just below average respectively. Students often gain useful additional qualifications which they need to meet industry requirements such as coaching qualifications, certificates in the safe use of pesticides and chainsaw certificates.
- Compared to their prior attainment, most advanced level students make adequate progress in their academic studies but they rarely exceed their expected grades and maximise their full academic potential. However, these students mostly make consistently good progress in their practical and wider skill development. Current advanced level land-based students are mostly making good academic progress because teachers' focus on academic challenge has increased. The proportion of students who progress into higher education courses is low.

- Success rates for the high number of students who take functional skills in English and mathematics at foundation and intermediate level are below average. Their success rates in English at foundation level are above average but rates are well below average at both levels in mathematics. However, students development of English and mathematical skills in lessons is mostly satisfactory and sometimes good.
- Students who have additional learning needs achieve at least as well as their peers and often better because of the good support they receive. The numbers of students from minority ethnic groups are too small for statistical analysis. In the first year of the new, merged college, male students underperformed compared to female students by a wider margin than nationally. Managers have put in place actions to reduce this gap in 2013/14.
- Students' attendance and punctuality are good. Because of the high emphasis placed on developing them to be work-ready, most develop a strong work ethic. The opportunities provided to them to work in teams on numerous different and often enterprising projects, such as charity ploughing matches, running equestrian hunter trials on local estates, breeding pigs to supply meat for a large supermarket chain and rearing turkeys for Christmas mean that many develop skills in leadership, problem solving and working independently which support their future economic prosperity.
- Apprentices' success rates are average overall and more complete their qualifications within the time allocated than in similar colleges. On apprenticeships in sport, hospitality and catering and game keeping success rates are high but are low on several other subjects including floristry and vehicle maintenance. Poorly performing apprenticeships in construction are no longer offered.

|   |      |
|---|------|
| <b>The quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b> | Good |
|---|------|

- Well-qualified teachers use their extensive subject and industry experience well to teach students a wide range of practical and wider employability skills which is reflected in the high rates of students' progression including into employment. Good teaching of land-based and foundation level subjects is evident in students' high success rates on these courses. Teachers provide a welcoming, safe and respectful learning environment and students enjoy their studies.
- Practical teaching is mostly good. Teachers make very good use of the estate including the farm, equine centre and sports facilities to engage students and develop their vocational skills. They add to students' experience through additional visits and work off-site. For example, arboricultural students maintain a local mature wood and floristry students provide floral displays at prestigious attractions such as Holkham Hall.
- In practical sessions, teachers challenge students through insisting on continuous improvement towards achieving high standards which often stretch students' practical abilities and extend the development of their vocational skills fully. For example, floristry learners make intricate and creative arrangements suitable for retail purposes and use peer- and self-assessment well to identify improvement points.
- Teaching for students on foundation and intermediate level courses is good. However, classroom-based teaching on advanced level courses varies in quality. In these lessons, teachers do not consistently challenge students to achieve their very best and do not consistently use prior attainment information about individual students effectively to inform their teaching strategies.
- Teachers link very effectively with a broad range of highly supportive employers to provide additional opportunities for learning, for example, public services students have a week long work placement with the Royal Marines.
- Teachers use a wide range of assessment methods well which include the use of substantial practically-based projects which involve relevant and interesting tasks. Written assignments are

appropriate, internally verified and marked promptly; however, feedback to students too often does not provide them with precise information on improvement points.

- Teachers reinforce well to students the need for good skills in English and mathematics in helping them gain employment and success. They routinely correct spelling and grammar in assignment work and many integrate the development of English and mathematical skills well in their vocational lessons, for example, horticulturalists calculate the number and costs of flagstones required while hard landscaping.
- Staff use information and learning technology to extend learning well, particularly outside of the classroom. Teachers have developed the virtual learning environment well in a number of subjects, including animal management and equine studies, to extend and enrich learning. Teachers and students use chat rooms productively to communicate and share experiences of work placements, but this is not yet used to enhance communication with apprentices.
- Staff monitor students’ progress thoroughly and have an increasing focus on using targets to ensure students maximise their potential. A new initiative of termly review weeks which focus on activities to review and accelerate students’ progress and provide them with further enrichment activities is proving successful, although it is at an early stage.
- Staff provide good support for students and know their students well. They provide high levels of very effective personal support, including for students at risk of underperformance, and constantly provide encouragement. However, some recording of support is unsystematic and a minority of records are of poor quality. In particular, too much inconsistency in precise target setting to achieve academic excellence for individual students exists and some is ineffective.
- Staff have refined systems for providing advice and guidance for students and they are now very effective including very good liaison with local schools.
- Students’ additional learning support needs are identified quickly through good communications with schools and thorough initial assessment. In-class support from learning mentors is very effective and those receiving this support achieve well.
- Teachers use naturally occurring examples within vocational teaching well to reinforce students’ awareness and understanding of equality and diversity. However, teachers do not include development of wider equality and diversity themes into their lessons frequently enough.
- Staff support apprentices to make good progress in their skills development by involving employers closely in the planning and delivery of the training. Staff monitor apprentices’ progress thoroughly and most current apprentices are achieving well and producing good work. However, off-the-job theory teaching tends to be uninspiring where teachers use a narrow range of teaching strategies and apprentices make slower progress as a result.

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <p><b>Agriculture</b></p> <p><b>16-19 study programmes</b></p> <p><b>19+ Learning programmes</b></p> | <p>Good</p> |
|--|-------------|

- Good teaching, learning and assessment are reflected in students’ high success rates, good development of employability and personal skills and their high rates of progression to employment. Students on advanced courses have not consistently achieved the high grades they are capable of but current students’ work shows that teachers are demanding more of them and their achievement is improving.
- Teachers are adept at developing students’ skills for the workplace. They include a good range of challenging activities within lessons. Teachers use the college’s extensive estate well to reinforce a strong work ethic and the links between theory and commercial practice to students.

For example, in a practical lesson on fencing, the teacher emphasised to students that high tensile wire fences need to be finished to a high standard to be secure for livestock.

- Teachers use their considerable industrial experience well to promote students' professionalism. Teachers keep up to date with industry changes and ensure that students develop good livestock, equipment handling and estate maintenance skills. Teachers give high priority to safety; for example, students have a good awareness of hazards, risks and bio-security.
- In most lessons, teachers develop students' reflective thinking skills and relate these well to work. For example, students writing a job specification for an assistant farm manager identified the skills, personal attributes and experience needed, then discussed and justified their reasoning. They then used this information to evaluate their own performance and improve their curriculum vitae.
- Teachers encourage less able students to develop confidence and independence well, for example, through promoting their involvement in posing and answering questions. In a few practical sessions, teachers' strategies to fully involve all students are not well thought out and unsuccessful, for example, sometimes pairing or grouping of students to work together is not always mutually productive.
- A minority of teachers do not include enough activities in lessons, do not allow students to think for themselves, or rely too much on uninspiring learning packs. As a result, students lose concentration and do not make the progress expected.
- Teachers use assessment effectively to reinforce learning, including the good use of peer and self-assessment. For example, in a tractor handling session, advanced students acted as examiners, assessing each other's skill level and giving feedback in preparation for an external driving test.
- Teachers mark assignment work carefully and give constructive written feedback. They consistently correct spelling and grammar mistakes. In a minority of teachers' feedback, it is not always clear from their comments exactly what students have to do to achieve higher grades.
- Most teachers develop students' mathematical skills well in the classroom. For example, school pupils weighed turkeys on the farm then plotted these weights on a graph. In another example, advanced students calculated loan interest rates for a business plan for a new pig house. Assignments briefs, however, rarely contain references to opportunities to develop mathematical skills.
- Staff use their strong links with employers in the design of courses and to secure high quality work placements which benefit students. Students apply formally for these and are interviewed by employers at a college-based jobs fair which helps prepare them for employment.
- Teachers provide students with sound advice about career choices. Staff involve students in enjoyable competitions and exchange trips. Staff ensure that students achieve a full range of additional qualifications, for example in telescopic rough terrain vehicle handling which enhances their job prospects.
- Teachers know and support their students well in many respects. However, their monitoring of students' progress is not systematically recorded and too many written targets lack clarity.
- Teachers engender a culture of mutual respect and in lessons they are skilful at reinforcing equality and diversity aspects, for example, challenging students to reconsider racial and gender stereotypes. However, this promotion is rarely reflected in the assignments briefs teachers set.

**Animal care and veterinary science**

**16-19 study programmes**  
**19+ Learning programmes**

Good

- Good teaching and assessment ensures that students learn quickly and effectively which is reflected in their above average success rates on most courses. Teachers use the wide range of resources available to them very well to ensure that students develop good technical skills and knowledge that meet industry requirements and prepare them well for work or further study. Students' attendance and punctuality are good and they quickly adopt the professionalism, good communication skills and use of safe working practices that their teachers display.
- Teachers develop students' confidence, knowledge and practical abilities very effectively which enables many of them to work competently and unsupervised with species across a wide range, for example, from exotic snakes to farm yard goats. Employers value this breadth of experience and offer students a broad range of work experience opportunities as well as working closely with staff to develop learning programmes.
- Teachers plan learning well and use practical examples very effectively within theory sessions to stimulate interest. They check students' knowledge and reinforce important learning points frequently and are often creative in assessing students' skills. For example, students complete a project which involves baking and designing dog biscuits as well as packaging them attractively and labelling them with accurate nutritional information.
- Teachers routinely develop students' English and mathematical skills in lessons; for example, multiplication skills are used when working out fish tank volumes. Teachers reinforce use of technical vocabulary and correct spelling well in lessons and within assignment work. They provide students with considerable extra support for learning through the well-developed virtual learning environment but their use of information and learning technology is underdeveloped in lessons.
- Teachers assess students' basic skill levels carefully and ensure that additional support for those identified with specific learning needs is timely and effective. Staff agree targets with all students and monitor progress in meeting targets frequently. However, targets set for more-able students are mostly insufficiently challenging to ensure they achieve the high grades of which they are capable.
- In the minority of lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers do not check learning regularly enough and activities lack relevance to industry, this leads to some students losing motivation. Where capable students complete work early, teachers do not routinely set extension work at an appropriately challenging level.
- Staff give students good support and act quickly to resolve problems which has ensured that fewer students withdraw from their courses before completion. Staff use a range of support strategies including good use of technology such as using chat rooms to deliver advice and prompts to support learning. Staff monitor students' progress thoroughly.
- Teacher plan assessments well, work is marked promptly and accurately with good written and verbal feedback covering the main improvement points needed. Students complete practical assessments frequently and to a good standard. Recently introduced review weeks enable teachers to give specific guidance on assignment work to make sure students focus on achieving the highest grades; this is an area which has been noted by managers as requiring improvement.
- Staff promote equality and diversity well with high levels of mutual respect between teachers and peers. Under-represented groups, such as males and those of minority ethnic heritage,

achieve at least as well as their peers. However, teachers do not develop equality and diversity themes within their lessons frequently enough.

## Equine studies

### 16-19 study programmes

### 19+ Learning programmes

Good

- Good teaching supported well by assessment is reflected in students' above average success rates and their good equine skills development. Teachers plan carefully and lessons are lively, interesting and purposeful. Teachers know their students well and, in most cases, take full account of their different starting points and rate of progress to ensure that each is given work that helps them to develop their skills rapidly.
- Teachers are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and are active in the equine industry. They provide students with valuable support and clear guidance, and most students make very good progress. Teachers demand high standards and provide consistent and constructive encouragement and inspiration for students. This improves students' self-confidence and ability to work well independently.
- Teachers ensure that students learn to work safely and develop good practical and employability skills in a range of situations. Staff structure students' work at the equine centre well so that they learn to prepare and present horses with high standards of grooming and turnout. Industry experts, such as well-known competition riders some of whom are ex-students, often run interesting specialist performance clinics. Students broaden their industry experience both in competing and volunteering as stewards for the equestrian events held at both campuses and externally in the region.
- Teachers use their expertise in the many better lessons very effectively to develop a range of interesting and challenging activities that ensure students gain new knowledge as well as developing their evaluative skills. For example in equine science, students acquired detailed knowledge of the equine respiratory system, used this to make accurate, three dimensional models of a horse's lungs and trachea and linked this to evaluating the performance of competition horses.
- Teachers assess students' abilities quickly and accurately and use effective assessment strategies to make sure that progress in lessons is often rapid and students are ambitious to do better. Teachers constantly challenge learners to reflect on what they are doing and how they could do it better, for example, during riding lessons. However, in a minority of advanced level lessons, teachers rely too much on undemanding worksheets and students lose motivation.
- Good assessment includes teachers' thorough marking of students' work with particularly helpful guidance on how to improve. Staff assess stable yard duties and equestrian work-placements thoroughly. Staff update assessment plans and monitoring records frequently to provide students with a detailed overview of their progress. Teachers do not consistently insist that assignment work is correctly referenced which limits development of students' research skills.
- Staff use information and learning technology well within lessons and in support of students' wider study as well as between campuses. Teachers have generated a wealth of on-line resources and provided useful links to interactive on-line training, activities and quizzes. Staff set homework which encourages and develops independent learning and self-evaluation. In an internal competition, students videoed each other's dressage tests to allow them to peer- and self-evaluate their performance after the event.
- Teachers develop students' English and mathematical skills well. Teachers mark work carefully and correct grammar and spelling errors; as a result students are developing good report writing skills. Teachers develop mathematics well in theory and practical lessons; for example, through

timing heart and respiration rates in performance horses and weighing horses to inform rationing ratios.

- Staff provide good support for students and have improved initial advice and guidance to ensure students are on the right course and are clear about what is expected of them. They identify support needs promptly and take appropriate action. Individual learning plans are well developed and set out provisional target grades to measure students' progress. However, these target grades are not reviewed and adjusted sufficiently frequently to focus students on meeting their full potential.
- Teachers foster good working and social relationships and are good role models for students, who respond well with good behaviour. Riding teachers match students carefully to horses to ensure they are not disadvantaged by having to cope with riding a more challenging horse before they are ready for this. Students are well prepared for working in the equine industry with a good understanding of diversity, for example, in working with disabled riders and the marked differences in tack design and fit across world cultures.

## Sport, leisure and recreation

### 16-19 study programmes

### 19+ Learning programmes

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement which is reflected in students' success rates which are just below average. In 2012/13, too few advanced level students met or exceeded their predicted grade based on their prior attainment. However, most current students are making expected progress in their assessed work.
- Teachers do not plan effectively enough to meet students' individual learning needs and abilities. As a result, a minority of students are not always fully included in practical lessons. For example, students with injuries who cannot take part in practical sports sessions are not always engaged in other relevant activities.
- Teachers make too little use of information about students' abilities to challenge and extend more able students. In particular, in some advanced level theory lessons, teachers do not keep all students engaged, motivated and ensure they reach their full potential. However, in the minority of better lessons, teachers use a wide range of sports-related examples and activities that include physical work to meet students' interests.
- Teachers' assessments of students' work are timely, well-organised and rigorous. In most cases students receive written feedback which is helpful in promoting improvement in their work. Teachers' verbal feedback during lessons is supportive and encouraging, although it is not always sufficiently precise about how students need to improve their academic skills, such as in analysis and evaluation.
- Teachers develop students' English skills, including using complex sports-related terminology well in lessons. However, teachers develop mathematical skills less well. For example, in a theory lesson the teacher did not ensure that students used calculations to compare sports performance work levels to average breathing rates.
- Staff provide good pastoral care and use individual tutorials very well to support students to overcome barriers to success. Personal tutors motivate students to complete tasks and assignments to agreed timescales well. In lessons, teachers ensure that students follow safe working practices and pay good attention to appropriate sequences such as warming up and cooling down for physical activity.
- Staff ensure that most students progress to a higher level of study or employment within the sport and leisure sector. Students develop good employability, personal and social skills by participating in sporting academies including in tennis and football, enrichment activities and by

gaining industry-recognised additional qualifications such as in fitness instruction or coaching football.

- Staff have improved the provision of information, advice and guidance to support students in making the right choices for their academic and sporting career aspirations. As a result, students understand the demands of their courses more clearly and most current students are settled on the right courses.
- Teachers enable students to take part in a wide range of additional activities, including those which increase their sports performance potential such as fitness testing and strengthening and conditioning sessions, and that enhance their learning considerably. Staff organise a wide range of sports teams and students are frequently involved in competitive sport, often with success, for example in rugby, football and swimming.
- The promotion of equality and diversity requires improvement. A few teachers do not use naturally occurring opportunities enough to promote wider aspects of equality and diversity in lessons. However, staff and students work together harmoniously in an atmosphere of mutual respect in all activities.

**Foundation English**

**16-19 study programmes**  
**19+ Learning programmes**

Requires improvement

- Teaching is improving which is contributing towards students’ increased success rates for the majority of courses to above average; however, the quality of assessment to support learning varies too much and too much requires improvement. Teachers do not challenge more able students sufficiently.
- Teachers ensure that students enjoy their lessons and most current students are making better progress than previously towards their qualifications. Teachers link students’ learning of English skills well to vocational contexts, for example, sports students undertake information searches about sports personalities. Students’ attendance is satisfactory and their punctuality is good.
- Teachers’ reinforcement of some aspects of English is ineffective. In a few lessons, teachers did not insist on correct use of capital letters and learning materials contained errors in the use of English. A minority of entry level learning materials are not in an easily readable format. Teachers rarely incorporate development of mathematical skills where opportunities occur to do so.
- Teachers motivate students well using constructive praise in lessons and create a productive and respectful learning environment. They encourage students to develop effective independent learning skills, such as the confident use of dictionaries. Students speak highly of their teachers and how they care for them as individuals.
- Teachers use a good range of learning strategies effectively to ensure students participate in learning activities which are often matched well to students’ abilities. For example, when producing a formal letter, a teacher provided lower ability students with the main elements on jigsaw pieces whereas more able students were challenged to produce the format and content independently. Teachers break down complex tasks, for example, by using category cards for identification of language type before analysis of an information article, which helps students to learn well.
- Teachers do not challenge learners with more advanced English skills enough. For example, they sometimes set undemanding tasks where more-able students complete work early and then lose interest. Teachers make appropriate use of information and learning technology in the classroom; however, they have not fully developed the content of the virtual learning environment to support students’ wider learning.

- Staff assess students' abilities, agree their qualification aim and ensure that individual learning plans are completed accurately. They assess students' additional support needs and ensure they receive in-class support which meets their needs well, such as through using coloured overlays for students with dyslexia.
- Teachers' monitoring of students' progress is adequate. Staff set some useful and constructive targets to encourage students to improve in English linked to their vocational subject.
- Assessment of students' work lacks rigour. Teachers do not routinely correct spelling and grammar and, in a few cases, marks are overgenerous. Teachers assess students' knowledge of the main points during lessons adequately but rarely extend assessment beyond this.
- Staff provide satisfactory advice and guidance. Through a current pilot scheme, more students are aiming to upgrade their GCSE English results where appropriate to their prior attainment but others are guided towards a longer route involving gaining functional skills qualifications first. Staff support students well in developing skills for employment such as preparing curriculum vitae and completing job applications.
- Teachers effectively promote and embed diversity topics in lessons to enhance learning. For example, a teacher used music and images from a religious festival at the start of the lesson which prompted an informative discussion about different religions. In another example, male students discussed the use of female roles models in sport. However, only a few learning materials contain sufficient references to a broad mix of cultural backgrounds.

### The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal, supported well by the governors and senior managers, has managed the merger of the two previous colleges highly successfully to form the new college in August 2012. Because senior managers have ensured very good communication across both campuses, staff understand well the clear mission and purpose to serve local and regional industries, with which there are very strong, supportive and productive partnerships.
- Senior leaders' and governors' prudent financial management has enabled significant investment in buildings and resources, including most recently at the Otley campus, that support students' learning very effectively and raise their aspirations successfully. Commercial units such as tennis and equestrian centres and the farm reflect industry requirements well and enable students to experience working in a very wide range of land-based and sport settings which broadens their horizons and ambitions and prepares them well for work.
- Senior managers know the skills requirements of the local and regional area very well and they use this knowledge very effectively to develop the curriculum. Their excellent links with regional employers are used highly productively to help plan relevant learning programmes. The range of college-based and workplace courses offered, coupled with the extensive transport network and residency opportunities ensures that students receive teaching and training that matches their ability, career goals and individual circumstances. As part of the merger, managers have carefully revised significant aspects of the curriculum, in particular, to increase the focus on land-based provision at the Otley campus.
- Governors know the college and the economic needs of the region well and use their wide range of vocational, business and management expertise very effectively in governance, in particular during the merger. They offer guidance on developing the curriculum and, from the accurate information they receive on students' performance, ask challenging questions of senior leaders.
- Senior managers use performance management procedures very effectively. They have ensured a good quality of teaching, particularly practical teaching, across both campuses in the first year of the new college. However, they have not been fully effective in developing teachers' skills in ensuring consistently high expectations of students' academic potential, particularly the more able. The effectiveness of targets set by managers in appraisals varies and, in a minority of

cases, targets are too imprecise about what each teacher needs to do to improve their performance.

- In the first year of the new college, managers' actions arising from rigorous self-assessment ensured an increase in success rates, in particular a significant increase at advanced level. Managers' self-assessment of the provision is broadly accurate although in a small minority of cases, managers have not identified all of the key areas for improvement. Managers' evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment is too narrowly focused on the results from lesson observations. Targets for improvement set in the quality improvement plans vary in their specificity, with a few lacking preciseness in required actions and timescales for completion.
- Senior management accountability for work-based learning is unclear, in part because of the newly merged management structure, and success rates remain average. However, middle managers who share responsibility for this provision meet monthly and are monitoring apprentices' progress and identifying those at risk of underperformance very effectively. Managers are supporting sharing of good practice across subjects well. However, actions to tackle some weak off-the-job teaching are underdeveloped.
- Managers' observations of teaching and learning lead to improvements in the performance of teachers. Teachers are provided with useful action plans which result in helpful and good quality staff development. However, a tendency for observers to focus too much on teaching rather than the impact on students is evident in records. As a consequence, managers have an over-optimistic view of the quality of teaching and learning from lesson observations.
- The promotion of equality is good, integral to college life and evident across both campuses. The curriculum is inclusive and managers ensure that students, including those in rural areas poorly served by public transport, have every opportunity to attend college. Teachers know their students well and are increasingly using this information to ensure all have an equal chance to learn thoroughly well, although managers recognise that action is needed to ensure more-able students are stretched to achieve their full academic potential. Teachers' development of diversity themes in lessons is less effective and requires improvement.
- Senior managers ensure very effective safeguarding procedures are in place and that statutory requirements are met. Managers undertake an annual risk assessment of all staff to ensure that their job roles have not significantly changed and carry out further background checks when an increased risk is identified. Managers organise a safeguarding week in which a wide range of very useful events and activities take place to increase students' awareness of safety.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Easton & Otley College

| Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:              |         |                        |                         |                 |
|---|---------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1: Outstanding<br>2: Good<br>3: Requires improvement<br>4: Inadequate | Overall | 16-19 study programmes | 19+ Learning programmes | Apprenticeships |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>  | 2       | 2                      | 2                       | 3               |
| Outcomes for learners   | 2       | 2                      | 2                       | 3               |
| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment                      | 2       | 2                      | 2                       | 3               |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management                        | 2       | 2                      | 2                       | 3               |

| Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Grade    |
|---|----------|
| <b>Agriculture</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Animal Care and Veterinary Science</b>                                 | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Equine Studies</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Sport, Leisure and Recreation</b>                                      | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Foundation English</b>   | <b>3</b> |

## College details

|   |  |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|---|--|-----|-----------------|-----|----------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| <b>Type of provider</b>   | Specialist further education college                   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Age range of learners</b>  | 14+  |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>                  | Full-time: 2,249                                       |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|   | Part-time: 2,622                                       |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Principal/CEO</b>  | David Lawrence   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>  | Not previously inspected                               |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Website address</b>  | www.eastonotley.ac.uk                                  |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>                                       |  |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Main course or learning programme level</b>  | <b>Level 1 or below</b>                                |     | <b>Level 2</b>  |     | <b>Level 3</b> |     | <b>Level 4 and above</b> |     |
| <b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>                                     | 16-18  | 19+ | 16-18           | 19+ | 16-18          | 19+ | 16-18                    | 19+ |
| <b>Full-time</b>  | 476  | 77  | 578             | 95  | 912            | 217 | 0                        | 0   |
| <b>Part-time</b>  | 20   | 40  | 44              | 716 | 37             | 90  | 2                        | 3   |
| <b>Number of traineeships</b>   | 16-19  |     | 19+             |     | Total          |     |                          |     |
|   | N/A  |     | N/A             |     | N/A            |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>                                    | <b>Intermediate</b>                                    |     | <b>Advanced</b> |     | <b>Higher</b>  |     |                          |     |
|   | 16-18  | 19+ | 16-18           | 19+ | 16-18          | 19+ |                          |     |
|   | 191  | 173 | 38              | 242 | 1              | 6   |                          |     |
| <b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>  | 493  |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Full-time</b>  | 0  |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Part-time</b>  | 493  |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of community learners</b>   | 117  |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of employability learners</b>   | N/A  |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Funding received from</b>  | Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency     |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b> | The college does not have any subcontracted provision. |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |

## Contextual information

Easton College, on the outskirts of Norwich, and Otley College, approximately six miles from Ipswich, merged in August 2012 to form the new Easton & Otley College. Both campuses include large estates comprising a range of land-based operations including working farms. The Easton campus includes residency for around 200 students. The college offers courses in all the land-based subjects in line with its specialist land-based designation but also offers courses in a number of other subjects including large provision in sports studies and foundation learning as well as smaller provision in construction. Apprenticeships are offered in sports studies and several land-based subjects, including large provision in agriculture. In Norfolk, the proportion of pupils aged 16 achieving five or more GCSEs at grade A\* to C is just below average, in Suffolk the proportion achieving similarly is well below. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is low and similar to the proportions within the populations of Norfolk and Suffolk.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Philippa Francis HMI

Four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the vice principal as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. Inspectors used data on learners' achievements in 2012/13 to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the college. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across 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>

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



Learner View is a new website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too.

To find out more go to [www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk)

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 learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, 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 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and provider inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2014