

Redcar and Cleveland College

General Further Education College

Inspection dates	13–16 October 2015
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Adult learning programmes	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- The proportion of level 2 students who successfully complete their courses is well below the national rate.
- Insufficient numbers of 16- to 19-year-old students participate in work experience.
- Teachers and managers do not monitor the progress of 16- to 19-year-old students closely enough, and these students make insufficient progress from their starting points.
- A minority of teachers do not provide written feedback that helps students to improve.
- The management and quality of subcontracted provision require improvement.
- Too often, teachers do not make good use of all the information they have about students to plan learning, and this slows the progress of students in mixed-ability classes.
- Too few 16- to 19-year-old students who retake GCSE English successfully achieve an A* to C grade.
- 16- to 19-year-old students do not consistently receive clear advice and guidance, before they enrol, about how their choice of course might affect their career options.
- The college's financial position makes it unlikely that managers will be able to sustain the breadth and quality of provision.
- Managers have recognised many of the college's weaknesses and have begun to make improvements; however, most changes are very recent and are yet to have sufficient impact.
- Reports to governors, although improved, do not provide them with sufficient information to effectively support and challenge senior managers.

The provider has the following strengths

- The new management team has significantly increased the pace of change in culture, performance management and quality improvement.
- The behaviour of students and apprentices is exemplary.
- Most teaching on adult courses is good.
- The proportion of students who successfully achieve A* to C grade at GCSE mathematics is significantly higher than the national rate.
- Current apprentices are monitored closely and most are making good progress.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Redcar and Cleveland College is based on a single, modern campus close to Redcar town centre. The college attracts learners from Redcar itself and the surrounding rural areas, which together have a population of around 135,000. The proportion of young people who leave school with five GCSEs, including English and mathematics, at grades A* to C is below the national average. Unemployment is higher than for the rest of the region and the UK as a whole. The proportion of the population from Black and minority ethnic groups is low. The college offers vocational classroom-based courses in all areas except land-based subjects, and apprenticeships in seven subject areas, with most apprentices working in manufacturing and business roles.
- The college is subject to intervention from the Further Education (FE) Commissioner because of poor financial health, although financial controls are strong. The Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency currently support the college to monitor its financial progress.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Monitor closely the progress of level 2 students and rapidly intervene where this shows them to be falling behind in their work so that more of those who remain on their programme to the end successfully gain qualifications.
- Fully implement the action plan to address the low numbers of GCSE English students who achieve A* to C grades. Monitor the impact of this and adjust the plan as necessary.
- Improve the extent to which staff set challenging targets for students, and monitor the progress students make towards achieving these targets. Help teachers use this information and the wide range of available information on students' starting points to devise lessons that ensure all learners undertake work that is appropriate to their individual needs.
- Ensure that all teaching staff understand the need to provide students with good quality written feedback. Monitor closely the quality of feedback given to students and intervene to help staff improve this aspect of their work.
- Ensure that the plans to extend work experience opportunities in the current academic year are implemented fully and extend them so that a greater proportion of 16- to 19-year-olds have the opportunity to participate.
- Undertake quality assurance activities to ensure that the plans to improve careers guidance are fully effective.
- Scrutinise closely the work of subcontractors, giving particular attention to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the progress learners make. Agree an improvement plan with underperforming subcontractors and ensure this is fully implemented.
- Further improve the quality of reports to governors so that they are provided with the information they need to identify areas of concern and to hold senior leaders to account.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The newly appointed senior leadership team inherited a weak financial position and although a recovery plan is in place and progress is being made, it is unlikely that managers will be able to sustain the breadth and quality of provision.
- Managers have not yet done enough to improve the quality of subcontracted provision. In this provision, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet good enough and the proportion of learners who successfully complete their qualifications is low.
- Managers have not yet implemented an adequate work-experience programme for 16- to 19-year-olds, and the effectiveness of careers guidance is limited. As a result, learners are unable to make fully informed decisions about their future career direction. Managers have recognised these weaknesses and have put plans in place to rectify them but, for work experience, these plans are insufficient.
- Senior managers have not yet secured sufficient improvement in the rate of progress made by learners or in the proportion who successfully complete their qualifications. However, the newly appointed interim Principal and new interim senior managers have established a clear strategy for improvement. They have a sharp focus on improving the quality of learners' experiences and this is communicated well to staff at all levels.
- Managers have recognised the importance, in such an ethnically homogeneous area, of helping students and apprentices to understand a range of diversity themes. In 16 to 19 study programmes and adult learning programmes, teachers develop their students' understanding of modern British society. However, this remains superficial and although apprentices cover diversity themes in their induction, these are seldom revisited during their programmes.
- Managers have worked well with employers and other local stakeholders to improve the quality and relevance of the college's provision. The curriculum has been carefully matched to the priorities of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Work with employers has led, for example, to the establishment of an oil and gas academy that provides learners with routes into higher education. However, managers do not analyse student destinations sufficiently to enable them to judge the effectiveness of this curriculum.
- Managers have extended the curriculum at level 1 and level 2 to better meet the needs of local learners: 16- to 19-year-olds undertake employability courses that help prepare them well for work and access to higher education, and programmes have been revised so that they include more practical skills development, helping students see the relevance of the theoretical aspects of their programme. The curriculum now prepares most learners well for life beyond college.
- Teaching staff benefit from effective continuing professional development that is now well informed by the outcomes of a revised lesson observation process. Staff appraisals make good use of a number of key indicators, including observation grades, course performance and course management data such as register completion; these have resulted in improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Policies and procedures to help manage the performance of teaching staff are effective and well used. A number of teachers have recently improved their performance or left the college and this has had a positive impact on staff morale. However, although improved, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet good enough across the whole range of provision.
- Managers have developed a well-informed plan for the teaching of English and mathematics but although students learn how to apply these skills in their vocational area, managers have been unsuccessful in increasing the proportion who achieve an A* to C grade in GCSE English.
- **The governance of the provider:**
 - Reports to governors require improvement. Although reports are now more analytical and detailed than previously and have helped governors contribute to improvement planning, governors were unaware of emerging concerns in a number of subjects.
 - Members of the governing body have appropriate expertise to allow them to fulfil their roles effectively. This has led to a greater degree of challenge being provided for senior leaders and has resulted in a change of senior leadership.
- **The arrangements for safeguarding are effective**
 - Managers maintain an accurate and up-to-date single central record of Disqualification and Barring Service (DBS) reports and staff training is up to date.
 - Staff members are clear about their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding learners and use

procedures well to deal with any concerns.

- The college has a well-designed and well-implemented action plan for tackling extremism and radicalisation and managers have established close working links with relevant authorities.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved, and for adult programmes and apprenticeships they are good. However, weaknesses remain, particularly in 16 to 19 study programmes.
- In a small minority of sessions, teachers do not plan activities effectively. They do not use students' prior experience or the results of initial assessment to plan relevant tasks that are at the right level. Consequently, some students find the work too hard and struggle to make progress, while others find tasks easy and do not make the progress of which they are capable. This is seen more often in lessons for the 16 to 19 study programme and in subcontracted provision.
- Written feedback on assessed work is of mixed quality and in many cases teachers' comments are very brief and do not relate to what students need to do to improve. In a few instances, written feedback on work is constructive, but this is not seen in the majority of cases. Teachers' verbal feedback in lessons is strong. Teachers use questioning effectively to check understanding, but use it less well to probe underpinning knowledge.
- For classroom-based vocational courses, the student progress monitoring system is under-developed. Teachers do not always set aspirational targets for students at the outset; they do not refer to targets in lessons and assessment feedback. College staff are aware of the need for improvement in this area and have started to implement a more comprehensive process, but it is too early to see any impact. Teachers and managers frequently monitor the progress of students who are seen as being at risk from early withdrawal and put actions in place to address concerns; these include the development of stronger links with parents. Assessors are now using the e-portfolio system well to track and monitor the progress of apprentices and put effective interventions in place when needed.
- Teachers use relevant opportunities in lessons to promote equality and celebrate diversity. However, they do not often use students' prior experience or examples relevant to their lives to ensure a deeper understanding of topics. For apprentices, although equality and diversity are covered at induction they are not followed up fully at later progress reviews.
- In most lessons, teachers use a good range of activities to engage and stimulate learners so that most current students are making the progress expected of them. Teachers use their good subject knowledge and expertise to link theoretical knowledge to working situations, so that students understand what will be expected of them in their chosen careers. For example, in a health and social care session, students worked together to discuss client confidentiality in different scenarios, including the information they would need and how to keep it secure.
- Staff in the college have now placed a strong focus on developing students' English and mathematics skills in vocational lessons. For adult learning programmes and in the majority of lessons for students on the study programme, English and mathematics skills are developed well. For example, students build up glossaries of relevant terms and use vocational terminology appropriately. However, assessors do not promote English and mathematics skills strongly enough in progress reviews.
- College staff have a well-structured system in place for identification of additional learning needs. Initial assessment is thorough and managers quickly arrange effective additional learning support for students. Staff and students hold regular reviews together to see how well the support is working and then adapt it as necessary. Additional learning support staff work well in lessons, and students have a positive view of the support they receive.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

- Students and apprentices develop their confidence and the skills they need to become successful and independent learners. This is because teachers and tutors provide a caring and nurturing environment in which students are able to explore and solve any issues that present a barrier to learning. However, teachers do not use target setting well and this prevents students from developing as much as they might.
- Students develop a good range of employability skills, such as communication, team working and problem solving. Managers have introduced a useful additional qualification for 16- to 19-year-old students and have adjusted access to higher education programmes to provide a range of more practical, employment-

focused units and these help students prepare for their next steps.

- The behaviour of students and apprentices is excellent, in lessons, in the workplace and when using shared spaces within the college. As a result, the college offers an excellent environment in which to study. Students enjoy their learning and are attentive and enthusiastic in lessons.
- Teachers' expectations are appropriate and students and apprentices produce work of a standard that prepares them well for progression into employment or further study; students develop good practical skills. In vocational lessons, teachers set expectations so that students recognise they are working to the level expected by employers.
- Students and apprentices feel safe and are safe. They have a clear understanding of issues surrounding safeguarding, for example bullying and online safety. They are able to identify signs of abuse, neglect and radicalisation and know to whom they should report concerns.
- 16- to 19-year-old students have not consistently received clear advice and guidance about careers. In the past, pre-enrolment advice did not focus sufficiently on students' career aspirations, and ongoing advice and guidance was of variable quality. Managers have recognised these issues and current and future students will benefit from new pre-enrolment processes and the support of an externally sourced careers advice service. However, it is too early to gauge the impact of these changes.

Outcomes for learners

require improvement

- 16- to 19-year-old students do not make enough progress compared to their starting points, although this is improving. Too many of these students are unclear about their academic targets and teachers do not monitor their progress closely enough. Although students make at least their expected progress in most lessons, progress over time is insufficient. The progress made by apprentices has been too slow in the past, but managers have made improvements and current apprentices are progressing well. Adult students make good progress.
- The proportion of students who successfully complete their qualifications remains below that of similar colleges nationally, although it rose in 2015. This is because students on level 2 programmes are much less successful than their peers nationally. Those on programmes at other levels achieve in line with students at other colleges.
- Only a very small minority of 16- to 19-year-old students successfully gain an A* to C grade in GCSE English. However, the proportion who gain an A* to C grade in mathematics is above the national rate. Students achieve functional skills qualifications at around the national rate.
- Most students for whom the destination is known progress to a higher level of study or employment within their chosen subject area. The vast majority of apprentices remain employed at the end of their apprenticeship or secure other relevant employment. However, too few students on level 3 programmes progress from the first year of their studies to the second year and the destinations of a small minority of students are unknown.
- There are no significant variations in the achievements of different groups of students such as those from different ethnic backgrounds or those with a disability and/or learning difficulty.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- The college provides study programmes in 13 of the 15 subject areas. The largest areas are health and social care, construction and engineering. There are currently 758 students on 16 to 19 study programmes, of whom 83 are in subcontracted provision.
- Although most students continue with their programmes to the very end, too few level 2 students successfully complete their programme and, although improving, advanced level students make slightly less progress than might be expected given their starting points. Only a few students who have not previously done so successfully gain a GCSE A* to C grade in English. However, students make good progress in functional skills qualifications and GCSE mathematics.
- Too many teachers do not plan lessons well enough to cater for the specific needs of individual students and this limits the progress students make; activities are too difficult for some students and too easy for others. Teachers do not take full account of students' prior attainment, do not always set appropriate academic targets or do not systematically monitor the progress of students against such targets. Teachers do not provide assessment feedback that is sufficiently detailed to help all students make the progress expected of them.

- Too few students participate in work experience, although most programmes include work-related activity such as trips, visits and guest speakers. Managers recognise the importance of real work experience and have put plans in place to extend the opportunities available to students. However, these plans will not provide enough work experience opportunities to all students who could benefit from this activity.
- In the large majority of lessons, teachers use their expert knowledge and experience well and make good use of high quality resources to help students to make sense of their subject and develop confidence in acquiring new practical skills. In addition, teachers effectively integrate English and mathematics skills into vocational lessons through, for example, presentations and mental mathematics activities, helping students to develop the wider skills required by employers.
- Managers have extended the range of foundation and intermediate level programmes to better meet the needs of young people locally. They have developed better links with employers and are using these to help develop the curriculum.

Adult learning programmes

are good

- Just over 700 students follow adult learning programmes with over 100 on access to higher education courses. Other provision includes a variety of work-related subjects, including supporting teaching and learning in schools, hairdressing and beauty therapy.
- Teachers use their professional experience well to bring learning to life and to reinforce industry expectations. Teachers plan learning effectively so that students develop a good understanding of themes within their intended area of work, such as legislation related to the health and education sectors. In practical lessons students develop useful work skills.
- In the large majority of lessons, teachers use activities effectively so that students develop confidence in their ability to learn, and feel comfortable taking part. Teachers use resources, tasks and questioning successfully to encourage students to apply their own experiences and knowledge. Students develop valuable discussion, thinking and analytical skills.
- Teachers ensure there are appropriate opportunities for adults to develop their English and mathematics skills by integrating these subjects well into lessons. As a result, students learn how to apply English and mathematics within a vocational context.
- Students develop useful study skills in preparation for moving on to higher education through effective teaching in lessons and from the learning resource centre. These include, for example, research and presentation skills. Teachers help students to become independent learners by providing them with online resources that they find useful. In tutorials, students receive timely and appropriate guidance about applying to higher education. However, the careers guidance received by students prior to enrolment does not always ensure they select the right course.
- Managers use information about local employment opportunities to develop new courses and modify course content. For example, they added a unit on professional health care skills to the access to health programme. However, there are insufficient introductory courses to help adults to take their first steps back into education.
- In a small minority of lessons, particularly mathematics, teachers do not make sufficient use of information on what students can already do, to extend the learning of the more able or support those with less experience to keep up.

Apprenticeships

are good

- The college has 280 apprentices and 130 advanced apprentices, of which 106 apprentices and 47 advanced apprentices are taught by subcontractors. The majority of apprentices follow programmes in business administration, plumbing and food and drink manufacture.
- Leaders set high expectations and apprentices, who are new to their roles, follow programmes that help them to develop an array of new skills. The large majority complete their framework and secure permanent employment. Many continue to study at a higher level and a few are promoted to more senior roles. Many former apprentices who have moved into employment now have apprentices with the college.
- Employers contribute fully to their apprentices' programmes. They help to set targets for apprentices and participate fully in progress reviews. They provide a diverse range of learning opportunities through well-coordinated on- and off-the-job training and this enables apprentices to develop good technical skills and a deeper understanding of current industry practices. Consequently, apprentices are able to make a full contribution to the work of their employer.
- Assessors are responsive to the individual needs of apprentices and provide good support that ensures

apprentices make at least the progress expected of them. Assessors will respond to requests at short notice and outside of normal working hours. For example, one assessor agreed at a day's notice to travel a significant distance to observe an apprentice pack and distribute vehicle parts.

- Apprentices receive good written feedback that informs them on what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve further. However, assessors do not use targets well to help apprentices plan their learning and measure their progress. Feedback does not do enough to help apprentices improve the quality of their writing.
- Assessors monitor closely the progress of apprentices and this has increased the pace of their learning. Apprentices are now completing their programmes within agreed timescales. Assessors review the progress of apprentices at monthly team meetings and share information and discuss strategies to improve apprentices' performance.
- Apprentices have insufficient opportunities to broaden their understanding of the diverse nature of people with whom they are likely to live and work in modern Britain. Although these themes are covered during apprentices' induction, they are not routinely discussed in learning sessions or progress reviews.

Provider details

Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	1,300
Principal/CEO	John Chance
Website address	www.cleveland.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	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19	16–18	19+
	125	98	196	234	437	129	1	0
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	94	186	57	73	0	1		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
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"> ▪ The TTE Technical Training Group ▪ Business Improvement ▪ Youth Training Academy ▪ Flexi Training 							

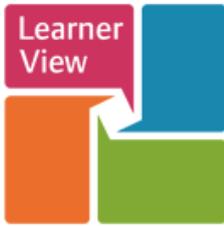
Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Russell Henry, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Heather Barnett	Her Majesty's Inspector
Richard Deane	Ofsted Inspector
Debra Forsythe-Conroy	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Loxton	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Scanlan	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the Quality and Improvement Manager, as nominee, and carried out the inspection at short notice. 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 students 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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