

# Inspection of Coventry College

Inspection dates:

17–20 September 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Education programmes for young people	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Adult learning programmes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Provision for learners with high needs	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## **Information about this provider**

Coventry College is a large general further education college based in Coventry across two campuses: Henley campus and City campus. At the time of the inspection, 3,085 learners were on education programmes for young people, 2,375 learners were on adult learning programmes, 463 apprentices were mostly following apprenticeship framework programmes, and 135 learners were in receipt of high-needs funding. Leaders offer courses in most subject areas, the largest being in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), health and care, business, and creative arts. Courses are offered from level 1 to level 4, with around two thirds of the learners on study programmes at level 2 and below. Over half of apprentices were on level 3 apprenticeships. The college works with one subcontractor who delivers spectator safety qualifications.

## **What is it like to be a learner with this provider?**

Most learners enjoy their time at college and benefit from the training that they receive. They work well together, are respectful of each other's needs and focus appropriately on achieving their qualifications. Learners feel safe at the college.

Learners and apprentices are generally positive about the quality of the training that they receive but many feel that it could be improved. Too often they are not inspired to learn in those lessons focused on learning facts to use in assignments. Teachers provide learners with enough support to complete their studies.

Most learners and apprentices sufficiently develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours for them to move on to their next steps. Learners on level 3 courses do not develop well enough their independent learning skills to equip them for higher-level study.

Most learners who do work experience and apprentices benefit from working with employers and organisations. They develop their confidence and ability to work with others in unfamiliar situations, honing their skills and making links between theory and practice.

## **What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders and managers provide a wide range of courses that enable learners to develop appropriately their knowledge, skills and behaviours and meet the needs of local employers. They have good relations with and listen carefully to the needs of the local enterprise partnerships and other business organisations. For example, managers have introduced a specialist transport design qualification required by the prestige car industry in the region. Leaders' actions have not yet improved the quality of provision in areas such as engineering and construction to ensure that all learners move into their intended next steps.

Managers and teachers in areas such as health and social care, art and design, sport and business administration plan their courses appropriately to help learners and apprentices achieve their qualifications. However, too few teachers and assessors teach their subject so that learners and apprentices – including those who have high needs – become interested, know more and can apply their knowledge to achieve the highest grades. Many learners focus mainly on gathering facts and feel restricted to spending much of their time writing assignments to pass the unit of study.

A minority of teachers and assessors present information clearly and in a logical order, but too few revisit and reinforce theories sufficiently for learners and apprentices to transfer the knowledge to their long-term memory. Many teachers of English and mathematics do not sequence learning activities well enough to enable learners to consolidate their learning. For example, in adult functional skills lessons, they move on without checking that all learners have understood basic concepts. As a result, too few learners make the progress expected of them and achieve their

qualifications in these subjects.

Teachers and assessors do not routinely review learners' and apprentices' work well enough or provide sufficiently helpful feedback for them to extend their knowledge. Most feedback merely confirms the completion of assessment. Teachers' corrections of learners' English skills are too complex for them to be able to amend their work. Consequently, too few learners consistently produce written work of a good standard. For learners in receipt of high-needs funding, staff fail to provide individualised targets and feedback to ensure that they make good progress in their development.

Most learners and apprentices develop good levels of practical skills through work experience and on-the-job training. Construction apprentices master various plastering techniques that help them to contribute well to their employers' business. Art and design learners used multi-media software effectively to produce promotional materials for a ferret rescue centre. Too few learners in receipt of high-needs funding develop the skills necessary for them to access supported internships or work experience.

Although managers have improved the advice and guidance for learners and apprentices in the current year, in 2018/19 too few received clear information about courses, their location and entry criteria. As a result, a minority of learners studied courses not linked to their career intentions. Learners on level 3 courses received information about applications to university late, limiting their options. Additionally, a small minority of apprentices and learners who have high needs did not know the range of options available to them on completion of their course. Leaders and managers have now produced clear and improved course information, entry criteria and pathways to employment.

Teachers develop and extend most learners' knowledge and skills effectively through additional courses, links with industry, and trips to exhibitions and cultural events. For example, learners in applied science relate their learning of medicine through work with St John's Ambulance. Adult learners studying ESOL increase their confidence in speaking and listening in their communities during trips and visits to local events and places of historical interest, such as Stratford-upon-Avon and Worcester, and visits to the local pantomime.

In the previous year, learners and apprentices did not receive high-quality tutorial support to help them develop resilience, confidence and an in-depth understanding of how to prepare to be citizens of modern Britain. Their attendance at tutorials was low. Adult learners and apprentices do not have a sufficient understanding of the risks of exposure to extremism and radicalisation and their potential impact on their lives in their communities. Managers have now planned a detailed tutorial programme to enable learners to settle in quickly and understand college expectations. All learners now receive appropriate information about safeguarding.

The majority of learners attend lessons on time and engage in their studies. While teachers have high expectations of learners' behaviour in class, they fail to tackle

the behaviour of a small minority of learners who disturb a mostly calm working atmosphere.

Governors have a good understanding of the college's curriculum and they provide leaders with effective challenge to improve provision. Since the college merger, they recognised quickly that leaders' planned improvements were ineffective and took decisive steps with the leadership of the college. Additionally, the chair and the chief executive officer (CEO) have appointed new governors who have a strong background in education to enhance the board's effectiveness. Governors and senior leaders now have compelling and well-considered plans to harmonise and improve the quality of the curriculum across both campuses.

Leaders and managers need to ensure that learners and apprentices make good progress in their English and mathematics GCSE and functional skills qualifications. The quality of education on programmes for young people is not yet consistently good. Too few learners achieve the grades of which they are capable. For learners who have high needs, teachers do not assess their starting points thoroughly to ensure they are on the best programme to meet their needs, or to provide them with challenging targets so that they reach their maximum potential. Too few apprentices achieve their qualifications in the time allocated.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff work effectively with various agencies to ensure that learners are safe. The designated safeguarding lead and deputies hold the requisite qualifications and receive current training to update their knowledge. They work well with local organisations to support learners who make disclosures and support them through to resolution. Learners are safe and secure in each campus. They know who to contact if they have concerns. Adult learners and apprentices do not have a sufficient understanding of the risks of exposure to extremism and radicalisation and of their potential impact on their lives in their communities.

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

- Leaders should set higher expectations of teaching quality and support managers and staff to improve curriculum design, planning and delivery so that learners achieve the grades of which they are capable.
- Too few learners and apprentices make good progress and achieve their English and mathematics GCSE and functional skills qualifications. Leaders must ensure that learners attend these sessions and that teachers have the requisite skills and knowledge to teach these subjects effectively.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that teachers provide learners with effective feedback and support so that they develop their skills, knowledge and behaviours according to their potential.
- Leaders must ensure that learners in receipt of high-needs funding receive the

individualised support to enable them to achieve well and move into supported internships or employment.

- Leaders need to ensure that recent improvements to the advice and guidance that learners and apprentices receive enable them to make informed decisions about their future career ambitions.
- Managers need to ensure that learners and apprentices attend planned tutorial sessions so that they develop a strong understanding of living and working in modern Britain. Learners and apprentices need to know specifically the threats posed locally from those with radical or extremist views.
- Governors must ensure that leaders' improvement actions lead quickly to learners and apprentices knowing more and achieving their best.
- Leaders need to ensure that all staff collaborate to create a harmonious and calm working environment, inside and outside the college campuses.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130472
<b>Address</b>	Henley Road Bell Green Coventry West Midlands CV2 1ED
<b>Contact number</b>	024 7662 6300
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.coventrycollege.ac.uk/">http://www.coventrycollege.ac.uk/</a>
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Jill Banks
<b>Provider type</b>	General further education college
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	Stadium UK

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous monitoring visit report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including observing learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

### Inspection team

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