Cadbury Sixth Form College

Sixth form college

Inspection dates	5–7 March 2018

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

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Governors and senior leaders were slow to make the improvements recommended in the previous inspection report.

- Between 2014/15 and 2016/17 too few students achieved their qualifications and the majority of students did not make the progress of which they were capable given their qualifications on entry.

- Leaders' and managers' actions to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment have not yet resulted in consistently good teaching and strong student progress.

- Teachers do not consistently provide sufficient academic challenge. The learning activities are too simple and uninspiring. Students' work does not reflect their potential.

- Teachers do not effectively use activities which recognise the different starting points of students. Too many students do not make the progress of which they are capable.

- Teachers do not ensure that all students are working purposefully and with sufficient pace. In particular, teachers do not check on learning or use group work effectively. Students learn too slowly.

The provider has the following strengths

- The principal and governors now provide effective strategic leadership. They have improved staff morale, and have a clear vision that focuses on finding a long-term solution for the college and improving the quality of provision. They have developed the level 2 curriculum to meet the needs of students.

- Leaders and managers have strengthened their systems for monitoring of students' progress. The majority of current students are making expected progress. More students are continuing on their courses this year.

- Leaders and managers promote equality and mutual respect effectively across the organisation. They support students well. Students – many from deprived backgrounds – feel safe and enjoy their learning.

- Students demonstrate high aspirations. They use the high-quality impartial advice and guidance well. They have clear ideas of their next steps, well-crafted careers plans and the large majority progress to higher education, apprenticeships or employment.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Cadbury Sixth Form College is a small college on a single site in Kings Norton, which is approximately six miles to the south-west of Birmingham city centre. Almost all of its students are aged 16 to 18. The student population contains a greater proportion of minority ethnic students than is the case in the local population.

- Nearly half of the students come from low-income households. The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades 4 to 9, including English and mathematics, in Birmingham is lower than the national average. Students' prior attainment on entry to the college is slightly below the average for sixth-form colleges.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Reduce the variation in student outcomes between subjects by:
  - ensuring that teachers and their managers put in place more effective actions to support students who are underperforming
  - assisting teachers in these poorly performing subjects with high-quality staff development and access to support from the strongest practitioners
  - setting more challenging and measurable short-term targets for improvement for these subjects and monitoring the impact so that more students achieve their target grades.

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - ensuring that teachers plan and use learning activities effectively to meet students' different starting points so that all students make swift progress
  - ensuring that teachers set more challenging tasks which build on previous learning and require students to demonstrate more advanced analytical and evaluative skills
  - developing teachers' skills so that they use the group-work activities they have planned more effectively to develop students' skills and understanding.
  - ensuring that teachers check learning frequently and effectively. Where questioning is used, teachers should employ a broader range of techniques to help students demonstrate, develop and extend their understanding.

- Strengthen the process for monitoring the progress of students by:
  - comparing students' final grades with the results from internal assessments and identify areas of inconsistency
  - reviewing the reliability of assessments and the internal quality assurance arrangements
  - implementing the necessary changes to improve the reliability of the assessment process.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement

- Governors and leaders were slow to address the recommendations arising from the last inspection in October 2016. Their actions did not succeed in improving the quality of provision. College performance and standards declined in 2016/17.

- The new principal, who joined the college in January 2018, has worked effectively in both stabilising the leadership of the college and raising staff morale through regular briefings and internal communications. Staff now have a clearer understanding of their roles, responsibilities and the college priorities.

- The principal and the governors, the majority of whom are new, have developed a clear strategic vision that focuses on meeting the needs of students, improving the quality of provision and finding a long-term strategic partner. The principal, with the active support of governors, is re-establishing good working relationships with key partners and stakeholders following a period of significant leadership change and decline in reputation.

- Leaders and managers have developed the curriculum appropriately to meet the priorities of the locality. Managers have replaced the underperforming GCSE resit programme with a more appropriate range of vocational technical diplomas. The revised offer includes subjects that reflect the priorities of the local enterprise partnership. Managers make good use of labour market intelligence to inform this process.

- During the current academic year, leaders are taking appropriate action to tackle weaknesses in the quality of provision. Managers have revised the process for assessing the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. It now includes planned learning walks, the results of which observers use to make informed judgements as to the impact of teaching on students' progress. Managers have an improved understanding of the quality of learning. Managers provide teachers with clear targets for improvement. However, while managers who observe teaching and learning are broadly accurate in their evaluations, teaching, learning and assessment are not yet consistently good.

- Managers monitor students' progress at five key points during the academic year. Leaders' and managers' collection and use of data have improved. More than half of the current students are performing in line with expected targets. Students' progress is improving. However, too many students are still making weak progress, and too few students are achieving better than their expected target grade.

- Managers offer appropriate and timely professional development for staff. Managers identify priorities for development, which reflect the areas for improvement that are identified in observations of teaching and learning and from staff appraisals. However, the support provided through the staff development programme is not yet consistently helping teachers to improve their classroom practices.

- Leaders and managers effectively manage the performance of staff who are underperforming. They focus appropriately on teaching and assessment practice and take appropriate action to enable these staff to improve or to leave the college. Students are now performing better than before in this subjects.

- Self-assessment of college performance is broadly accurate. However, managers' judgements in the self-assessment report for the key aspects of the quality of teaching,

learning and assessment and for study programmes were too generous. Managers draw on useful evidence from course reviews, teaching observations and outcomes data. Staff and managers have an accurate understanding of what the college needs to improve. Leaders have introduced a new performance monitoring system to analyse and improve performance at course level further, but this has not had sufficient impact. Too many subject areas are still underperforming in terms of the progress that students are making.

■ Leaders and managers promote equality and inclusiveness effectively across the organisation. Students enjoy the culture of understanding and mutual respect that leaders have established in the college. As a result, students feel confident to express their feelings. Managers, teachers and tutors support them well in developing their understanding of different cultures, religions and life in modern Britain. Leaders closely monitor the performance of different groups of students. In the current year they have implemented actions which have narrowed achievement gaps.

The governance of the provider

■ Until recently, governors were not effective in holding senior leaders to account. Governors did not focus sufficiently on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and student outcomes. Achievement rates declined and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment did not improve. The financial health of the college declined.

■ The current board of governors has a good understanding of the challenges facing the college. They have established a clear set of targets to both monitor performance and accelerate the pace of improvement. They are now using their considerable skills and expertise to support the senior leadership team.

■ Governors are now challenging senior leaders more effectively. Senior leaders provide helpful management reports which enable governors to ask questions about the performance and direction of the college. All governors now participate fully in the entire range of corporation decisions.

Safeguarding

■ The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

■ Staff receive appropriate training in child protection. They are aware of their responsibilities to keep students safe. Designated safeguarding officers benefit from enhanced levels of training and support to keep their knowledge and practice up to date in aspects including forced marriages, female genital mutilation, e-safety and child sexual exploitation. They have a good awareness of the signs that would indicate that a student could be at risk of harm, and put appropriate actions to support the student into place.

■ Where appropriate, managers make timely referrals to local authority safeguarding teams. The safeguarding team has developed productive relationships with a range of professionals and agencies.

■ Students feel safe. They have confidence in college staff to help them to address any concerns. Through the tutorial system, tutors develop well their knowledge and understanding of the risks posed by lifestyle choices and other behaviours. As a result, students can speak confidently about the measures they can take to keep themselves safe in a range of settings.

- The leadership team ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and up to date. Managers have developed an effective action plan for addressing the risks associated with extremism and radicalisation, which they have updated with the support of a specialist advisor. Leaders ensure that they carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of all staff to work with learners.

- Leaders and managers are successful in developing a strong culture of safeguarding.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment — Requires improvement

- All students at the college follow full-time 16 to 19 study programmes. Two thirds study courses at A level, just under a third follow advanced vocational courses, and the remainder enrol on level 2 courses. The largest A-level subjects are English, sociology, chemistry, biology, mathematics and psychology. The largest vocational subjects are business, health and social care, applied science and applied law. Close to a third of the students take GCSE courses in English and mathematics as part of their study programme.

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good. Too many students do not make strong progress.

- In the majority of teaching, learning and assessment, teachers do not challenge students sufficiently. Too often, the learning activities are too simple and uninspiring. Students are not required to think more deeply or in sufficient detail. Students' work is too frequently below the standard expected for the stage of the course. Teachers do not routinely provide extension activities for those students who complete tasks before their peers, resulting in some becoming bored and disengaged. Teachers do not plan for, or respond swiftly to, the needs of students. As a result, too many students do not make the progress of which they are capable.

- In the majority of teaching and learning, the pace of learning is slow. When teachers set activities which require independent learning, they do not always provide sufficient detail for students to follow. They do not set clear and demanding deadlines for completion of the tasks. Too often, teachers set group-work activities without ensuring that students understand the roles and possess the skills to lead or participate in the group-work task. Students lose concentration and make slow progress.

- Within lessons, teachers do not check learning effectively to test students' understanding and to support their progress. When teachers do check what students have understood, they often use verbal questioning, but not always effectively. For example, when students do not provide the correct answer to a question, teachers will provide the answer themselves, or move on to another student. Teachers do not give students sufficient time to reflect on the response. Teachers do not rephrase the question so that students can arrive at the answer with support. Therefore, students do not consolidate their learning effectively.

- In a minority of sessions, particularly in creative arts, sociology, media and English, teachers effectively challenge students to progress swiftly and to achieve high standards of work. In these sessions, teachers check students' progress frequently and effectively. Teachers allow students time to reflect on questions; tasks vary in difficulty so that they challenge students of all abilities to progress. For example in textiles, the teacher builds

effectively on students' starting points, develops the essential skills well, and then inspires students to produce high-quality work through peer challenge in a supportive environment. The teacher displays recent examples of high-quality work from other students.

- Teachers assess students' progress through five key assessments in each year. Managers evaluate the standard of the assignment set and request to see a sample of the marked work. This is a new initiative. It provides some assurance that the outcomes for internal assessments are reliable indicators of students' current progress.

- Teachers provide good written feedback on the key assessments. For example, in sociology and English, it is precise, detailed and ensures that students know what to do to improve. However, teachers' written feedback on assessments, which are not part of the key assessment regime, is not helpful enough in showing what students need to do to correct their mistakes.

- Teachers support students particularly well on the English GCSE course. Teachers plan well for the individual needs of students and they reinforce and check learning regularly. For example, students learn how to skim and scan effectively when analysing age-relevant and interesting texts. Students make strong progress.

- Across all courses, teachers integrate and reinforce the technical vocabulary which is required for a good understanding of the subject. In assessments, teachers monitor the correct use of spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as ensuring that all written work is clear and explains the points effectively and succinctly. Teachers do not support and develop extended evaluative writing consistently well across the curriculum.

- Teachers support students' development of mathematical skills well where they occur within the topics. For example, teachers help students in biology to calculate the surface area of organisms and the impact on molecular transport.

- Managers identify students with additional support needs accurately at the beginning of the year and provide them with effective support and learning strategies. Managers and teachers support these students through additional study sessions, individual mentoring and specific teaching strategies. Managers monitor their progress closely, and these students make good progress.

- At the beginning of the year, managers raised the GCSE grades that students needed in order to start on some of the advanced level courses. The large majority of students are on suitable courses to progress to higher education or the world of work. The large majority of current students are remaining on their chosen courses.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare   Good

- The majority of students take pride in their work and are able to explain what they have learned.

- The large majority of students take part in well-planned, high-quality and meaningful work-experience placements. These help students to develop a good awareness of the expectations of the workplace, and the importance of the wider skills that employers value. For example, one student developed their confidence, resilience and team-working skills while on placement at the West Midlands Fire Service; another student developed their empathy and ability to work with vulnerable adults while on placement at a care

home. Students set clear targets for their placement. Students record their progress and achievements in a logbook, and then the employer validates the record.

- All students prepare for employment through the tutorial programme. Specialist tutors develop students' skills well so that they can produce good-quality curricula vitae and job applications. Teachers successfully use a variety of methods to reinforce and develop students' understanding of the world of work within individual subjects. For example, in science, students understand the relevance of chromatography in industry; and in French, students explore the nature of industrial relations. In art, students develop the skills to offer and receive criticism, which reflects professional practice in this discipline. In business and performing arts, students develop confidence and strong communication skills through presentations and realistic role-play scenarios. In media studies, students produce some very high-quality short films in response to a professional brief.

- Students develop employability skills well in enrichment activities, such as project management and communication skills. Students work with business mentors to develop and carry out ideas, which raise money for charities or vulnerable people. For example, one group of students planned a fundraising event for homeless people. Students developed good project management skills. Another group of students participate in a librarianship course and work regularly with the college staff to provide a high-quality service to students. Students develop the skills of librarianship, but also develop their confidence and ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of customers.

- Through the tutorial programme, students know how to keep themselves healthy in terms of eating habits, keeping physically active, maintaining positive mental health and developing good personal relationships. Managers, teachers and specialist support tutors work hard to reinforce this learning. Managers provide high-quality professional support and environments to enable vulnerable students to talk through and address their concerns. Managers have developed a room for reflection, which is popular with students. Student mentors and professional counsellors offer a highly valued service to students. The large majority of vulnerable students stay at college and achieve their qualifications. However, only a small proportion of students take part in sporting activities.

- Students have high ambitions. Students use the range of college-based and external advice and guidance well. Managers ensure that advice and guidance for students is impartial and of high quality. Students have well-developed and realistic career plans. The large majority of students progress to higher education, apprenticeships or employment.

- Students feel safe at college. Managers and teachers work effectively to ensure that the college is a safe place to learn. Students understand how to protect themselves from the dangers of extremism and radicalisation and what that means in the local context and in their daily lives and online.

- Students demonstrate a good understanding of fundamental British values and show respect for the different views of people from different communities. Students work collaboratively and harmoniously. The college community is diverse and the atmosphere is inclusive and welcoming.

- The very large majority of students attend college regularly and arrive in good time for the start of lessons. The very large majority of students are able to complete work within the expected timescales.

- The large majority of students appreciate the additional independent study sessions and

use the time effectively to catch up and complete independent work. They improve their independent learning skills and make better progress. Teachers, specialist tutors and students do not systematically record progress.

- In the minority of sessions, a small number of students become distracted – particularly during less effective group-work activities. A minority of students do not follow the college code of conduct, and they wear hats and coats in lessons.

Outcomes for learners	**Requires improvement**

- For the period 2014/15 to 2016/17, too few students achieved their qualifications, and the proportion declined. For 2016/17, the proportion of students who remained on their courses was too low. Too few students on A-level, AS-level and vocational courses achieved their qualifications. There was a large achievement gap between female and male students. Male achievements were very weak.

- Most students on A-level courses did not make the progress expected of them given their entry qualifications. In most subjects, students made poor progress and did not achieve in line with expectations. In a few subjects, such as graphics, textiles, art, media studies and sociology, students made good progress. Students on vocational qualifications made very weak progress given their starting points.

- Across the majority of courses, current students are making expected progress. Managers have been successful in improving in-year retention. Managers have taken actions which have halted the decline in the progress that students are making. However, progress remains a concern in too many subjects, including science, mathematics and psychology.

- For 2016/17, outcomes for students on a full level 2 programme consisting of retake GCSE courses were weak. Too few students achieved the GCSE grades in business studies, media studies, sociology and science that were required to progress to level 3. Managers no longer offer this type of study programme.

- Students achieve well in English and mathematics GCSE. A high proportion of students achieved the higher grades, and students made good progress from their starting points.

- Students with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve in line with or better than their peers.

- Managers now monitor the outcomes of different groups of students well. Current data shows that they have been successful in closing the achievement gap between male and female students.

- The majority of current students produce work that is in line with the standards expected of the course and at this time in the year, given their starting points. However, too much work is still below the standard expected and only a minority of students' work is of a high standard.

- Teachers and other professional advisors prepare students well for the next stage of their education, training or employment. A high proportion of students progress to further/higher education, employment or training at a level suitable to meet their career plans.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130469
Type of provider	Sixth form college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	784
Principal/CEO	Mr Andrew Cropley
Telephone number	Tel 0121 458 3898
Website	www.cadcol.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 or above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	–	–	42	–	523	–	–	–

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 to 16	–
Number of learners for whom the provider receives high-needs funding	–
Funding received from:	Education and Skills Funding Agency
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	–

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the quality director, 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 and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners; 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

Martin Ward, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Susan Gay	Ofsted Inspector
Deborah Summers	Ofsted Inspector
Victor Reid	Her Majesty's Inspector

Learner View

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

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