

Leyton Sixth Form College

Sixth form college

23–26 February 2016

Inspection dates**Overall effectiveness****Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for learners	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- The Principal provides excellent leadership; with his senior leadership team and governors, he has promoted an excellent culture and ethos that is strongly focused on developing the craft of teaching and supporting learners to succeed.
- Staff have created and sustained a highly inclusive environment at the college where learners feel safe, work well together and enjoy their studies.
- A very high proportion of A-level and vocational learners achieve their qualifications and the majority exceed their target grades.
- A high proportion of learners on level 3 programmes go on to university. Most learners on level 1 and level 2 programmes progress to the next level of learning.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and underpinned by very well-considered staff development, and an innovative and successful approach to observing lessons.
- Teachers frequently and accurately assess learners' learning and provide detailed feedback that helps learners to improve.
- Most teachers and tutors have high expectations and effectively use demanding and accurate targets that help learners work at pace and make progress in line with, or better than, expectations.
- Safeguarding arrangements are excellent; learners feel very safe at the college and staff use their extensive connections with outside organisations to understand and manage any emerging concerns.
- Learners receive very good support with their learning from teachers, learning support assistants, library staff and mentors.
- Most learners participate in the many opportunities available to develop their personal and social skills, including volunteering, Duke of Edinburgh awards and the accreditation of their achievements through a university awards scheme.

It is not yet an outstanding provider

- In a minority of subjects, not enough AS-level learners achieve the grades expected of them relative to their prior attainment.
- Too few learners achieve a grade C in GCSEs in English and mathematics at the first attempt.
- Staff are not fully successful at ensuring that learners on level 3 programmes not applying for university are sufficiently prepared for, or receive enough guidance about, gaining employment.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet consistently high across all subjects.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Leyton Sixth Form College (Leyton) is located in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. The college serves the borough's population and that of the neighbouring boroughs including Newham, Haringey, Hackney and Tower Hamlets. The college specialises in study programmes for learners aged 16 to 18 funded by the Education Funding Agency. The few learners aged 19 or over, funded by the Skills Funding Agency, are those who are continuing their academic or vocational study alongside younger learners and follow the same study programme curriculum. The vocational and academic curriculum has around 40 subjects with the largest areas being humanities, English and modern foreign languages, mathematics and business. Around 80% of learners are on level 3 study programmes, and of these about half on AS- and A-level courses. The remaining learners are on vocational programmes at or below level 2. In the current year, there are 12 learners for whom the college receives high needs funding. Waltham Forest and its neighbouring boroughs are ethnically very diverse and this is reflected in the learner population at the college.
- Waltham Forest is one of the 10 most deprived boroughs in London. The unemployment rate is higher than the London and national averages, and fewer people achieve qualifications at all levels of learning than the average nationally. Average earnings for those in work are lower than the London average. The proportion of school pupils in the borough who achieve five GCSEs at grade C or above, including in English and mathematics, is lower than the regional average.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that governors, leaders and managers maintain their strong focus on developing teachers' skills to ensure that the quality of provision is consistently high across all subjects.
- Increase the proportion of AS-level learners who achieve and exceed their target grades by ensuring that:
 - more teachers use activities in lessons that are tailored to meet the different ability levels of learners
 - teachers check more carefully what learners have learned in lessons and help them fill any gaps in their understanding.
- Increase the proportion of learners who achieve a grade C or above in GCSEs in English and mathematics at the first attempt by:
 - improving learners' awareness of the importance of developing their skills in these subjects and raising their attendance at lessons
 - providing learners with work that is sufficiently demanding, especially those who are most-able, so that a higher proportion make progress relative to their prior attainment.
- Develop further the study programmes for level 3 vocational and academic learners who do not apply for university so that they have a greater range of guidance and experiences, including work placements, to prepare them for employment.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The Principal provides excellent leadership for the college, exemplified by his commitment and actions to improve the craft of teaching. Senior leaders have carefully developed and nurtured an organisational culture that promotes open and yet challenging debate, through which they identify what needs to be improved and implement robust actions. Consequently, most learners are successful on their courses and make good progress relative to their starting points; many progress to higher education.
- Leaders and managers have maintained a strong financial position for the college and have used this to create a high-quality and safe learning environment for learners. Teaching areas are very well resourced for learning. Leaders and managers have planned the curriculum well to ensure that it can be maintained over time and meets the needs of local learners, as well as of the increasing number who are recruited from a growing number of London boroughs.
- Leaders and managers have secured excellent partnerships with other education providers which they use to good effect in improving learners' experiences. The Principal takes the lead on local and regional initiatives for collaborative work with other schools and colleges: for example, to facilitate initiatives for staff and curriculum development within the borough. The leadership he has demonstrated in shaping a partnership with local sixth form colleges sets the scene for governors' and leaders' intentions for future collaborations.
- Staff at all levels manage quality assurance and improvement processes well. They mostly work effectively to improve learners' outcomes and to iron out inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. Managers' capacity to make further improvement is very good.
- Managers make very effective use of data to monitor and manage the quality of provision and to review frequently the progress of learners. They are quick to implement improvement plans where issues arise, as in the recent poorer performance in a minority of AS-level subjects.
- The Principal leads on the innovative approach to lesson observations, personally and jointly observing every teacher. His, and managers', evaluations of the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching, learning and assessment are accurate. Managers use the excellent programme of continuing professional development and their effective performance management arrangements to support teachers to improve the quality of their practice.
- Managers' evaluation of the quality of provision is mostly accurate. In a few curriculum areas, managers are overgenerous in their judgements and do not correlate learners' achievements well enough to the quality of teaching. Managers make very effective use of feedback from learners to ensure that they plan improvements to meet their needs.
- Leaders and managers have implemented the requirements of study programmes well and they are well managed. Staff have good partnerships with local schools in order to manage learners' transition from school to college. They also liaise well with higher education providers to ensure learners' successful progression to the next level of study. Managers correctly identified the need to extend their partnerships with employers in order to ensure that more learners have a direct experience of the world of work.
- Managers set high expectations for improving learners' skills in English and mathematics through their strategy to focus on learners improving on their GCSE grades. However, managers have not yet secured consistently high standards of teaching or achievement in these subjects.
- As at the previous inspection, the college is a vibrant and diverse community, where an ethos of equality and of valuing others' beliefs, attitudes and values are embedded in college life. Staff prepare learners very well for life in modern Britain. Learners' understanding of fundamental values, which are well integrated into their courses and wider life at college, is well developed.
- **The governance of the provider**
 - Governors represent a good mix of local and national interests, and they use their work and life experiences well in the best interests of the college and its learners. They are clear about the mission and role of the college within its communities. They maintain an effective oversight of key areas of accountability, including for safeguarding, equalities, and health and safety.
 - To help improve their effectiveness, governors ensure that their collective skills and experience match the requirements of effective governance. They have recently reviewed their membership and new appointments have been made which strengthen their capacity to provide suitable scrutiny of, and challenge to, senior leaders.

- Governors suitably review the college’s strategy, targets and performance. They are aware of what needs to be done to further improve the quality of provision and they hold managers to account effectively.

■ **The arrangements for safeguarding are effective**

- Staff at all levels manage safeguarding very well; learners feel safe and know that staff are committed to their well-being. Learners and staff receive effective training and have a good understanding of safeguarding. The college’s security staff work well to maintain learners’ safety and identify and report any concerns. Staff use their well-established links with external agencies to good effect to further learners’ wellbeing.
- Managers carry out comprehensive recruitment checks on new staff and keep thorough and up-to-date records. Their use of risk assessment in relation to safeguarding is well developed.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the college complies with the requirements of the ‘Prevent’ duty. They have put in place thorough arrangements to identify and tackle the threats of radicalisation. Staff’s relations with local safeguarding-related agencies, including the police, are excellent. Learners have produced an excellent video giving their positive perspectives on British values.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Since the previous inspection, teachers have continued to develop their skills through a well-developed whole-college strategy. They are confident to experiment, try out new strategies and share ideas with each other. For example, they have used an action research project approach to increasing their skills in helping learners become more independent in their learning, and in their use of technology to enhance teaching, learning and assessment.
- Teachers set high expectations of their learners with regard to the quality of their work and standards of behaviour. They successfully ensure that learners work collaboratively to solve problems and evaluate their own and each other’s learning. Learners have a good work ethic, respond positively to their teachers, and are committed to succeed and make good progress.
- Teachers make effective use of the information they have about learners’ prior attainment to set them demanding, realistic target grades and, in most cases, good short-term targets. For example, in AS-level mathematics, teachers set weekly targets for individual work and closely check learners’ achievement of these. Teachers monitor learners’ progress well. They quickly challenge those who fall below their target and agree interventions which may include additional work and contact with learners’ parents or carers.
- Teachers set homework frequently; their marking and feedback on learners’ assignments are accurate and helpful, and ensure that learners understand what they need to do to improve. For example, in order to improve the assessment of learners in GCSE English, teachers have developed a comprehensive feedback grid which provides learners with a thorough overview of their progress and the tasks they need to complete to improve.
- The majority of teachers use effective strategies to check learners’ understanding in lessons. A minority of teachers do not carry out sufficiently comprehensive checks on learners’ learning in order to provide them with targeted support; this results in a few learners falling behind with their work. A minority of teachers are not yet skilled enough at using techniques to deepen learners’ understanding of topics taught, for example through the use of questioning techniques.
- Teachers make effective use of opportunities to develop learners’ understanding of the diverse communities in which they live and will work. For example, in an early years class, learners discussed confidently the dietary restrictions of different faith groups.
- Staff accurately assess learners’ abilities at the start of the course and provide good guidance to ensure that learners are on programmes that suit their aspirations. Consequently, most learners stay to the end of their course. Most teachers make good use of the information they have about learners’ abilities to set tasks and activities that match their needs. A small minority of teachers are less skilled at adapting lessons to meet learners’ needs and their varying abilities; in these cases, the pace of learning is too slow for the most able but too fast for others. This is particularly the case in GCSE English and mathematics lessons.
- Teachers work closely with staff who provide support for learners who need extra help to achieve, including those for whom the college receives high needs funding. The support is very effective and is tailored well to meet individual needs. Learners receiving support achieve as well as their peers.

- Staff have a strong focus on promoting excellence; they have designed a 'stretch and challenge' programme for learners who are predicted to achieve very well. In addition to completing more challenging work, learners receive the support of mentors from outside the college in order to further raise their aspirations and achievements.
- Teachers place a strong emphasis on the value of learners developing good English and mathematics skills in their academic and vocational subjects. Most staff are skilled at planning learning to include the development of English skills. The promotion of mathematics skills is still under development, except for areas such as science where it is an integral part of the curriculum.
- Teachers do not make sufficient use of industry visits and other wider learning to help learners understand the practical application of what they are learning. In A-level business, the teachers make good use of learners' experiences on two factory visits to advance their understanding of the principles of lean production. However, this approach is not widespread enough; for example, second-year applied science learners have had no direct experience of the application of science within an employment setting.
- Since the previous inspection, teachers have developed their skills well in the use of technology to further learners' understanding of topics. For example, science teachers use videos posted online very effectively to provide learners with information that they use to prepare for lessons. Learners and teachers maintain a dialogue outside lessons in which learners ask often probing questions that demonstrate their curiosity and interest in the subject. Similar successful developments have taken place in computing, where teachers have developed a strong learning community through the use of online applications and social media.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

- Staff place a strong emphasis on helping learners to develop their study skills. They have very successfully introduced learners to the concept of being 'professional learners', through which learners understand their responsibilities for timekeeping, standards of work, attitudes to learning and independent study. Learners work hard, apply themselves well to class and homework activities, and collaborate well with each other.
- Learners' behaviour at college is excellent. They have good attendance in their main areas of study and move quickly between lessons to ensure that they are punctual.
- Learners develop good personal, social and employability skills. They communicate with maturity with each other and with their teachers. They confidently and even-handedly discuss a wide range of topics and issues. Learners model behaviours that will serve them well in future employment.
- Learners participate in a wide and varied range of activities through which they develop their social responsibility. Around 80 learners per year achieve a Duke of Edinburgh award, and a large and increasing number gain accreditation for their volunteering and other extra-curricular activities through a programme accredited by a London university. Participation in sporting activities by learners is good, with many taking up regular exercise. Learners make a valuable contribution to the life of the college as learner ambassadors and learning mentors.
- Learners produce work that is of a high standard. Staff ensure that learners have high aspirations, understand their challenging targets and adhere to deadlines for achieving them. Learners make good use of the lunchtime workshops and study spaces to catch up on coursework or collaborate on homework.
- Staff manage work experience very well for learners who are not yet ready for level 2 programmes, and ensure that learners use their experiences to develop their understanding. For example, health and social care learners gave a formal presentation to parents and senior staff on what they had learned on work placements. They demonstrated high levels of confidence and an aptitude for work in their chosen careers.
- Teachers support learners well to develop their skills in English, mathematics, and information and communication technology through a range of strategies. These include a thorough explanation and application of key technical vocabulary, and ensure that in subjects such as business, learners show their calculations when answering examination questions about the relative wealth of different countries.
- Learners gain a comprehensive understanding of contemporary issues related to life in modern Britain through the well-planned tutorial programme. Learners all complete an 'identity and belonging' module and explore topical issues ranging from the European Union referendum to the impact of teenage pregnancies. Tutors ensure that learners are well prepared for examinations and receive effective guidance on applying for university.

- Learners know how to stay safe, including online, and are well informed about cyber bullying. Staff have an appropriate focus on ensuring that learners develop a good understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation.
- Learners' attendance at GCSE lessons in English and mathematics falls short of their attendance for other subjects, and is an area for improvement.
- Staff are not yet fully successful at ensuring that learners on level 3 programmes who do not apply for university are sufficiently prepared for, or receive enough guidance about, gaining employment.

Outcomes for learners

are good

- The proportion of learners on A-level courses who gain qualifications has risen over the past three years and is very high. A high proportion of learners on vocational courses successfully complete their qualifications, in particular in sport, travel and tourism, and health and social care. Learners on A-level and vocational programmes at level 3 make very good progress and the majority achieve or exceed the grades expected of them.
- On AS-level courses, not enough learners achieve their qualifications, but those who do mostly achieve in line with expectations relative to their prior attainment. In the majority of subjects learners achieve well, for example in computing, art and design, and history. In a minority of subjects, including in science, sociology and psychology, learners do not achieve well enough.
- The proportion of learners who progress from the first to the second year on both vocational and academic study programmes at level 3 is high. The majority of learners on study programmes at levels 1 and 2 move up to the next level of learning on completion of their course.
- Learners on most qualifications are making good progress in the current year, and in subjects where their progress was previously poor, particularly on AS-level courses. The large majority are on track to achieve.
- Over the past three years, the number of learners on GCSE courses in English and mathematics has risen sharply. Although not enough learners achieve a grade C in these subjects at the first attempt, the majority make satisfactory progress, improve their attainment during their two years at college and achieve a grade C or better before they leave. Of the small number of learners who study functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics, too few are successful.
- Managers monitor the performance of different groups of learners closely and few differences exist. Male and female learners make the same level of progress and learners who need extra help to achieve do as well as their peers. Learners come from very diverse backgrounds and no significant differences exist over time in the achievements of learners based on their heritage. Managers monitor learners' performance well and where any gaps do exist, they take effective action to bring about improvements.
- The few learners for whom the college receives high needs funding are integrated well into study programmes with other learners. They receive good support to enable them to achieve their learning goals and qualifications.
- Staff oversee and provide good support to the learners who are in the care of the local authority and those who have personal circumstances to overcome in order to stay in learning. These learners mostly make good progress.
- A high proportion of learners on level 3 programmes go to university and an increasing number are gaining places at prestigious institutions. Managers acknowledge the need to improve their understanding of where learners go who do not apply for higher education; a high proportion of those for whom they have information continue in further education or gain employment.

Provider details

Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	2,186
Principal/CEO	Kevin Watson
Website address	www.leyton.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)	131	2	227	7	1,825	42	0	0
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	n/a		n/a		n/a			
Number of learners aged 14-16	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 							

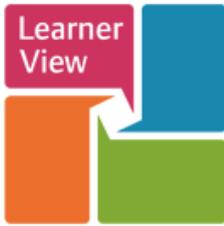
Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Rieks Drijver, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Martin	Her Majesty's Inspector
Philip Elliott	Ofsted Inspector
Heather Barrett-Mold	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the vice-principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. 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 relevant provision at the provider.

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