

Newbury College

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 130602

Name of lead inspector: Andy Harris HMI

Last day of inspection: 13 November 2009

Type of provider: General Further Education College

Address: Monks Lane
Newbury
RG14 7TD

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Information about the provider

1. Newbury College is the only general further education college in West Berkshire. In 2002 it relocated to a purpose-built building in the south of Newbury as a private finance initiative pathfinder project. Small and temporarily rented accommodation two miles away from the main site houses construction workshops and a hair salon. The college's catchment area is predominantly rural. Overall West Berkshire is regarded as a relatively prosperous area though it has GCSE success rates (5 or more A* to C) slightly below national averages and pockets of deprivation. Local schools all have sixth form provision.
2. The main public funding is from the Thames Valley Learning and Skills Council. The college is also contracted by West Berkshire Council to deliver nearly 90% of the Council's adult and community learning through 52 outreach centres. This accounts for around 30% of the learners enrolled by the college. In 2008/09 the college had around 700 learners on Train to Gain programmes; this was a significant increase on the previous year's 24 learners and the college is working with five subcontractors to deliver that programme.
3. Newbury College provides courses in all sector areas, except social sciences, and focuses on vocational courses. Around 30% of learners are under 19 years old, mainly on full-time courses. The adult learners are mainly on part-time courses. The larger numbers of learners are on care and engineering courses and particularly on courses in the area of preparation for life and work, including provision for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In 2008/09 around 22% of the college's learners received additional learning support, either through specialist provision or in routine classes. The inspection directly inspected engineering, literacy and numeracy, including key skills, and the Train to Gain and apprentice programmes. The adult and community learning was not directly inspected.
4. The college provides training on behalf of the following two main providers:
 - West Berkshire Local Authority
 - Atomic Weapon Establishment.
5. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the college:
 - CPL Training Ltd
 - Training Associates (Surrey)
 - Nordic Pioneer
 - Wessex Partnerships Ltd
 - Electrical Assessment Services.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Provision for young learners: 14 to16	66 part-time learners
Further education (16 to 18)	519 full-time learners 184 part-time learners
Foundation learning	205 full-time learners 69 part-time learners
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	175 full-time learners 1,898 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain	774 learners
Apprenticeships	168 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Grade 2
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	2
Subject areas	
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	2
Literacy and Numeracy	3

Overall effectiveness

6. Newbury is a good college. People, from outstanding governors working through enthusiastic staff to motivated learners, are bringing about improvements. Learners are pleased to attend classes in a welcoming, modern college and they feel safe and valued there.
7. Over the past four years outcomes for learners have improved significantly. Now learners get their qualifications at rates which are at least as good as other colleges and in some cases, such as level 2 results for younger learners, the results are outstanding. The college does outstanding work supporting many learners who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, helping them achieve their own goals. Programmes for apprentices are good, and are completed in a pleasingly prompt way.
8. The college has outstanding links with employers and others interested in education and training. This leads to a range of programmes that meet the needs of learners very well. The numbers of learners who move on to higher-level courses, work-based learning and university are good. The college provides a very good range of work placements and events at college to help learners prepare for eventual employment.

9. Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory. The college has worked well to improve these aspects and there are some examples of really good lessons. However, a few aspects require improvement, and the comprehensive system of observing classes requires refinements to make it even clearer how teachers can improve. The way the college promotes equality and diversity is good with an admirable sense of mutual respect amongst learners and staff. There are many teaching assistants and volunteers helping in class; whilst some do give useful support, they could be used more effectively.
10. Inspection grades matched nearly all the college's provisional 2008/09 self-assessment report grades. That report also judged one curriculum area outstanding, five good and two satisfactory.

Main findings

- Partnerships with employers, schools and other community organisations are outstanding. Links are used well to provide learning programmes and activities that promote social inclusion, increase skills and qualifications and prepare learners for work and life. The college provides good progression opportunities for a wide range of learners.
- Leadership and management are good. Governors provide outstanding support and challenge. Both governors and managers provide clear leadership and direction which has led to improvements. Quality improvement arrangements are comprehensive and generally effective, though the monitoring of and the involvement of subcontractors in quality reviews requires some improvement.
- Arrangements for providing information, advice, guidance and support for learners are good. Support for learning is effective. Support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding.
- Arrangements for promoting and maintaining safeguarding of learners and vulnerable adults are good. The college makes sure that all appropriate checks and staff training are carried out. Health and safety is well managed, and a safe and inclusive ethos is effectively promoted. Learners feel safe at the college.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Managers effectively monitor learners' achievements and many other aspects of the college's work. Arrangements to check opportunities and participation by all groups of learners and staff and bring about improvements are effective. However, teachers do not routinely reinforce equality concepts in relevant lessons.
- The college provides good value for money. It manages its finances well and has reduced costs. Accommodation and learning resources are good, though there are insufficient sports facilities at the main site for learners.
- Whilst at college learners build up their confidence, improve their social and living skills and prepare themselves very well for eventual employment. Learners take part in a good range of activities to develop themselves, and to help the local community.

- Outcomes for learners have improved steadily for several years. For the majority of learners aged 16 to 18 years results are now good or outstanding. Apprenticeship success rates are good, Train to Gain satisfactory. Achievement of personal goals is good. Adult learners, and younger learners on level 1 courses, have results that have now reached satisfactory levels of success.
- Teachers plan interesting and engaging activities that provide development and challenge for many learners. However, tasks do not always meet the needs of all learners in lessons. Teachers often do not focus sufficiently on what learners will learn by completing these tasks and questioning in class is not always helpful.
- The use of learning support assistants in lessons is not as effective as it could be. The large number of support staff try to help a wide range of learners, but they do not always work sufficiently closely with teachers to decide exactly what needs to be done, and with whom.
- Teachers highlight the value of lesson observation and staff development to help them improve the quality of lessons. However, observers' precise identification of areas for improvement in lessons is not yet of a consistently high standard across the college.

What does Newbury College need to do to improve further?

- Encourage teachers to better plan the activities of support assistants, making it clear which activities, individuals or groups need help. Review the college allocation of learning support assistants or volunteers and arrange to monitor their activities to ensure that all are used to a consistently high standard.
- Identify more clearly what is to be learned in lessons. Develop engaging ways to check that learning has taken place, including precise and directed open questioning of learners. Plan a sufficient range of tasks to challenge the more able and to motivate and keep the interest of the whole group.
- Ensure that the findings from observations of lessons capture more precisely the key areas for improvement and that action-planning for teachers is sufficiently focused to lead to clear and measurable improvement.
- Emphasise to teachers that the promotion of equality and diversity should be a routine part of all areas of the curriculum, to enable all learners to develop their awareness of these matters. Monitor this as part of lesson observations and clearly identify ways for individual teachers to improve.
- Develop arrangements to better include franchise and subcontracted providers in the quality review process. Ensure that all aspects of the performance of subcontracted provision, particularly Train to Gain, are fully and routinely reviewed.

Summary of the views of learners as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- tutors and teachers who are approachable and treat students as adults

- the fact that bullying and harassment are not tolerated in college and an atmosphere of respect is encouraged.
- good support in class, individual attention, and the opportunity to learn new skills and improve confidence
- the learning resource centre
- work placements that are interesting and helpful
- some exciting lessons
- very helpful support and advice for personal matters

What learners would like to see improved:

- the range of sporting activities and facilities and the opportunity to have more recreational activities involving music and performance
- a few lessons that are boring
- financial support, especially for adult full-time learners, although advice is good and there are some sources of funding including for course fees
- the affordability of sandwiches in the shop

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the good partnership working with the college
- effective communications and an immediate response to enquiries
- flexible programmes that meet business and learner needs
- good training that motivates employees well
- frequent visits to train learners and assess learners' progress
- good value for money
- good opportunities for learners to access other professional qualifications

What employers would like to see improved:

- increased involvement in the more timely delivery of national vocational qualifications
- skills development courses, not necessarily qualification driven
- clearer instructions for business visitors accessing the college site

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

11. Overall success rates at Newbury College have improved continuously over the past four years, at a rate that has been significantly better than national increases. Improvements have come from such things as an emphasis on raising attendance levels, better use of targets to guide learners, and improved systems to monitor assessment. A comprehensive and generally accurate self-assessment process and regular and effective curriculum reviews trigger specific actions for improvement. Improvement is very well led, with clear and challenging targets. Managers and staff at all levels ensure that improvements happen, and are maintained. Learners also contribute well to the culture of improvement. Governors make a significant contribution to the development of the college. Extremely good partnerships help the college meet changing local and national priorities. Use of resources is effective.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

12. The most recent qualification success rates are satisfactory overall. However, results for learners aged 16 to 18 on level 2 and 3 courses, which represents around 40% of the work of the college, are now at outstanding and very good levels respectively. At level 3 for learners aged 16 to 18 there have been some outstanding achievements when compared to learners' previous attainment and anticipated success. There is particularly good achievement of personal goals amongst the many learners with personal or physical challenges. The overall picture for the two years prior to 2008/09 was satisfactory, with some results, particularly at level 1, poor. But during this period rates improved significantly, outstripping national improvements. Apprentices have good success rates, with particularly good timely success rates. The new Train to Gain programme has satisfactory outcomes. Attendance is satisfactory. Learners participate well and enjoy their work. Development of literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory. Progress is satisfactory. There are no significant differences in success rates for various groups of learners.
13. An extensive, well-developed range of vocational programmes enables learners to enhance their employability prospects. A comprehensive programme of work placements means learners develop relevant skills. In many courses learners gain additional qualifications. Key skills success rates have been improving, some to a good level and most above national rates. Progression to other courses, work-based learning, higher education or employment is particularly good.
14. Learners feel very safe. A well-resourced and laid-out building provides a safe environment. Working practices on-site are good and off-site are appropriate for the workplace. Learners are very confident about being able to report any

abusive behaviour and have it dealt with. The most vulnerable learners are very well safeguarded. The college manages and promotes online safety well. Tutorials, under a staying safe theme, reinforce the safety message.

15. Learners are able to make good, informed choices about their health and well-being. This starts in tutorials and is reinforced with advice from health professionals, displays and visiting speakers. Health and safety is properly introduced on induction and reinforced thereafter.
16. Learners gain a good understanding of the community through work placements, visits, visiting speakers and events held at the college. They are active in fund-raising events for charity and college activities, such as open evenings. Individual courses have an impressive record of taking part in events to support local schools, community ventures, churches and other organisations. A comprehensive and generally effective student representative system involves many in the work of the college. A student governor plays an important part in the college's work. There is a satisfactory approach to improving learners' understanding of sustainability.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

17. Teachers' rapport with learners is good and fosters a learning environment of trust, confidence and respect. Learners are highly motivated. Teachers share their extensive industrial experience with learners and use it well in planning activities related to employment practices. Learners enjoy working independently of their teacher on tasks and activities in pairs or in groups. In one lesson, learners' understanding of the respiratory system was successfully developed as they made a simple working model with support from the teacher, and their enjoyment of this task was clear. Teachers thoughtfully plan interesting and relevant tasks and activities that provide development and challenge for many learners. However, teachers do not always plan well to meet the needs of all learners in a group. Tasks are sometimes not sufficient to challenge the more able and motivate and keep the interest of the whole group. Learning objectives in lesson plans are often too broad and are related to the whole course rather than a particular lesson. As a result it is not always clear what learners will learn as a result of completing planned tasks.
18. In lessons where learners use information learning technology, they do so confidently and well. Learners value highly the college's intranet as a source of information for college events and as a resource for information around their health and well-being. However, the college's virtual learning environment is underused in some subject areas, though this is improving. Most classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards. Inspectors saw some good use of this technology to enhance learning; however, on occasions teachers used these facilities unimaginatively.
19. Assessment is satisfactory. Learners clearly appreciate and benefit from the support of their teachers and the constructive feedback they receive on their

performance. Generally, they know how well they are progressing on their courses, although learner progress reviews for apprentices have recently fallen behind schedule. Learners know clearly what they need to do to improve the quality of their work and to achieve their targets. However, teachers' methods of checking for understanding of key ideas or progress in lessons are too often confined to making sure tasks or activities have been completed. Questions too often require over-simple answers or are insufficiently frequent or not targeted to individual learners.

20. Teachers are well qualified and those working towards teaching qualifications are well supported. Teachers highlight the value of lesson observation and consequent staff development to help them improve the quality of lessons. Those teachers who take part in the peer observation scheme find this particularly valuable; the college is taking well-considered steps to increase teachers' participation in this programme, which was launched last year. Lesson observation is bringing about improvements to the quality of lessons. College data show continuing improvement in the proportion of good or better teaching. This is evident in the re-observation grades of lessons which have been previously graded as satisfactory. In the joint lesson observations conducted by members of the college's staff and inspectors, inspectors identified in a few cases significant areas for improvement in the lesson that the observer had missed. Observation records show, in a small minority of cases, that the observer focuses on what the teacher does rather than on what learners are learning. The college's moderation has identified a number of instances of over-grading. Observers' precise identification of areas for improvement is not yet of a consistently high standard across the college. Action-planning for teachers' development is often insufficiently precise to enable teachers to make clear and measurable improvement.
21. Newbury College's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is good. A wide range of provision provides a good choice of subjects and progression opportunities. The college consults well with its learners to ensure its provision is relevant to their needs. Learners' evaluation of the quality of training helps the college to improve training.
22. The college responds well to employers' needs. The college links with over 400 employers. Routine communication is very effective, though few employers respond to formal requests for feedback. Problems are dealt with promptly and employers rate the college's customer service as excellent. Opportunities for work-based learning have increased significantly, particularly on Train to Gain programmes. The college programme of short management and professional courses and distance learning packages meets employers' needs. Skills for life programmes are helping learners to gain work or progress in their work.
23. Arrangements for provision for work-based and community learners are highly flexible. The college provides bespoke courses as appropriate. Employers are involved in planning learners' training and most are involved in the reviews of learners' progress. The college plans carefully the timing and location of visits to employers.

24. Participation in enrichment activities is high and these activities successfully contribute to learners' enjoyment and achievement. However, sports facilities and facilities available for learners' enjoyment in rest periods are limited. Sport and public service learners have to spend a significant amount of time travelling to practical sessions.
25. Tutorials are well organised and promote the 'Every Child Matters' themes successfully. Tutors support learners to study independently. The college monitors attendance closely and liaises fully with parents and carers.
26. Partnerships with employers, schools and other community organisations are outstanding. A variety of links lead to the development of learning programmes and activities that promote good social and educational inclusion. Joint projects provide learning opportunities for vulnerable and unemployed learners in the community, helping them progress to more formal learning. Learners who were not in education, employment or training gain confidence and skills on a specialist programme. The college works hard to offer appropriate support to local schools. Success rates for learners aged 14 to 16 on specialist college courses are good and many learners progress to level 2 courses in college when they leave school.
27. Arrangements for providing information, advice and guidance are good. Pre-course information and advice, including brochures, open days and taster days, is effective. Induction is good. Learners make informed choices with the help of well-qualified staff and their course tutors. Arrangements to inform learners about higher education are good.
28. Welfare and counselling services are extensive and effective. The college provides support for learners on entry and level 1 programmes from the beginning of the course. Assessment of learners' literacy and numeracy skills is thorough. However, results are not always used sufficiently in the planning of lessons. Individual help is generally effective. However, teachers do not always plan the activities of learning support workers in session plans in sufficient detail in order to maximise their effectiveness.
29. Support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding. Learners make excellent progress and achieve their learning goals. Care and support for these learners is coordinated well and staff are highly sensitive to learners' needs. The college makes effective adaptations to ensure learners with difficulties can take a full part in college life.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

30. The principal and senior managers provide clear strategic leadership and direction. Senior managers have created a purposeful ethos with a strong focus on improvement. The college's strategic objectives form the basis of operational and action plans at all levels of the organisation. There are good arrangements

for monitoring progress against objectives and targets by managers and governors, and good lines of communication. Staff understand their roles and feel well supported. The college is very active in forming partnerships locally and regionally and these are improving opportunities for learners and beneficial for the community. Partners and employers hold the college in high regard.

31. Governors provide outstanding guidance, direction and support. They have helped the college steer successfully through the initial challenges of its public finance initiative, so that it has moved from a weak financial position to one of strength. This has enabled plans to be put in place which will benefit learners, for example to build a new hairdressing salon and construction skills centre on site. Governors have a good range of skills and provide strong challenge and scrutiny when monitoring college progress reports.
32. The promotion of safeguarding is good. Policies and procedures for safeguarding young learners and vulnerable adults are appropriate. Mandatory online basic awareness training has been launched for all staff, in addition to previous staff development events. Governors have also received training. The designated child protection staff are trained to an appropriate level and are skilled and knowledgeable. The college has undertaken enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks of all employees, governors and volunteers; it maintains a single central list and also checks with contractors the CRB status of their staff employed in the college. Safeguarding is effectively promoted with employers and is discussed with work-based learners. Risk assessments are carried out to protect the most vulnerable learners. The college works closely with its partner agencies to support learners who require protection and safeguarding. There are good arrangements for the management of health and safety in the college.
33. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The college recruits a higher proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups than the proportion in the local population, and the proportion of staff of minority ethnic background has increased to above the local average. The curriculum has been amended to focus more closely on meeting the vocational and other learning needs of the community, and to developing progression routes. The college has appropriate policies and action plans to meet its duties in relation to race, gender and disability. Staff and governors have received training in equality and diversity. There is very thorough monitoring and analysis of data relating to all aspects of equality, including that at curriculum area and course level, which are used to promote improvements. Teachers are encouraged to promote equality and diversity within the curriculum and many do so, although this is not universal. Equality impact assessments are effectively used to check, and where necessary, adjust college policies. The college has an inclusive ethos which ensures that disabled learners and those with learning difficulties are integrated well into courses and the life of the college and receive good support.
34. The college's arrangements for quality improvement and self-assessment are good. Staff and curriculum managers are fully involved with the self-assessment and target-setting process. The college closely and regularly monitors progress

against action plans. The scheme for the observation of teaching and learning is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning, but is not yet providing sufficiently well-focused guidance to teachers on how to improve. The college has identified a need to improve the arrangements for involving franchise and subcontracted providers in the quality review process and for monitoring sub-contractor performance in Train to Gain programmes. The college's identification through self-assessment of its strengths and areas for improvement is broadly accurate. Plans for improvement have measurable targets and the college is making good progress towards meeting its current strategic objectives. Outcomes for learners have progressively improved over the last three years.

35. Arrangements for users of the college to contribute their views and promote improvement are good. The student council is active and it successfully represents learners' views. These have led to changes, for example in facilities. A student governor is well supported in her role and she has received appropriate training. Learner surveys are used effectively to inform developments.
36. The college provides good value for money. Financial management and control are good and managers have significantly improved the efficiency of the college. Improved success rates indicate more effective use of financial resources and class sizes have increased. The modern college building provides a pleasant learning environment with good vocational facilities, good access for disabled learners, and attractive grounds and pleasant social facilities. Learning resources and specialist accommodation are of high quality in foundation learning. Resources are good in most areas.

Subject areas

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Grade 2

Context

37. The college provides courses at all levels in electrical, electronic and mechanical engineering and computer-aided engineering. Courses in motor vehicle engineering cover levels 1 to 3. Currently 337 learners are on engineering courses, of which 137 are aged 16 to 18. There are 21 apprentices studying for electro-technical apprenticeships, 22 for mechanical engineering apprenticeships and 23 for apprenticeships in motor vehicle engineering.

Key findings

- Success rates overall are now good. National certificate programmes success rates have been mainly at high or outstanding rates for three years. Although previously inadequate, level 1 and 2 motor vehicle courses have shown significant improvement in 2008/09 to high levels. Similarly success rates on craft electrical courses also significantly improved during 2008/09 and are now very good.
- The progress of learners on courses is good. The range of work undertaken is sufficiently differentiated to challenge the full range of learners' abilities.
- Practical learning in electrical installation is good. Learners achieve a high level of practical skills through good planning of practical tasks in the workshop. Tracking sheets are well used to aid monitoring and act as a motivational tool.
- Resources are good. Workshops are well equipped with a good range of specialist equipment, though the vehicle fleet requires updating. The electronics practical room lacks a digital projector and this detracts from the quality of teaching and learning. The stock of books is well managed to aid learners' work.
- Health and Safety awareness in the curriculum area is good. Relevant behaviours are emphasised and appropriate precautions are taken at all times. There are comprehensive health and safety assessments for high-risk areas such as motor vehicle engineering. Learners feel safe and happy when at college. The temperature in the motor vehicle workshop is sometimes too low.
- The quality of work-based learning is good. Success rates are high. Work placements are well managed and on- and off-the-job training is effectively coordinated despite initial reviews for new apprentices not being undertaken early enough at the start of their apprenticeship. Additional support for work-based learners is good and includes tutorials in college.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learning technology is used innovatively in some classes to very effectively support learning through animation, interaction and learner interest. In other classes its potential is not well utilised. In some motor vehicle and mechanical engineering theory classes teaching methods, including overly long demonstrations, fail to engage learners sufficiently.

- Initial advice and guidance are satisfactory. Arrangements to initially assess learners' aptitude and level of numeracy and literacy skills are satisfactory and lead to appropriate support. The range of provision for full-time motor vehicle learners has been widened to ensure the best range of learning opportunities at entry level are available. The range of courses available provides good progression opportunities for learners.
- Links with schools and employers are good. For example, college staff judge school design and technology competitions. Short engineering sessions are provided for schools leading to some learner enrolments. New Diploma courses have been developed with four local schools. Some employers attend course review panels and one large employer visits to monitor the teaching and learning on courses attended by their apprentices.
- The use and effectiveness of learning support assistants are poor in some lessons. Although the number of learning support assistants is high, they are not used in a meaningful way by teachers. In some workshop classes they play no part in the learning process. However, in electronic engineering, technician assistance in practical classes is used effectively to enhance learning.
- Leadership and management of engineering are good. Regular course team meetings lead to identification of actions for improvement, which are carried out and are then monitored by senior managers. Senior managers set demanding targets. Self-assessment is rigorous and helpful. Some good aspects of the management of apprenticeship courses, however, are not shared with other engineering areas, including Train to Gain programme management.

What does Newbury College need to do to improve further?

- Ensure frequent changes of appropriate and relevant activities in theory classes to promote interest and maintain learner concentration.
- Make more effective use of learning support assistants by ensuring their roles are well planned, understood and effectively implemented in class.
- Ensure a full range of electronic learning equipment is available and is properly used in electronics practical rooms to make teaching points clearer and engage learners better.
- Develop ways of sharing of good practice between staff delivering apprenticeship programmes, Train to Gain and other courses to help learners in achieving their full potential.

Literacy and numeracy

Grade 3

Context

38. Around 260 learners are on part-time adult literacy and numeracy programmes. The courses range from pre-entry level to level 2 and are held on the main college site, in the community and in workplaces. In addition some 240 full-time learners and apprentices are taking key skills application of number and communication at either level 1 or level 2 as part of their main programme. Literacy and numeracy are large parts of courses for learners who have not been in education, employment or training, and for learners on a course run in association with the Probation Service.

Key findings

- Overall success rates are satisfactory, although for adult literacy and numeracy entry programmes success rates are good and improving. At levels 1 and 2 for literacy and numeracy success rates are satisfactory, despite slight drops in 2008/09. Success rates for key skills are generally satisfactory with a marked recent improvement at level 1 communication to a good level and sustained improvements for level 2 application of number up to a satisfactory level.
- Learners improve their confidence and personal skills well and they enjoy their learning. Progression to higher levels for adult learners is good. Younger learners welcome being treated as adults and they clearly understand the importance of key skills qualifications in helping them achieve their main vocational goal. Attendance is monitored closely and remedial action taken as necessary.
- The standard of learners' work in classes is satisfactory. Most learners work with interest and complete their tasks. However, the progress of learners is not sufficiently monitored. Progress in key skills is not always monitored in tutorials.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In better lessons methods and resources are effective in meeting learners' individual learning needs. In key skills lessons content is relevant to learners' vocational courses. In the poorer lessons sometimes essential concepts of application of number are not sufficiently well explained and in others there are insufficient resources.
- Learning activities do not always challenge the more able learners sufficiently, especially in key skills sessions. Planned learning objectives do not provide learners with enough information on what they should aim to achieve within specific timescales.
- Outcomes from diagnostic assessments are not always used to develop learners' individual learning plans nor used to set learners meaningful targets. Learners are informed of their assessment scores and levels, but often all learners in the same teaching group are set identical tasks.
- In some lessons there is good use of technology involving learners. These include imaginative activities using the interactive board to play games and

manipulate text and numbers to illustrate the use of grammar or number concepts. However, in other lessons the use of interactive boards is limited to displaying a PowerPoint presentation.

- The college offers a good literacy and numeracy programme for adult learners from pre-entry to level 2. In partnership with the Probation Service and careers advisory services the college has devised relevant provision for specific cohorts of learners.
- Learners receive good individual support from teachers in classes who explain tasks further and provide additional resources. However, the planning for additional support in the lesson is not always effective. Learning assistants and volunteers are not sufficiently directed to be able to support learners effectively.
- The college provides good additional support for learners with a wide range of difficulties. Staff are skilled at managing challenging behaviour. Learners are well supported to help them deal with personal and social issues, including useful access to specialists such as a counsellor and a nurse. Helpful financial support for travel and childcare is available for learners.
- The management of the quality improvement programme is satisfactory. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate, but it does not identify all the areas for improvements identified in this report.

What does Newbury College need to do to improve further?

- Help all learners achieve their full potential by ensuring that diagnostic assessments inform individual learning plans and that learners have appropriate targets.
- Ensure that teaching staff adapt learning activities to challenge the more-able learners.
- Fully implement plans to integrate the key skills progress review into the overall monitoring of learners' progress, particularly in tutorials.
- Develop the expertise of staff to plan and direct learning support assistants and volunteers, thereby enabling them to support learners more effectively to become independent learners.

Information about the inspection

39. Four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the college's Director of Students, Quality and Curriculum as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the local Learning and Skills Council, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
40. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires that learners and employers had recently completed on behalf of the college. They also observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Newbury College

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; 16-18 Learner responsive: FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; 19+ responsive: FE full- and part-time courses; Employer responsive: Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners at the time of inspection	904	0	753	151	0
Full-time learners	2006	30	208	1232	536
Part-time learners					
Overall effectiveness	2	2	2	2	2
Capacity to improve	2				
A. Outcomes for learners	3	2	3	3	2
A1. How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3				
A1.a) How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3				
A1.b) How well do learners progress?	3				
A2. How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2				
A3. How safe do learners feel?	2				
A4. <i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	2				
A5. <i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	2				
B. Quality of provision	2	2	2	2	2
B1. How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3				
B2. How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2				
B3. How well do partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	1				
B4. How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2				
C. Leadership and management	2	2	2	2	2
C1. How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2				
C2. <i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	1				
C3. How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2				
C4. How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2				
C5. How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2				
C6. How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	2				
C7. How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2				

*where applicable to the type of provision

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