

Inspection of Shipley College

Inspection dates:

17 to 20 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Education programmes for young people	Requires improvement
Adult learning programmes	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Shipley College is a small general further education college based in Saltaire, near Shipley. The college provides courses and training for young people, adults and apprentices from entry level to level 5. At the time of the inspection, there were 941 learners on education programmes for young people, of whom 170 were learners with high needs. The largest subject areas for young people to study are digital and health and social care. There were 947 adult learners, the majority of whom were on courses in English and mathematics and English for speakers of other languages. There were 181 apprentices, with most studying on early years and teaching assistant programmes.

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

Learners benefit from a positive culture in the college. They are respectful towards each other, teachers and visitors. Teachers create welcoming environments in the college's classrooms and in the community settings where classes take place for learners with little or no English who are unable to travel to the college.

Learners feel safe at the college. They appreciate the security personnel on site and around the college buildings. Staff provide learners with useful information on how to keep themselves safe from online risks, including the risks associated with social media, disclosure of passwords and fraudulent activity. Learners are aware that local risks include criminal exploitation linked to drug trafficking and child sexual exploitation. They know how to report any concerns and are confident that staff will deal with any issues promptly. While staff provide information on the risks of radicalisation and extremism, most learners cannot recall this information well enough.

Learners benefit from working with teachers who are appropriately qualified and skilled in their specialist subjects. On the GCSE mathematics course for adult learners, teachers hold relevant qualifications and are enthusiastic about their subject. Teachers on the T level in childcare have worked in both primary and secondary schools as teachers and teaching assistants. Learners on the health and care level 2 course benefit from teachers who have a range of backgrounds in the sector, such as working in residential homes, secure units and adult services. Teachers are able to relate learning well to professional working practices.

Most learners and apprentices achieve their qualifications. Learners with additional learning needs progress at least in line with their peers. The curriculum for learners with high needs is appropriately ambitious and challenging, and it prepares learners for their next steps, including into supported internships. However, too many apprentices on the level 5 leader in adult care programme do not complete their programme. Too few adult learners on the level 3 accountancy course achieve their qualification.

Not enough young learners benefit from a sufficiently ambitious curriculum. Too many learners on study programmes do not have access to relevant work experience. On courses where learners do experience work placements, these are usually relevant to their studies. For example, some learners with high needs engage in work experience at a local farm, where they pick grapes for locally produced wine. Others work for the Yorkshire Dales National Park, planting trees and maintaining the upkeep of the park. Learners on the T level in education and childcare attend work experience in local primary schools and creches.

Contribution to meeting skills needs

The college makes a reasonable contribution to meeting skills needs.

Leaders have a clear ambition: to engage stakeholders and employers with curriculum areas in the college. They take appropriate action to align their provision to regional and national skills strategies. Leaders are keen to find gaps where they can support the local community and employers with education programmes that help to meet skills needs. They have established a positive culture of employer and stakeholder engagement, which most staff embrace.

Most staff engage well with employers in the design and implementation of the curriculum. When employers are actively involved, for example in digital and care programmes, they provide valuable input, such as giving guest lectures, participating in events and confirming that curriculum content is relevant and current. They also help staff to identify relevant training opportunities and understand future skills needs. However, in a few curriculum areas, employers do not contribute to the design and implementation of the curriculum.

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

Leaders and managers do not have clear enough oversight of all aspects of the provision to enable them to identify weaknesses. They have not ensured that younger learners have well-planned, relevant and high-quality encounters with the world of work. Too many of these learners do not participate in work experience as part of their programme.

Through a range of quality assurance processes, leaders and managers accurately identify most other aspects of the provision that need to improve. However, their response to some concerns identified has been too slow, including concerns about weak teaching and poor achievement on a few programmes. In too many instances, leaders do not monitor closely enough the progress that staff make in relation to actions for improvement identified through the quality assurance process. This has a negative impact on the quality of teaching that some learners and apprentices receive.

Most teachers plan the content of programmes well. On the level 2 social and therapeutic horticulture course, adult learners develop their knowledge of the value of green spaces on mental health and how to work with clients in a therapeutic manner. However, a few teachers do not plan teaching effectively enough. For example, in some cases, learners with high needs complete the same activities regardless of their abilities, which slows the progress of these learners in developing their knowledge and skills.

Most teachers use a range of teaching techniques to present new information to learners and provide them with opportunities to practise using the information in different scenarios. These include effective use of presentations, independent and group work, and games and quizzes using digital technologies. However, a few teachers do not provide interesting activities for learners but, instead, overload learners with excessive information. In these instances, teachers do not check learners' understanding effectively or support learners to practise their skills.

Most teachers use a range of assessment strategies to identify gaps in learning. In level 2 creative digital media, for example, teachers use frequent directed questions to check learners' understanding of how to produce videos for target audiences. In a few cases, however, teachers do not allow sufficient time for learners to provide answers to questions. As such, teachers are unable to assess learners' understanding accurately.

In most cases, teachers provide helpful feedback to help learners improve their work. During cookery lessons for learners with high needs, teachers use verbal feedback with step-by-step demonstrations to develop learners' practical skills. On the level 2 creative digital media skills course, learners benefit from regular and constructive feedback to consolidate knowledge and understanding. However, on the level 2 health and social care course, teachers do not correct spelling and grammatical errors in learners' written work. This results in a few learners continuing to make the same mistakes in their work and not improving their English skills.

Most learners and apprentices produce written and practical work that is of the expected standard. On the level 3 T-level course in education, learners develop their analytical skills to a high standard and can confidently critique well-known theorists such as Bloom. On the level 5 leader in adult care programme, apprentices develop an understanding of a range of leadership styles, which they can then apply at work when they carry out audits, supervision and reviews.

Learners and apprentices receive effective careers information, advice and guidance about their potential next steps. Learners who aim to progress to higher education visit local universities and benefit from specialist lecturers visiting the college. Staff work with appropriate external agencies to support learners to research career options and review job vacancies and volunteering opportunities. However, on some adult learning programmes, learners do not receive effective careers information, advice and guidance. As a result, these learners are not prepared well enough for their next steps.

Leaders and managers provide learners with a range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. On the level 3 Esports course, learners cover topics such as 'shoutcasting' and games design with industry experts. On an 'aspiring leaders' project, learners camped out overnight in the countryside. They developed communication and team-working skills while walking and collecting waste, for which they received a national environmental award.

Leaders and managers are considerate of staff well-being. They have discussions with staff about mental and physical health and encourage them to take walks in the park during breaktimes. Leaders manage staff's workload through well-planned timetables and utilisation of support for staff sessions. Staff receive appropriate time to plan sessions and carry out non-teaching activities.

Governors are suitably qualified to carry out their roles. They understand their statutory duties well and engage in many aspects of the college's activities. Leaders make governors aware of any issues promptly. They provide information to the governing board in a timely manner to enable governors to formulate questions in advance of meetings. However, as leaders have not accurately identified all areas for improvement, governors are unable to hold leaders to account fully.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Ensure that all learners on education programmes for young people participate in relevant and high-quality work experience.
- Maintain an accurate oversight of all aspects of the provision and take action, where necessary, to improve the quality of the provision.
- Provide helpful careers information, advice and guidance to learners across all provision types.
- Provide all learners with useful feedback to improve their written English.
- Ensure that staff reinforce learners' understanding about the risks of radicalisation and extremism to help commit the information to learners' long-term memory.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130534
Address	Victoria Road Saltaire ShIPLEY West Yorkshire BD18 3JW
Contact number	01274 327222
Website	www.shipley.ac.uk
Principal, CEO	Diana Bird
Provider type	General further education college
Date of previous inspection	12 February 2013
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the vice principal of curriculum and quality, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection 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 visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Joanne Stork, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Philippa Firth	His Majesty's Inspector
Mark Keen	His Majesty's Inspector
Chloe Rendall	His Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Scanlan	Ofsted Inspector
Daniel Grimes	Ofsted Inspector
Neil Clark	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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