

South and City College Birmingham

General further education college

Inspection dates

27–30 November 2018

Overall effectiveness			Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good	Adult learning programmes	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good	Apprenticeships	Good
Outcomes for learners	Good	Provision for learners with high needs	Good
		Full-time provision for 14- to 16-year-olds	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Not applicable

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- The principal and senior leaders create a harmonious and inspiring environment, in a large and complex college, which enables staff to raise aspirations successfully.
- Governors and senior leaders have managed recent strategic changes well. The recent college merger and the separate development of courses for full-time pupils aged 14 to 16, have led to improved outcomes for students, pupils and apprentices.
- Senior leaders and managers ensure that close collaboration with local partners and employers results in a well-planned, coherent curriculum that meets the needs of local people and employers, as well as the priorities of the wider Birmingham City region.
- Achievement rates in vocational qualifications have improved and are high. Most students and apprentices who leave the college at the end of their course continue to higher education, employment, promotion or training.
- Teachers are successful in supporting students with significant personal difficulties and low skill levels to improve their confidence, language skills and readiness for work.
- Most students and apprentices develop good practical and vocational skills under the guidance of highly skilled teachers and assessors. Standards of work are strong in fashion, hairdressing, music and business.
- Students benefit from highly effective pastoral guidance and support, which means that they remain on their course.
- Despite the actions of managers, attendance at lessons is too low, and this has a negative impact on the progress that these students make.
- Too few students achieve their qualifications and make the progress of which they are capable in A-level provision and GCSE English and mathematics courses.
- A small minority of teachers and assessors do not use the information on learners' starting points well enough to ensure that all students make the progress of which they are capable.
- A small minority of teachers and assessors do not provide students with clear instructions on what they need to do to improve.

Full report

Information about the provider

- South and City College Birmingham (SCCB) was formed in 2012 following a merger between South Birmingham College and City College Birmingham. In August 2017, a further merger with Bournville College took place. In the same year the college assumed responsibility for the full-time education of a group of pupils aged 14 to 16 and established the Bournville Academy.
- SCCB is a large general further education college providing vocational education from five main campuses and four smaller centres across Birmingham. It provides education and training predominantly to communities and employers local to Birmingham. There is a small number of subcontractors within the delivery of apprenticeships and adult learning programmes.
- The college serves a diverse community. More than half of the students are from minority ethnic groups. The college is a large provider of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). Students aged 18 and over make up the largest group by age.
- Birmingham includes many communities in areas of high deprivation and a significant proportion of students come from these areas. The unemployment rate in Birmingham is higher than the national figure. The proportion of young people not in education, employment or training is also above the average.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Teachers and assessors, particularly in A-level provision and English and mathematics GCSE courses, should improve the quality of teaching learning and assessment by:
 - using the information from students' starting points to develop learning that challenges the most able to make the progress of which they are capable
 - providing clear feedback to all students on what they need to do to improve.
- Managers of English and mathematics GCSE courses should improve the progress of students by:
 - ensuring that teachers record the in-year attainment of all students and that staff and students have a shared and common understanding of the actions for improvement for students who fall behind
 - ensuring that they have a comprehensive understanding of the progress that students are making online and in the hub, and that these additional forms of study are leading to rapid progress
- Leaders and managers should improve pupils', students' and apprentices' attendance on the courses where rates are too low.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal, governors and senior leaders have a clear strategic vision for the college. They aim to develop the skills and aptitudes of students so that they can make a significant contribution to the local and regional economy. Given the location of the college and the starting points of their students, leaders understand the importance of raising aspirations. Governors and leaders are implementing this vision successfully.
- The principal and senior managers sit on regional bodies such as the Local Enterprise Partnership and the West Midlands combined authority. They contribute fully in both shaping and meeting their strategic priorities.
- Leaders and managers have strong and productive partnerships with external stakeholders. They work particularly well with employers to get students into jobs. For example, they are working in close partnership with a national but locally based transport company to meet their identified skills gaps.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the curriculum is highly responsive to local priorities to meet the needs of both employers and students. Managers review the curriculum annually and are proactive in changing and developing the curriculum offer, for example the introduction of cybersecurity courses for adults, demolition training for those who want to work in construction and the development of digital qualifications such as gaming. All these courses reflect current opportunities in the labour market.
- Leaders and managers have managed well the challenging task of merging with Bournville College. They have successfully reorganised teams across the college to develop a common culture and ethos which successfully focuses on students' progress.
- Governors, managers and staff share this common goal which underpins the objectives in the three-year strategic plan for the merged college. Governors and senior leaders closely monitor progress towards achieving seven key performance targets. They have been successful in securing higher and more consistent standards across the merged college.
- Leaders and managers have successfully addressed key weaknesses identified in the previous inspection of Bournville College. They have improved the quality of apprenticeship provision and the use of management information. However, they have not sufficiently improved the level of attendance across the college and the quality of teaching in A levels and English and mathematics GCSE courses.
- Leaders and managers have effectively established full-time provision for learners aged 14 to 16 at the Bournville Academy. They have ensured that leadership of the academy is strong and most of the teaching is of good quality. Students make good progress from their starting points.
- Senior leaders and managers have rightly made students' development of English and mathematics a priority. They have recently developed a new strategy and made significant investment in online learning resources and additional staffing to provide individual support outside the classroom. However, it is too early to assess the impact of the strategy.
- Leaders and managers have a strong focus on the development of the skills of teachers,

assessors and staff. Managers are effective in developing the skills of those who are new to teaching and the college. Senior leaders' investment in teaching excellence leaders has led to good support for individual teachers and assessors.

- The self-assessment process is well managed and informed by staff, governors and other key stakeholders. Managers identify the main strengths and weaknesses accurately. Leaders and managers monitor curriculum quality improvement plans well and use 'monitoring of target' meetings effectively to ensure that managers are identifying underperformance and taking prompt action to support the progress of students.
- The performance management of teachers and managers is effective in raising standards. Senior leaders set high expectations for staff. They use a range of information about the students' experience to identify good and poor performance. They act swiftly to support underperforming staff and remove staff where this is not effective.
- Leaders manage the few remaining subcontractors well. The performance of subcontracted provision is at least in line with the college's direct provision.
- Managers also work closely with local community groups and employment agencies to offer disadvantaged students access to courses that allows them to progress to employment or higher-level courses.
- Senior leaders and managers promote an inclusive culture. They accept all students regardless of their starting points and provide them with good support to meet their goals and aspirations. The college is a welcoming environment, and students from different backgrounds work well together. They treat each other with respect and are prepared well for living in modern Britain.

The governance of the provider

- Governors bring a wide range of appropriate experience to the board and are strong advocates of the college's mission and values. They are fully involved in shaping the strategic direction of the college and in identifying the college's key priorities.
- Governors have access to regular detailed reports which inform them of how well students are attending, making progress and achieving. As a result, they have a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the college.
- They hold senior leaders and managers to account for delivering the three-year plan. They question and challenge senior managers to explain strong and weaker performance and ensure that managers complete improvement actions.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Managers responsible for overseeing the college's duty for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults record, monitor and act on safeguarding incidents well.
- Safeguarding officers have good links with external agencies such as the Local Safeguarding Children Board, the 'Prevent' executive board and the police. They report regularly and in detail to the governors. They are well informed about potential risks to learners' safety. They are vigilant and report any concerns to the appropriate authority.

- Managers have developed appropriate policies to meet the safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty. Managers have recently updated them to ensure a consistent approach across the merged college and in the Bournville Academy.
- All staff and governors receive regular and appropriate training.
- Managers are aware of the risks students face in the different college centres. College safeguarding officers share information appropriately to keep students safe.
- Students and apprentices demonstrate a good awareness of how to work safely in college workshops and in the workplace. Students, apprentices and pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and social media.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers, assessors and staff are well qualified and undertake regular professional development to keep their knowledge and skills up to date within their subjects. Students in creative arts, games design, music, hairdressing and beauty therapy, and carpentry benefit strongly from the expertise of their teachers. Students are developing their skills and knowledge in line with industry standards. For example, students in level 3 hairdressing courses use current industry-standard colouring techniques well.
- Most teachers on vocational courses use the information they have on students' starting points carefully to set appropriate learning activities. They use a range of methods well to check that students are making progress. Teachers frequently review the progress that students are making through practical observation, assessment and questioning. For example, teachers on the level 3 beauty therapy course use questioning to review thoroughly students' understanding of technical terms about muscles and bones before planning facial treatments. They build on students' previous knowledge and skills. Students develop a secure understanding of what they have learned.
- Most students and apprentices develop good practical skills. Students in creative arts, hairdressing and beauty therapy, carpentry and business produce good standards of work. For example, students in fashion confidently employ industry-standard pattern-cutting techniques. Students on level 3 fashion demonstrate skills in modifying patterns from their ideas.
- Most vocational teachers track and monitor the progress of students precisely. As a result, most students understand the progress they are making towards their target grades on their programme. When students fall behind teachers are swift to respond and provide valuable support.
- Most teachers provide thorough and helpful feedback to students. Most students know what they need to do to improve. For example, teachers in music discuss students' sound tracks and provide feedback on how they can improve. Students develop their understanding of how layering different drum sounds in their work will improve their recordings. However, a minority of teachers and assessors do not provide sufficient feedback to enable students and apprentices to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Most vocational teachers and assessors develop students' and apprentices' English and mathematics skills well within the context of their subject. Students in beauty therapy lessons calculate accurately the proportions of colour needed for a hair treatment for a

client. In ESOL sessions teachers adapt their feedback to suit the language level of individual students. Assessors in apprenticeships teach mathematics in a relevant vocational context. For example, in plastering apprentices learn how to cost a job accurately and develop a detailed understanding of the cost of wastage. Most students on vocational study programmes develop the technical language skills required for their level of programme and industry.

- Teachers and assessors use projects based on industry to prepare students for work. Students rapidly develop their learning and skills through activities such as fashion shows. This provides students and apprentices with the skills and knowledge they need for the workplace and their next level of study. In apprenticeships, a level 5 care manager worked with specialist organisations to develop an excellent care plan for a complex condition that required specialist equipment.
- Most teachers in vocational sessions use e-learning systems to help develop learners' skills and independence. For example, teachers in business check students' understanding methodically through interactive quizzes. Teachers use technology well to enable students to see and learn from each other's work and to provide and receive constructive feedback, which helps them improve their performance.
- Most teachers make good use of information to support students with additional needs on vocational programmes. Teachers work well with learning support workers. Students receive appropriate levels of support and make progress at least at the same rate as other students in their group. Students value their support and feel confident in asking for help when they need it. For example, in a barbering class students were able to complete activities and answer questions at a high level with support from their sign language teaching assistants.
- Most students are well behaved and respectful to each other, teachers and staff. Students with high needs develop in confidence due to the positive relationships they have with their teachers and staff. Most students enjoy their courses and feel well supported by their teachers and staff. For example, students on the access to social sciences course gained a detailed understanding of the English Poor Laws through challenging questioning and lively debate.
- Teachers and staff embrace the breadth of diversity within the student population. Students develop an in-depth understanding of equality of opportunity and cultural diversity. For example, in adult programmes teachers draw on students' diverse backgrounds to deepen their understanding about forced marriage, gender and sexual orientation.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are less effective in A levels and English and mathematics GCSE courses. Most teachers in these subject areas do not use the information on students' starting points well enough to support good progress. For example, a teacher insufficiently checked learners' prior knowledge when setting group tasks in percentages. As a result some students had difficulty in answering set questions. Teachers on A-level courses do not provide sufficient challenge for most-able students, and so these students do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers and managers in English and mathematics do not monitor the progress of students' skills effectively. Too many students do not complete the assessments, and managers do not track effectively the work that students complete online and through the

English and mathematics hubs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Students behave well both within the classroom and in the wider college environment. They respond well to the high expectations of staff. Students are welcoming and demonstrate good social skills.
- Staff support students well with a range of services. This includes the provision of free breakfast to students to encourage regular early attendance, and financial, personal and social support. Staff are effective in identifying students at risk of leaving college and providing additional support. Most students remain at college.
- Most students benefit from structured, meaningful work experience that supports the development of personal skills and readiness for work. Many students undertake work-experience placements in challenging and demanding environments such as pharmaceutical companies and the local mental health trust. Students are effective in linking the learning from work experience to their theoretical studies.
- A few students participate in a two-week personal development experience in another country to broaden their understanding of the wider world as well as building skills such as confidence, public speaking and independent living. For example, a student who attended a programme in Ireland spoke very highly of the life skills and confidence that they developed.
- Students benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities in college. These activities give students valuable additional skills for their personal lives, future education and careers. For example, public services students take part in workshops with the Counter Terrorism Unit to understand the complex nature of their work, and ESOL students attend workshops from the Fire Service on fire and road safety.
- Many students benefit from a comprehensive programme of guest speakers, which managers design to support the development of skills for employment. The entrepreneurship club provides students with the opportunity to meet and learn from successful local business people. Former students who have set up their own businesses, particularly within the fashion and music industries, return to college and inspire current students.
- Students speak very positively about their experiences at the college and the positive environment in which they study. They enjoy being at college and become more confident. They have high aspirations.
- Most adult students make good progress in developing the skills they need for work and their personal lives. For example, ESOL learners develop confidence in their spoken language skills in different situations. This enables them to take an active part in their local communities and develop their understanding of life in modern Britain. Apprentices develop valuable vocational skills. Highway maintenance apprentices develop the skills to measure and record accurately pothole location and size and conduct a risk assessment to reduce the risk of litigation.
- Students feel safe at the college. They know how to keep themselves safe online. Managers have employed an effective system to monitor and protect students while they

are online, with automatic reporting of activities of concern to the safeguarding team.

- Students have access to appropriate, impartial careers advice and guidance, which enables them to make informed choices about their next steps. Leaders have invested in the provision of well-qualified careers advisors and are working to improve capacity to meet growing need as a result of the recent merger.
- Most students have a well-developed understanding of British values and the dangers of radicalisation. However, a small minority of learners are unable to articulate their understanding in depth.
- Despite a clearly defined management process for addressing absence including telephone calls, postcards and home visits, students' attendance at lessons is too low.
- Attendance on English and mathematics programmes, while improving, is still lower than attendance on students' other commitments. Too many learners are missing essential learning to prepare them for assessment.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- The proportion of students on 16 to 19 vocational study programmes who achieved their qualifications improved in 2017/18 and is high. Most current students on vocational courses make good progress and develop good levels of practical skills.
- Too many students on A-level provision and GCSE English and mathematics courses did not achieve their qualifications in 2017/18; a minority of current students are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- In adult learning programmes achievement rates are high, and students make very strong progress from their starting points on access to higher education, vocational, basic skills and ESOL courses. Too few adults achieve higher grades on English and mathematics GCSE courses.
- Students on full-time 14 to 16 programmes, who join the college with a very low starting point and have been disengaged from education for some time, make good progress from their starting points. The teachers inspire students to move into employment or further education.
- Current apprentices are making good progress. Apprentices who transferred from Bournville College are making rapid progress. Historically, apprentices aged 16 to 18 on intermediate apprenticeships did not achieve within the planned timescale. Apprentices aged 25+ achieved well and within planned timescales on higher apprenticeships.
- Students with high needs are making very strong progress on vocational courses. However, a minority of students are not making rapid progress in the development of their skills for independent living.
- The standard of most students' work meets or exceeds that expected for the level of their course and relevant industry. Students can explain how they have developed and what they have learned. Students produce high-quality work in fashion, hairdressing, music, and business.
- Teachers are effective in supporting students with significant personal difficulties and low skill levels to improve their confidence, language skills and readiness for work.

- Students on short courses which develop their readiness for employment are successful in gaining employment or developing rapidly skills for work.
- Leaders and managers effectively identify and address any significant gaps between the achievement of different groups of students. At the time of inspection there were no significant gaps in achievement.
- Most students who remain at college on completion of their course move to a higher level of study.
- Most students aged 16 to 19 move to positive destinations, such as further study, university, employment, or training at a level suitable to meet appropriate career plans. An increasing proportion of students at level 3 are moving into very competitive courses in higher education.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The college currently has 5,042 learners on study programmes in a wide range of vocational areas from entry level to advanced level. A small proportion of students study A levels. The largest numbers of students follow programmes in health, care and early years, business, creative arts and media, hospitality and catering, hairdressing and beauty therapy, construction, and foundation learning.
- Managers plan individualised study programmes which meet the principles of 16 to 19 provision well. Most current students are making good progress. Students enjoy enrichment activities and meaningful high-quality work experience, which links theory to practice well and prepares students for employment. For example, students on the music production course have been on work experience with local enterprises and are able to describe the software skills that they have learned. They apply these skills successfully to current college projects.
- Most teachers in vocational courses make good use of information about the students. As a result, they provide targeted support for students that enables them to move on into higher levels of learning, apprenticeships or employment.
- In vocational lessons teachers have appropriately high aspirations for the students and plan learning thoroughly to match the prior learning of the students in their class. Teachers prepare high-quality learning materials which enable students to achieve. Teachers provide clear explanations that build on prior learning. Students' attitude to learning is positive and purposeful. Students studying games art use industry-standard software and develop appropriate technical skills to create a 3D treasure chest for an online game.
- In practical vocational lessons, students develop practical skills to a high standard and they use technical vocabulary precisely. Students in a beauty therapy practical lesson prepared their work stations swiftly and professionally to provide high-quality pedicures for clients. Level 1 students on electrical programmes participated effectively in discussions about the different metals used in cables and why and how these were used in everyday appliances. They then used this knowledge effectively in a practical task.
- Teachers check learning precisely. In a childcare lesson the teacher allowed the students

to prepare detailed responses to questions and then tested students' understanding with supplementary questions. Teachers in hairdressing and beauty therapy used a mobile phone app to check students' progress to enable students to receive immediate feedback on the quality of their work. As a result students improve their work rapidly.

- Most teachers provide thorough feedback and give students helpful guidance on how to improve. This is particularly effective in childcare courses where students use well-defined targets and clear areas for development to help them to improve subsequent pieces of work.
- Teachers on vocational courses develop students' English and mathematical skills well. For example, in an engineering class students used their mathematical skills to work on data sets to calculate standard deviation. In construction lessons students developed their mathematics skills when calculating job costings from a technical drawing. In art and design students used specialist language accurately when describing their creative thinking through a project.
- Students value the careers advice and guidance provided by their tutors and are well prepared for their next steps. Specialist staff at each centre provide impartial advice and guidance for students. Staff provide drop-in sessions, individual appointments and group tutorial sessions. Most students have high aspirations and are following clear career pathways that are directly related to their vocational or academic programmes of study.
- Students feel safe; they know whom to contact if they have a concern. Students confirmed that staff had introduced safeguarding and e-safety as part of their induction programme. They value the presence of security staff, who encourage the wearing of lanyards in the buildings. Staff are confident to challenge learners in lessons if they see or hear inappropriate references.
- Teaching is less effective in the very small minority of academic programmes offered. In A-level lessons, teachers do not provide the most able learners with sufficient opportunities to extend their knowledge, and therefore they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Too many students do not make good enough progress on GCSE courses in English and mathematics. Too often in these lessons, students are all working on the same activities irrespective of their ability, and the most able learners wait while the remainder of the group completes the tasks. Students who accessed the individual support located in the 'hubs' in the learning resource centres valued the support from experienced teachers; however, too few students currently access this support. Students and staff are enthusiastic about the introduction of online support for mathematics and English. However, managers are not yet able to provide a picture of how effective this new initiative is in improving students' understanding.

Adult learning programmes

Good

- There are currently 8,086 adult students from entry level to level 4 studying full and part time. Most students are on entry and level 1 courses.
- Leaders and managers develop the adult learning curriculum precisely to meet local needs and priorities. One in four of the students is on ESOL qualifications which provide an important step into making a contribution in the wider community and gaining

employment. One in 10 students studies English and mathematics qualifications to improve their chances of gaining employment. Courses, such as the access to higher education programme, have been developed to match local healthcare sector needs. One in three students is on vocational courses which develop creative and practical skills to appropriate industry standards

- Managers develop courses which help the most disadvantaged students, including those with mental health issues, to re-engage in learning. Managers use the community learning fund well to encourage students in activities that improve their personal and social skills and bring benefit to the local community. Students receive college certificates if they are not working towards externally validated qualifications. Students value these certificates.
- Managers have strong and effective relationships with Job Centre Plus, local employers, and the Department for Work and Pensions. As a result, managers successfully establish short courses which lead to employment through the effective development of skills for work, such as the production of job applications and improved interviewing skills.
- The vast majority of students enjoy their studies and make good progress. Students are proud of their work. Their learning helps them develop increased levels of confidence and self-esteem. Students benefit from supportive feedback, which encourages them to improve their work; however, in a minority of cases feedback from teachers lacks precision and further challenge. A large proportion of students move onto higher level courses and employment. Many students learn skills which enable them to make a positive contribution to their families and communities.
- Teachers integrate mathematics effectively into lessons. As a result students develop their numeracy skills, including costings, calculations and measurements. For example, students in construction calculated the raw materials required to complete a plastering job.
- Students are confident in using a range of technical terms and specialist vocabulary. For example, in access to healthcare courses students use technical terms confidently when studying genetic theory and the transmission of haemophilia. Teachers develop students' independent research and study skills well and introduce students to learning through technology. For example, in health and social care students researched and evaluated effectively the roles of care professionals in collaborative teams.
- Most teachers check on students' learning carefully and use questioning effectively to provide appropriate challenge to extend students' knowledge. Teachers monitor students' progress well over time. Teachers have a clear understanding of individual student development and set appropriate targets which help students make good progress. Teachers intervene effectively if students fall behind.
- Adult students achieve a wide range of additional qualifications from entry level to level 3. These additional qualifications are related to specific skills which make it easier for students to gain employment. For example, students on construction courses will achieve the construction skills certificate scheme (CSCS) card.
- Students feel safe and know how to report concerns. They know how to keep those in their care safe. They understand why health and safety and safeguarding are important in the workplace. As a result, students apply what they have learned in lessons and when on work placement.

- Students benefit from the promotion of British values, equality and diversity in lessons and through college organised events. For example, managers invited the Lord Mayor and representatives from the army and police into college to discuss British values with students. Students developed their understanding of the concepts of democracy and the rule of law and how these applied in their communities. Students behave well and demonstrate respect for others.
- Managers ensure that students have access to impartial careers guidance and most students move into a higher level of study. In a minority of cases students depend too heavily on the advice of their teacher and do not use the impartial adviser. Potentially, they are not aware of all the options.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers do not set activities which match the starting points of students. Students become disengaged in these lessons and do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Attendance is too low in too many adult lessons.

Apprenticeships

Good

- Currently the college has 675 apprenticeships in learning, of which a third are aged 16 to 18. Roughly equal proportions of apprentices are on intermediate, advanced and higher apprenticeship programmes. Most apprenticeships are in health, public services, care, engineering, construction, and business administration. Most apprentices are on framework apprenticeships, with 20% on standards-based apprenticeships.
- Managers and staff plan all the apprenticeships well, and the apprenticeship provision fully meets the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship programme. Apprentices benefit from very good training in the workplace. Employers design practical projects and workshops that complement and reinforce apprentices' theoretical knowledge. Staff work very closely and effectively with employers on the recruitment and induction of apprentices. Most apprentices remain on programme and succeed.
- Apprentices make a significant contribution to their employers' businesses. Managers ensure that apprenticeship programmes meet the needs of employers closely by addressing skills gaps and enabling businesses to remain competitive. Employers value the contribution of their apprentices. For example, in accountancy apprentices are meticulous in their work and quickly identify errors in payroll. Most employers are fully involved in the planning and review process for their apprentices and help support their progress well.
- Current apprentices make good progress. Most apprentices are on target to complete their programme on time. Apprentices work hard, grow in confidence and demonstrate professional attitudes in the workplace. For example, in health and social care higher-level apprentices carefully plan their research projects to support the development of services that meet the requirements of service users.
- Highly qualified and vocationally experienced assessors effectively use their expert knowledge to inspire and motivate apprentices. As a result, apprentices produce work of a high standard. Staff undertake professional updating to refresh their skills. Teachers and assessors have high expectations of their apprentices. They make good use of their industrial experience to invigorate learning, with examples that help apprentices to link

theory and practice closely. Teachers engage apprentices well in developing new knowledge that they use in their workplaces. However, teachers in painting and decorating, electrical installation, and functional skills mathematics do not challenge apprentices sufficiently. Consequently apprentices in these subjects do not make the progress of which they are capable.

- Assessors review the progress of apprentices frequently to ensure that they remain on track. Employers play an active role in reviewing their apprentices' progress ensuring that apprentices continue to move rapidly into the culture of the company. In a minority of cases assessors focus on the completion of units, with limited emphasis on extending the apprentices' skills.
- Most teachers and assessors provide feedback on assessed work that helps learners to improve. In a minority of cases written feedback lacks detail and it is not clear how the apprentices could improve further.
- Apprentices develop and consolidate their English, mathematics and ICT skills well during their training programme. Most apprentices pass the required qualifications in these subjects first time. Apprentices develop and practise these skills in their job roles such as when measuring, using data to conduct analysis, processing the payroll for the company and communicating with clients.
- Apprentices are aware of their next steps and progression opportunities. They are ambitious and keen to move into higher levels with the potential for promotion and higher earnings. Most apprentices continue into permanent full-time employment or training. Apprentices are aware of their future career options.
- Apprentices feel safe and have a good understanding of safeguarding and how to keep themselves safe. Assessors help apprentices to understand how to keep themselves safe and work in a safe environment. Teachers and assessors cover safeguarding topics thoroughly at induction and reinforce them in reviews. Apprentices are fully aware of the dangers they may face from radicalisation and extremism.

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

- Some 160 students identified as having high needs are studying courses at all centres. There is specialist provision for supported learning at the Bournville, Hall Green and Handsworth centres.
- Leaders and managers use the funding they receive well and design programmes for learners which enable them to develop useful skills for their futures.
- Students attend a wide range of vocational courses where they make at least the progress expected of them. Students who study on accredited courses achieve at least as well as their peers who do not have high needs. Managers ensure that students receive impartial advice and guidance. Students choose appropriate courses and they make clear and realistic career plans. Most students continue into higher-level courses.
- Students have good relationships with teaching staff, support workers and the other students in their groups, which enable learners to develop confidence and feel comfortable in learning environments. Teachers use visual and creative methods to help students to understand more easily. For example, a teacher hung plastic items such as bottles, crisp packets and yoghurt pots from a white coat to show how hard it would be

for fish to swim when caught in plastic. The teacher then challenged them to identify single-use items and to suggest what society could do to reduce plastic usage. Students enthusiastically discussed plastic use; they could list items that were single-use only and discussed what they could use instead.

- Students receive appropriate, specialist support which further helps them overcome barriers to independence and develops their confidence. For example, one student with specialist support in a barbering class was able to confidently explain the best haircut for someone with thinning hair and why that haircut would be the best choice.
- In a functional skills session one student used sign language to join in with other learners and make contributions. When they started at the college this student could use only lip reading. They had received the support to learn sign language, which had enabled them to contribute and progress further in their studies.
- High-needs students make good progress in improving their English and mathematics skills throughout their learning programmes. Students develop literacy skills well. For example, in barbering the teacher asked the students to use the terms degree, guideline, and graduation within the context of barbering. In a GCSE English session, students were able to use effectively similes, alliteration, personification and an appropriate tone.
- Teachers provide useful feedback to students, which enables them to improve.
- Students behave well. They understand the risks of radicalisation and extremism and are aware of British values and how they impact on their everyday lives. They feel safe in college and know to whom they should report concerns.
- Attendance in sessions is low, and too many learners are late for their sessions.
- Managers and teachers do not provide sufficiently detailed targets on support plans to enable close tracking of progress. Teachers and managers do not track the development of independent of skills well enough. As a result, students do not practise and develop these skills as much as they should.
- The current supported internship programme does not provide appropriate activities for learners to move into employment.

Full-time provision for 14- to 16-year-olds

Good

- There are currently 53 full-time pupils aged 14 to 16, of which 24 are in Year 11 and 29 are in Year 10. Pupils in Year 11 were previously at Baverstock High School and have been on the college's roll since September 2017 upon the closure of that school. These Year 11 pupils are taught in the Bournville Academy. Pupils in Year 10 were previously electively home educated (EHE), having been unsuccessful in schools. Managers have allocated them a separate area within the college which is adjacent to the academy. Year 11 pupils attend for 25 hours per week, while Year 10 pupils attend for 18 hours per week.
- Senior leaders and managers have a clear and appropriate purpose for the education they provide for both groups of pupils. Leaders' aim for the pupils at the academy is to secure some qualifications and continue to further education or employment when they complete Year 11. Leaders' aim for the Year 10 learners is to re-engage them in formal education so that they can proceed to positive post-16 destinations.

- Leaders are successful in achieving their aims. Leaders have invested considerable staff resource into the provision. Leaders have appointed a head of school, the equivalent of two full-time teachers, a teaching assistant and a pastoral support worker to each group of pupils.
- Teaching is generally effective across both groups. Teachers develop strong, productive relationships with pupils. Consequently, pupils trust their teachers and value the support they receive in classes with small numbers. Skilled teaching assistants provide effective support to pupils in lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge that they use well in planning activities that are generally engaging and well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils, with an explicit intent to prepare pupils to achieve GCSE qualifications, mostly at grade 4 or above. Pupils make good progress in most subjects.
- The teaching of mathematics is strong. Teachers build productive relationships with pupils and provide high-quality support and encouragement. They prepare well-structured lessons which build on previous learning effectively. Consequently pupils make good progress and enjoy mathematics.
- Teaching is least successful in science. Many pupils have considerable gaps in their scientific knowledge because of their previous educational experiences. Teachers do not take these low starting points sufficiently into account. Additionally, pupils currently do no practical science. As a result pupils do not find science interesting or engaging. Pupils do not make sufficient progress.
- Leaders and managers have developed a curriculum, for academy pupils, which is broad and balanced. This incorporates a wide range of subjects which, for the most part, engage pupils well. Teachers provide high-quality learning experiences in vocational subjects. These successfully help pupils to decide what they would like to study in the future.
- The Year 10 curriculum is narrower, comprising English, mathematics, science, personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and a vocational option. However, this is appropriate given these pupils' lack of recent formal education. Although the provision has been operating only since September 2018, it is already proving successful in re-engaging many pupils in formal education.
- Leaders ensure that the discrete area for pupils aged 14 to 16 is safe and secure. Pupils feel safe. They trust their teachers and other adults and they value the support they receive. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful. Pupils recognise and appreciate the care that staff provide. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training and are alert to the signs that pupils might need extra help. Staff are clear about their responsibilities to report their concerns in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Pupils generally have good attitudes to learning. Most pupils behave well and are keen to do well. Where teaching is strong, and activities are well matched to pupils' abilities, pupils respond well. They focus well, work hard and make good progress. When teachers' planning does not sufficiently take into account some pupils' low starting points, some pupils disengage, and low-level disruption is evident. Most members of staff are skilled in managing behaviour and consequently they have been successful in improving behaviour over time.
- Leaders place a high priority in improving pupils' personal, social and employability skills.

All pupils have two timetabled hours each week focusing on developing these skills. Managers plan this programme well, and teachers cover a wide range of topics. These include welfare and safety topics such as radicalisation, drugs and alcohol awareness. Pupils have a good understanding of British values and what it means to grow up in multi-cultural Britain. They consider health topics including mental health and how to deal with stress. As a result, students engage more successfully in college and at home and make progress in their studies.

- Attendance remains the greatest challenge facing leaders in both elements of the 14 to 16 provision. Attendance remains well below the national average for 14-16-year-olds in school. However, leaders make attendance a top priority and it is improving rapidly. Staff contact absent pupils' parents immediately if they do not attend. Staff often follow up calls with home visits and offer parents support in getting their children to college regularly.
- Published data for the outcomes of pupils who left Year 11 in 2018 does not accurately represent the progress they made during the one year that they attended the college. In the 12 months at the college, most pupils achieved level 1 qualifications in English, mathematics and science. Almost all pupils moved on to appropriate courses when they left. The great majority chose to remain in the college to pursue level 1 or level 2 qualifications.
- Pupils receive the careers advice and guidance that they need to make informed choices about their next steps.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130461
Type of provider	General Further Education College
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	22,411
Principal/CEO	Mike Hopkins
Telephone number	0121 694 6293
Website	www.sccb.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	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	1,827	5,193	1,523	1,820	1,661	1,010	3	63
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	71	187	143	172	33	230		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	Directly funded pre-16 learners: 53 <i>Of which previously home schooled: 29</i> School links (non-ESFA-funded pre-16 learners): 128							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	160							
Funding received from:	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Access Skills Ltd. CPC Training Consultants Fairway Training (Healthcare) Limited The NVQ Training Centre Limited Topps Management & Support Services University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the assistant principal quality and standards, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection reports. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners, staff 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

Martin Ward, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
William Baidoe-Ansah	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrea Dill-Russell	Her Majesty's Inspector
Harmesh Manghra	Her Majesty's Inspector
Dominic Whittaker	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Gay	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Thompson	Ofsted Inspector
Jacqui Ecoeur	Ofsted Inspector
Kay Hedges	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Kinghorn	Ofsted Inspector
Carolyn Brownsea	Ofsted Inspector
Alun Williams	Her Majesty's Inspector

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