

# Sir George Monoux College

Sixth form college

Inspection dates

9–12 January 2018

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

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- Governors and leaders have not yet had sufficient impact on raising the quality of provision to ensure that the overall effectiveness of the college reaches a 'good' standard.
- A minority of staff do not consistently instil in students suitable behaviour, or attitudes to learning, to comply with college expectations in lessons.
- Too many students turn up late for lessons and not ready to learn, which often causes disruptions and delays to the start of lessons.
- Too often teachers do not design a sufficiently broad range of activities to match students' varied abilities in lessons.
- Too few students benefit from external work experience to support the development of work-related skills.
- Too few AS- and A-level students, who make up around a third of students, make sufficient progress and successfully achieve their qualifications.
- The proportion of students who successfully achieve high grades in GCSE mathematics, or who passed their functional skills English or mathematics, is too low.

### The provider has the following strengths

- The new leadership team has established a positive environment for both staff and students, with a strong focus on improving teaching. Leaders, governors and managers have improved markedly their ability to assess the quality of teaching and learning, and to put in place improvement strategies.
- Teachers are now setting more effective targets for students, and using better checks to monitor their progress.
- Students have good opportunities to build their independence, social and interpersonal skills.
- Managers and teachers have successfully increased the proportion of students on vocational courses at levels 2 and 3, who make up around two thirds of students, who achieve their qualifications and make good progress in their learning.
- Students receive good, impartial careers guidance, and support with application to university.
- On completion, a high proportion of students successfully progress to the next stage of their education or training.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Sir George Monoux College is a medium-sized sixth form college located in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. Around 1,620 full-time students, nearly all of whom are aged 16 to 18, are on study programmes. Most students are on courses at level 3, while a small minority are studying at level 2. Just over two thirds of students are on vocational study programmes, while the rest are on AS- and A-level programmes. A very small number of students with high levels of need are on vocational and AS- and A-level programmes at the college.
- Waltham Forest has significant levels of socio-economic deprivation, with relatively high levels of low-paid employment and homelessness. A high number of students at the college come from some of the more deprived areas of the borough and adjoining boroughs. Waltham Forest is culturally a very diverse area, and college students come from a broad range of ethnic backgrounds. School leavers' achievement of five or more GCSEs at high grades, including English and mathematics, is low, compared to other London boroughs. Many students join the college with lower-than-average prior attainment.

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

- All staff and governors should maintain the focus and momentum of quality improvement initiatives to consolidate progress and establish higher standards of provision.
- Teachers should instil in all students suitable behaviour and attitudes to learning, to enable them to make better progress. In particular they should:
  - adopt a more consistent approach with students who are absent and late, or arrive to lessons without the required equipment
  - ensure that students remove any physical barriers that might prevent them engaging fully in lessons, in particular coats, hats, hoods and bags
  - adopt and enforce a cross-college approach and set of expectations as to how students maintain their folders and/or notebooks, to ensure that they compile an orderly and comprehensive record from which they can revise effectively.
- Teachers should ensure that they plan lessons that engage and motivate students more, and cater appropriately for the wide range of abilities, so that all students are able to make good progress.
- Managers should significantly increase the opportunities students have to do work experience, to support the development of their work-related skills.
- Managers should focus resources in particular on those more poorly performing subject areas, to ensure that the staff teams have the development, guidance and support they need to raise standards in those areas.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- After an initial period of very slow progress following the previous inspection, governors appointed a new principal, who took up post in September 2016. Since that time, the rate of improvement has increased significantly. The new team of governors, leaders and managers has taken decisive action and greatly enhanced the college's capacity to improve. All staff have helped raise standards and improve the quality of provision, but outcomes for learners, teaching, learning and assessment, and personal development, behaviour and welfare are still not yet good.
- Leaders and managers are working well to help the college recover from the reputational damage caused by a period of significant industrial relations issues. Student enrolments have fallen over the past three years from over 2,000 students to the current figure of around 1,620. Despite this drop in student numbers, governors and leaders have continued to ensure the sound financial status of the college.
- Governors and the principal have taken prompt and decisive action to remodel senior and middle management, and teaching teams, resulting in a significant change in personnel. Since the new leadership team redefined the expectations and accountabilities of teachers and managers, and put in place more effective performance management processes, some 50 staff have left the college as a result of capability or voluntary redundancy arrangements.
- Leaders' and managers' ability to assess the quality of provision and put in place improvement strategies has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is good. Self-assessment reports are evaluative and use a wide range of reliable quantitative and qualitative evidence. Managers use these reports to draw up suitably well-focused improvement plans, as well as tracking more accurately the progress of students.
- Managers use the lesson observation scheme well to assess the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They then support and develop individual members of staff effectively, and identify suitable priorities for wider staff development. While a number of areas associated with teaching, learning and assessment remain in need of further improvement, leaders are clear about their priorities to bring this about.
- The principal and governors have successfully established a new, more open culture of support and mutual respect between managers, staff and students. They have increased the focus on meeting the needs of each individual student, and raised their expectations of students and staff. They have also created a safer, more relaxed environment around the college.
- A small minority of teachers still do not promote the new culture and increased expectations from students strongly enough. They are not yet sufficiently demanding of students, particularly in relation to punctuality, attendance, personal organisation and engagement in lessons.
- Student surveys indicate a marked improvement in the level of satisfaction they have with their experience at college, particularly in relation to the opportunities they have to influence their lives at college, the ease of communication with teachers and managers, the more inclusive college community, and feeling safe around the campus. Leaders and

managers recognise that they have more work to do to improve students' views on the quality of their teaching and on whether they would recommend the college to a friend.

- Leaders and managers ensure that all students receive good, impartial, careers guidance. Through the work of teachers, specialist staff and visiting speakers, students become knowledgeable about the world of work and the opportunities available to them.
- Managers and teachers work well to promote an ethos of equality and of valuing others' beliefs, attitudes and values. Students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- In spite of many positive improvements across the college, progress with some weaker areas identified at the previous inspection is incomplete. For example, external work experience for students on study programmes is still not available for all students. Also, leaders and managers have not yet made sufficient progress to improve attendance in English and mathematics lessons, or punctuality overall.

### **The governance of the provider**

- Governors are well qualified and experienced and use their expertise well to serve the college and its students. They use their insight of the college's local communities and employers well to help strengthen college partnerships.
- Governors reinforce the effectiveness of the work of the principal, his senior leadership team, senior managers and middle managers. Since the previous inspection the governors' quality and standards committee has increased the level, detail and effectiveness of its scrutiny of performance. Governors work closely with managers to help secure improvement.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding is particularly well managed, and recently integrated with the college's arrangements to support students. Managers have ensured that all staff have kept pace with the developments in safeguarding practices since the previous inspection. Managers ensure that staff they recruit are safe to work with their students.
- Key staff maintain appropriate contacts with local safeguarding agencies and the police, to help ensure the welfare of the students, to take appropriate action to deal with safeguarding concerns, and to implement the 'Prevent' duty appropriately. Staff pay particular attention to making students aware of the 'Prevent' agenda, local threats associated with the risks from radicalisation, gang and knife crime, and how to tackle them.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Requires improvement**

- In too many lessons, teachers do not engage or challenge students sufficiently, to maintain their interest fully. While in many lessons students are enthusiastic and motivated by the subject, too often the pace of activities and the development of students' knowledge and understanding are too slow.
- Teachers' introductions to, and explanations of, lesson activities are not always clear. At

times, their questioning and verbal support do not provide enough guidance to students to help them complete a particular learning activity. In these instances, students tend to be confused or fail to complete tasks promptly.

- In more effective lessons, teachers' questioning is clear, with probing questions that enable students to develop a better understanding of their subject knowledge. For example, in an applied science lesson, the teacher asked students to label models and pictures of different viruses. While they were initially hesitant, with the teacher's clear questioning and encouragement they soon grew more confident, which helped them strengthen their understanding.
- Too often teachers do not design a sufficiently broad range of activities to match students' varied abilities or level of understanding. Teachers do not make sufficient use of the information from initial assessment, when they identify students' relative strengths and weaknesses on entry to the course. As a result, the most able do not make the progress of which they are capable, and less-assured students occasionally struggle.
- Teachers and managers do not consistently challenge learners when they fail to meet the college's standards and expectations. For instance, too often students interrupt the beginning of lessons when they arrive late, sometimes without the right equipment or resources.
- Managers have recently introduced a more thorough, detailed and effective target-setting process. Teachers are now setting more effective learning targets for students, and using clearer progress checks. These changes are enabling students to focus more effectively on steps they can take to help them improve and develop. In addition, they are helping students become more aware of their longer-term goals, and raising their awareness of the wider skills they will need to achieve their ambitions.
- Managers have recently reviewed and updated the entry criteria for each course. They have also amended and improved the advice, guidance and initial assessment that students receive. As a result, teachers gather the information they need to enable them to place students on the most appropriate course that suits their interests and abilities.
- Students receive regular, suitable homework activities. The majority of teachers provide good feedback to learners on marked work and practice examination papers. Teachers' correction of spelling, punctuation and grammar helps students improve their use of written English. Comments from teachers are clear; they not only explain what learners have done well, they also provide suitable actions to improve. For instance, travel and tourism students made good progress in a revision session, and were able to identify areas for improvement, following receipt of comprehensive written feedback on a mock examination paper.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge; they are enthusiastic about their subjects, and often include relevant sector examples in lessons. As a result, students use subject-specific terminology with growing confidence. For instance, students in a history lesson were able to explain a range of different perspectives that influenced the decision-making of politicians, which resulted in the Berlin blockade.
- Most classrooms and facilities are suitable and fit for purpose. In a few information technology (IT) classrooms, students tend to be partially hidden from the teacher's view behind office screens, or computer monitors. As a result, on occasions, students take advantage of this situation to disengage from lesson activities.

- Teachers create good opportunities to promote students' understanding of diversity and culture. Students also develop a sound understanding of British values and positive attitudes to diversity in British society. For instance, in a sociology lesson, male learners reflected on their preconceptions of male sexuality, attitudes and behaviour, as the group discussed gender stereotyping.
- Additional learning support is effective. Support staff carefully identify suitable ways to support learners who require assistance. They pitch the support appropriately, enabling learners to remain responsible for their own progress and development. This approach ensures that students in receipt of support achieve as well as their peers.
- Managers and staff ensure that parents and carers can easily access information about students' progress, and have direct contact with staff from the college when necessary. This contact with parents is particularly effective for students who are at higher risk of dropping out, or who have particular additional needs.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

### Requires improvement

- Staff do not consistently instil in students suitable behaviour, or attitudes to learning, to comply with college expectations in lessons. For example, students sometimes wear coats, hats, bags or hoods; they occasionally use their mobile phones, and do not always bring suitable equipment with them. As a result, a minority of students do not engage sufficiently with lesson activities.
- Too many students arrive late for lessons and not ready to learn, which often causes disruptions and delays to the start of lessons.
- Behaviour around the college has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is generally good. However, at times students tend to use inappropriate language in social spaces, showing a lack of regard to fellow students and staff.
- Attendance is generally adequate in most lessons. However, in GCSE English and mathematics, and in functional skills, it is too low, where poor attendance limits the progress made by students in these subjects.
- Not enough students benefit from external work experience to support the development of work-related skills in their chosen vocational area. Managers have set challenging improvement targets to increase the number of external placements on offer in each vocational pathway; however, they have not yet fully achieved these targets.
- Students develop and improve their literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and study skills in lessons. For example, students in a science lesson were able to calculate ratios and apply them accurately in everyday situations. Students have a sound understanding of the importance of these skills for successful progression to employment and higher education.
- Staff work well with students to discuss and identify suitable career aspirations; careers guidance is good. Staff help students reflect on how to become more successful learners, and increase their chances of achieving their future career aspirations.
- Staff are very clear with students about how all components of the study programme support their personal development and help them achieve their short- and long-term goals. As a result, most students grow in confidence, become more self-assured and

successfully progress towards the next stage of their education and training.

- Students make good use of the learning resource centre. They appreciate the opportunity to access suitable facilities and support which enable them to continue with their studies outside lesson time.
- A newly established team of personal mentors offers students a good range of personal and welfare support. Where required, students benefit from expert support and referral to external specialist agencies for a range of personal issues, for example matters relating to personal finance, mental health and forced marriage. This support helps assure students' physical and emotional well-being.
- Students benefit from a wide a range of extra-curricular activities. They set up, run and participate in a variety of clubs, societies and sports fixtures, for example public speaking and debating clubs, trips to employers, and various sports fixtures.
- Students build their independence and interpersonal skills well through membership of a student leadership team. For example, students run a college newspaper and participate in a range of community projects, raising money for local charities and organising events in community settings. This helps them become more confident citizens and gain an increased awareness of the wider community.
- Students feel safe around the college. They appreciate the safe environment maintained by the security team, and are highly supportive of the college's random checks on bags and coats, to ensure that the college remains a safe environment in which to study. Through a series of workshops, they learn about various risks and what to do about them, for example how to stay safe online and in the wider community, safe sharing of information on social media, awareness of gang culture and the meaning of sexual consent. Students know whom to go to if they have any concerns about their personal safety inside or outside the college premises.

### Outcomes for learners

### Requires improvement

- Too few students make sufficient progress and successfully achieve their qualifications. In 2017, as a result of decisive intervention from managers, the proportion of students on AS- and A-level programmes who successfully achieved their qualifications increased in comparison to the previous year, although it remained too low. The poorest-performing subjects included AS levels in science-related subjects, mathematics, business and religious studies.
- In contrast, the larger proportion of students on vocational courses at levels 2 and 3 generally make good progress and the significant majority successfully achieve their qualifications. In 2017, results showed an improvement over previous years for students at level 2, and a consistently good picture for students at level 3. The best-performing vocational areas included courses in travel and tourism, art and design, health and social care and IT.
- In 2017, the proportion of students who successfully achieved high grades in GCSE mathematics, or who passed their functional skills in English or mathematics, declined and was too low. However, the proportion of students who successfully achieved high grades in GCSE English increased considerably and was broadly satisfactory.
- In 2017, the progress students made relative to their prior attainment improved

markedly. Students on vocational courses broadly make satisfactory progress, but those studying art and design, IT, performing arts and travel and tourism perform particularly well.

- Students on AS- and A-level programmes generally make the progress expected of them. Notable exceptions exist, however; in particular, those students who join the college with higher GCSE results do not make such good progress and too few achieve their full potential.
- Managers have taken effective action and successfully improved the performance of male students so that it is now similar to that of female students. Those students from more disadvantaged backgrounds generally perform particularly well in comparison to their peers. Managers are, however, seeking to address the current lower performance of students of African and Caribbean heritage, who achieve less well than their peers from other ethnic groups.
- Too often students' folders or portfolios are poorly organised. Students do not store handouts or teaching resources consistently well, and the quality of their note-taking is often poor. In these circumstances, students make slow progress, lack confidence and assurance in their learning and do not have a suitably organised set of notes from which to revise.
- On completion of their courses, a high proportion of students successfully progress to university. In 2017, a particularly high number successfully gained offers from their first choice of university.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	130458
Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	1,680
Principal/CEO	David Vasse
Telephone number	020 8523 3544
Website	<a href="http://www.sgmc.ac.uk">www.sgmc.ac.uk</a>

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	0	0	242	0	1,392	31	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	n/a	n/a
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	n/a		n/a		n/a			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for whom the provider receives high-needs funding	4							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	n/a							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection 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.

## Inspection team

Peter Nelson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Martin	Her Majesty's Inspector
Francoise Beregovoi	Ofsted Inspector
Kanwaljit Dhillon	Ofsted Inspector

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