

Sir George Monoux

Sixth form college

2–5 February 2016

Inspection dates

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not maintained the good quality of provision and outcomes seen at the previous inspection.
- Teaching and learning are not consistently good to ensure that students of all abilities make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not plan activities and resources well enough to meet students' different abilities; students' targets are not always challenging enough and feedback on their work does not always identify what they need to do to improve.
- Not enough students achieved their main qualifications over the last two years and not enough make the progress expected, compared with their previous attainment.
- Students' achievement of qualifications in English and mathematics is too low and rates of improvement are too slow, especially in mathematics.
- Attendance rates remain too low, particularly in foundation level English and mathematics; a significant minority of students have poor attendance and arrive late to lessons.

The provider has the following strengths

- The vast majority of students complete their courses and a very high proportion progress to higher education, often at prestigious universities.
- Students develop a good knowledge of different career and employment routes and understand the skills and attitudes required to be successful in later life.
- College staff promote equality and diversity well and students demonstrate a good understanding of British values and are respectful of each other's differences.
- High-quality support services help students gain self-confidence and enable them to develop into mature, independent young adults who make a valuable contribution to college life.
- Students feel very safe at college and develop a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe from a broad range of potential risks to their safety and well-being.
- The new senior leadership team and governors have a clear and realistic understanding of the strengths and weaknesses across the provision; this is leading to well-targeted actions to secure improvement.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Sir George Monoux is a medium-sized sixth form college located in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. Around 2,000 full-time students, nearly all of whom are aged 16 to 18, are on study programmes at the college. The vast majority of students are on courses at level 3; just over half are on vocational study programmes, with the remainder on AS- and A-level courses. A small number of students with high levels of need attend mainstream courses at the college.
- Waltham Forest has significant levels of socio-economic deprivation, with relatively high levels of low-paid employment and homelessness. It is a very culturally diverse area, and college students come from a broad range of ethnic backgrounds. School leavers' achievement of five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, is low compared to other London boroughs, and many students join the college with lower than average prior attainment.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Leaders, managers and governors must ensure that the recently implemented college improvement plan is rigorously applied in all areas of the college's work and that they review progress regularly against targets set, and take urgent action where insufficient progress is being made.
- Managers and teachers should use data on students' performance more effectively to develop a sharper understanding of individuals' progress and to set more specific and challenging targets for students to help them make better and faster progress.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning and students' progress by:
 - ensuring that all teachers plan and use appropriate activities and resources in lessons to meet the different abilities of all students, and provide sufficient challenge for most-able students
 - improving teachers' skills in using questioning more effectively to probe and check students' depth of understanding and to help students to extend and apply their knowledge
 - ensuring that teachers' marking and assessment of students' work provides sufficiently detailed feedback to help students know how to improve their work and increase their progress
 - sharing the existing good practice evident in the better performing subjects so that teachers, especially those most in need of improvement, are supported to reflect on, and improve, their own practice.
- Maintain and accelerate current actions designed to improve students' development of skills in, and achievement of, GCSE and functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics. Ensure that all teachers have the skills and confidence to integrate and develop English and especially mathematics in their own subjects.
- Ensure that recent actions taken to improve students' attendance and punctuality are sustained and implemented rigorously and consistently across the college. Increase the expectations on students of regular attendance and good punctuality.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have failed to maintain or improve the quality of provision and students' achievements, both of which now require improvement. Students' achievements declined in 2013/14 and fell significantly in 2014/15, to well below national rates.
- Managers ascribe much of this decline to a period of turbulence in the college, when significant changes in senior leadership, difficulties in recruiting to senior and middle management posts and a period of industrial action combined to have a significantly negative impact on the quality of provision.
- The new board of governors, under the strong leadership of its Chair, has now prepared the ground for improvement. Governors have acted promptly to stabilise the senior management team and to recapture their role in providing a strong focus and direction for the college. A 'Turnaround Action Plan 2015/16', informed by the college's realistic evaluation of its provision, was implemented in October 2015. A small executive board meets monthly and is urgently instigating and overseeing college improvement.
- The interim Principal now leads a small, talented and able senior management team, some of whom are new to the college and bring with them fresh skills and ideas. Key appointments have been made for previously vacant head of faculty English and mathematics and head of English posts. Senior managers are developing a team approach to management and improvement, working well together and with staff. Teachers understand much better the college's key priorities for improvement and what is expected of them.
- The coordinated approach to improve performance is very new, and the impact from actions so far on the quality of provision and outcomes is modest; governors and managers have an accurate understanding of weaknesses within the college's provision and are now demonstrating their capacity to take prompt action to improve. Their evaluation of the quality of provision is thorough and largely accurate at whole-college level, but less so for curriculum areas. Managers' monitoring of progress against targets is good.
- Managers review teachers' performance rigorously; this, along with effective appraisal and professional development, is helping teachers to improve. Teachers achieving poorer grades in lesson observations receive good support to help them to improve and many do; a number have left the college as a result of performance management. The college's scheme for lesson observation helps managers to understand what actions are needed to improve teaching, learning and assessment consistently.
- In the best interests of their students, leaders, managers and teachers continue to make good use of the college's wide range of partnerships with schools, employers, local and public agencies, and the wider local communities. Good relationships with higher education organisations support students' high progression rates to higher education. Productive partnerships with employers enhance students' understanding of, and preparation for, future progression to employment. Leaders and managers ensure that the college's curriculum meets the needs and interests of its diverse range of students and local communities. Managers have implemented the requirements of study programmes well. Managers and teachers prepare students well for life in their communities and in wider modern Britain. Leaders and managers ensure that all students receive good, impartial careers guidance.
- Leaders, managers and teachers successfully promote social inclusion with an increasingly diverse group of students, many of whom come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Leaders and managers carefully analyse data on the performance of different groups of students. Most significantly, the overall success rates of female students significantly exceed that of males.
- **The governance of the provider**
 - With excellent leadership from the Chair, governors ensure that they are very clear about what the college does well and what it needs to improve. Governors have strengthened their challenge to senior managers, especially through the thorough work of their quality and performance committee.
 - With the addition of the executive board, governors are now in a much-improved position to set demanding targets and oversee and monitor progress against them.
 - Governors take the lead in the promotion of the college's ethos. They have recently re-affirmed the primacy of local students at the centre of the college's work. They have a very good understanding of regional and national priorities which may impact upon the college.
 - Student governors make a particularly strong contribution to the work of the board, and governors take their views and suggestions seriously. This is just one aspect of the way in which students are fully involved in the work and life of the college.
 - Through careful management of resources, governors and senior managers have secured the

excellent financial position of the college, helping to secure the continuation of the college's inclusive provision over time.

■ The arrangements for safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and well integrated with the wider support provided to students, so that students are protected from a range of potential risks. Managers complete thorough checks on staff prior to recruitment and records are comprehensive and up to date. Students feel safe at college and know how to report any concerns to college staff.
- Staff, governors and students have all received effective training on safeguarding so that they are able to identify any concerns quickly and take effective action. Close working with specialist safeguarding agencies significantly enhances student safety and students' knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including when working online.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the college complies with the 'Prevent' duty. College staff work closely together and with external partners to identify potential threats of radicalisation and/or extremism and to take appropriate actions where necessary. Students interviewed articulated a very good knowledge and understanding of possible risks and were very clear about the importance of acting on concerns through the college's reporting system.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are not consistently good enough to ensure that all students make the progress they should and achieve their main qualifications or those in English and mathematics. Teachers do not always make good use of initial assessment information to plan different activities and resources to meet students' different needs and levels of ability. Too often this results in a lack of challenge for most-able students, and sometimes weaker students struggle to understand key information or concepts. In many lessons, students complete the same tasks and activities, regardless of their ability or previous progress; where teachers provide additional tasks for those who complete work more quickly, they are often at the same level of difficulty as earlier tasks and so do not help most-able students extend their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers do not use questions consistently well to extend students' knowledge. Often teachers only test lower levels of knowledge and thinking, or expand on the answers themselves, rather than encouraging students to develop extended responses. Teachers do not always ensure that all students participate fully in lessons; in a minority of lessons students, though compliant, remain uninterested.
- Most teachers mark work regularly and accurately and correct students' errors in written work. However, not enough teachers provide sufficiently detailed or developmental feedback so that students know how to improve and make better progress. While most teachers set subject-related targets for students, these are not always precise enough to help students improve or to assess when they have been achieved. In art, design and media, students make good use of self- and peer assessment to reflect on and evaluate their own work and progress and to give peers constructively critical feedback. Teachers prepare students well for informal classroom assessment and external examinations by reviewing examination techniques and ensuring that students understand marking criteria.
- Actions to improve teaching in English are beginning to have a positive impact. Teachers in many subjects develop students' written and spoken English skills well in lessons and assignments. Students learn strategies to improve their spelling and are challenged to broaden their vocabulary. Teachers check carefully that students understand key subject vocabulary and technical terms; some use detailed subject glossaries to help students understand the meaning of complex terms.
- Improvement in the teaching of mathematics is less evident, both in discrete functional skills and GCSE lessons and in other subjects. Teachers are more skilled and confident in promoting students' literacy skills than in integrating mathematics into their own subject areas. Students understand the importance of improving their written and spoken English, but are less well motivated to develop their mathematics skills.
- Teachers and support staff give students a lot of additional help through learning support and subject-specific workshops; this is contributing to the improvement in achievement seen in recent mock examinations and assessments. Teachers and support staff plan workshops effectively to meet individual needs; for example, GCSE English students work on those aspects of their work where teachers have identified specific weaknesses. However, the role of learning support assistants in the classroom is not always clearly defined to provide effective targeted support for individuals who need it.
- Students develop a good understanding of equality and treat each other with respect. For example,

students develop their understanding of the impact of knife crime in their communities and explore law and democracy. In many subjects, students explore social and ethnic diversity including topics such as feminism, racism, stereotypes and different cultural influences on modern society.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

require improvement

- Despite managers' strong focus on improving attendance, students' attendance and punctuality to lessons are not yet consistently good. Overall college attendance rates remain stubbornly below the college's target, although this masks some marked variations between different subjects and levels. For example, attendance rates are high in AS- and A-level mathematics lessons, but low in functional skills and GCSE English and particularly mathematics. Leaders and managers have started to put effective actions into place; for example, targeted work with around 100 students with the lowest attendance rates has helped over half to make significant improvements in attendance this term. However, leaders acknowledge that there is still much to do to raise attendance rates across the college. Students do not always arrive punctually to lessons, which impedes their own learning and disrupts lessons for others.
- Students are keen to articulate their ideas and gain confidence in expressing their views through group discussions and presentations in lessons and to larger groups, including staff briefings and governors' meetings. Students' behaviour in lessons and around the campus is good. Students come from very diverse communities and backgrounds and treat each other with respect and learn tolerance of different cultures, faiths and viewpoints. Staff are positive role models for their students, who respond well to their teachers. The 119 current student representatives help to promote the students' views very effectively, and contribute well to cross-college decision making.
- Students benefit from a broad range of work-related activities to help them to develop useful practical skills and knowledge of potential career paths. The very large majority of students on level 3 programmes complete a wide range of relevant and worthwhile work-related activities; these include opportunities for work placements in hotels, antenatal clinics, local hospitals, doctors' surgeries and veterinary practices. Students often take part in projects set by external clients or employers, such as digital marketing and developing a cinema advertising campaign targeted at the teenage market. Students receive good support to develop their curriculum vitae and prepare for higher education or employer interviews.
- Impartial careers advice and guidance help students make informed choices about their future options; while the vast majority of level 3 students progress to university, students also receive appropriate help with researching other options such as training, employment and apprenticeships. Employability and enterprise events help students to develop their knowledge of the local and regional job market and industry. Teachers encourage students to research potential career options within their subject areas; for example, art and media students explore a variety of careers in the creative industries.
- A good range of enrichment activities helps students to broaden their knowledge and interest of the world around them, and to grow into more independent and mature individuals. They gain self-confidence, build resilience, develop tolerance and improve their understanding of different cultures and differing viewpoints. Students in the debating society choose current and sometimes controversial topics to debate, honing their skills in developing an argument and evaluating opposing points of view.
- Students feel very safe in the college and develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example when working online or using social media and in their lives outside college. Students know how and where to report any concerns. The student services team provides good support through counselling and timely referrals to external support services, for example to help students with mental ill health to develop resilience and improve their well-being.
- Students demonstrate high levels of respect for their peers and for staff, and support each other well. They are developing a very good understanding of the importance of fundamental British values through induction, tutorials and topics covered in lessons, including democracy, current political and social developments and the legal system. Students are very aware of the potential risks posed by extremism and radicalisation within their local area and know how to identify possible risks and the importance of reporting concerns to appropriate staff in the college.

Outcomes for learners

require improvement

- The proportion of students successfully completing their qualifications has declined in each of the last two years, following a previous three-year period of improvement. In 2014/15 the vast majority of students completed their courses, but too many did not achieve their intended qualifications; pass rates were too low on AS-, A-level and vocational provision and were particularly low on AS-level courses. However, success rates on level 3 vocational courses have improved steadily over the last three years, as an increasing number of students complete their courses.
- On many courses in 2014/15, students made less than the expected progress compared to their previous attainment, particularly on AS- and A-level and some extended diploma courses. This masks considerable variations between different subjects; for example, students made good progress in AS-level sociology, world development and citizenship and on vocational courses in information technology and music technology. Students on level 3 90-credit diploma courses made the level of progress expected.
- Results in recent internal examinations and assessments indicate that achievement rates are improving and are higher than at the same time last year, particularly on AS-level courses. Managers are monitoring students' progress and achievement very closely and have a very clear understanding of where students are on track to achieve their target grades, and those courses where students are not yet making sufficient progress.
- Students' achievement of GCSE and functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics requires improvement; results in both English and mathematics were too low last year. Early test and examination results in the current year indicate some improvements, particularly in English; however, this improvement is not evident yet in mathematics. Female students achieve better than their male counterparts and this gap widened in 2014/15; students of African and Pakistani heritage, which are the two largest ethnic groups in the college, achieve well. Students in receipt of additional learning support generally achieve as well as their peers; the small number of learners identified with high levels of need achieve very well, as a result of the very carefully tailored individual support they receive.
- The majority of students' work meets the required standards to enable them to progress successfully to the next stages of their intended careers. A very high proportion of those applying to university are successful, with an increasing number of students gaining places at prestigious institutions. Most students on level 2 courses progress to an advanced level course at the college or other institution, or move into training or employment. Managers have tracked the destinations of a very large majority of their students and have successfully reduced the number of students whose progression is not known.

Provider details

Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	16–18
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	2,079
Principal/CEO	David Ball
Website address	www.george.monoux.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)	0	0	321	0	1,685	29	0	0
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	-		-					
Number of learners aged 14–16								
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	None							

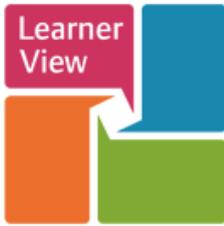
Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Janet Mercer, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Martin	Her Majesty's Inspector
Winsome Aldred	Ofsted Inspector
Marinette Bazin	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the associate vice-principal quality and curriculum planning, 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 and online questionnaires to gather the views of students; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and tutorials. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

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 If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



Learner View is a 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



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

To find out more go to www.employerview.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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and 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 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk



© Crown copyright 2016