

# West Thames College

GFE college

## Inspection dates

14–17 November 2017

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>	16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Adult learning programmes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Apprenticeships	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for learners	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Provision for learners with high needs	<b>Requires improvement</b>
		Full-time provision for 14- to 16-year-olds	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- On 16 to 19 study programmes, too few learners on level 2 programmes achieve their qualification, and too few on level 3 programmes attain high grade passes. The proportion of apprentices who complete their qualification in the time planned is very low.
- Leaders and managers have been slow to implement the statutory requirements for learners aged 14 to 16.
- Learners' attendance in lessons remains poor; too few learners on 16 to 19 study programmes attend lessons regularly enough to make good or better progress in their learning.
- Teachers and assessors do not use the information they have of learners' prior skills and knowledge, or of the progress they make on their courses, to ensure that learning is demanding.
- Too few learners improve their skills in English and mathematics; the proportion of learners who achieve their functional skills qualifications in these subjects is low.
- Leaders' and managers' evaluation of the college's performance is inaccurate and does not focus sharply enough on the long-standing weaknesses. Managers do not take sufficient action to ensure good-quality teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured that learners on 16 to 19 study programmes have sufficient opportunity to practise their developing skills and knowledge within the workplace.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Learners develop good practical skills. Teachers, who have good vocational experience, make effective use of well-equipped workshops and classrooms to ensure that practical teaching is relevant to employment.
- A high proportion of adult learners on English for speakers of other language programmes (ESOL) achieve their qualification.
- The very small proportion of learners on supported internships programmes benefit from highly effective provision.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- West Thames College (WTC) is a medium-sized general further education college with two main sites in the London Borough of Hounslow. The employment rate in Hounslow is well above the rate found in other London boroughs, with many large international companies using the borough as a London base for their corporate head offices. Hounslow's population is linguistically and ethnically diverse, with over 100 languages spoken.
- WTC offers a broad curriculum in most subject areas for full- and part-time learners, and includes full-time provision for pupils aged 14 to 16. The majority of learners study on full-time 16 to 19 study programmes. Adult learning programmes include ESOL, access to higher education (HE) and skills for employment programmes in partnership with Jobcentre Plus. Apprenticeship programmes are in business administration, plumbing, customer services, health and social care, engineering and logistics. High-needs funded programmes include supported learning for moderate learning needs, vocational learning and supported internships. Part-time provision for pupils at partner schools was not within the scope of this inspection.

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

- Leaders and managers need to:
  - ensure that learners on 16 to 19 study programmes benefit from relevant work experience to enable them to practise the skills and knowledge they have gained at college
  - improve rapidly the management of apprenticeship learning to ensure that apprentices make good progress and achieve their qualifications in the time planned
  - monitor and track learners' and apprentices' next steps in education, training and/or employment to ensure that they relate well to their studies.
- Leaders and managers need to strengthen existing quality assurance arrangements by:
  - focusing closely on the skills and knowledge learners and apprentices are developing and the progress that they make
  - ensuring that self-assessment of performance focuses sharply on long-standing weaknesses, and that subsequent actions rapidly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Teachers and assessors need to make effective use of the information available to them regarding learners' and apprentices' starting points and their ongoing progress, to ensure that learning is demanding and appropriate to their learning requirements.
- On 16 to 19 study programmes, teachers need to ensure that learners:
  - attend frequently and remain focused on their learning as a result of inspiring teaching, learning and assessment
  - apply their mathematics skills frequently and well in their vocational lessons.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not rectified successfully the areas of weakness identified at the previous inspection. They have not ensured that more learners on level 3 programmes achieve high grade passes; most apprentices still do not achieve their qualification within the time planned. They do not have good information on how the qualifications that learners take benefit their next steps in employment, education and training. Too few learners on 16 to 19 study programmes develop good skills in English and mathematics or attend frequently.
- In 2015/16, leaders and managers were evaluating carefully the merits of merging with another college; the achievements of learners declined during this period. The time taken to complete this work distracted leaders and managers from essential quality improvement.
- Leaders and managers have been slow to implement the statutory requirements for learners aged 14 to 16 who study full time at college. Learners have only recently had time allocated for collective worship or spiritual reflection.
- Managers have not ensured that learners on 16 to 19 study programmes benefit from work-related activity or work experience. Learners do not have sufficient opportunity to practise the skills they have learned at college in the workplace.
- Senior leaders' assessment of the college's performance is overly optimistic and they do not focus closely enough on the long-standing areas for improvement. They do not take sufficient account of the progress and achievements of learners when evaluating standards of teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders and managers do not use action plans well enough to bring about swift improvements to the quality of learning, or to improve sufficiently the achievements of learners and apprentices.
- Managers' observations of teaching, learning and assessment do not place sufficient focus on the progress learners and apprentices make. Observers correctly identify many of the strengths and areas for improvement; however, they pay too much attention to what teachers and assessors do, and not enough to learners' and apprentices' progress and skills development.
- Managers give teachers frequent and informative feedback following observations of learning and use this information in performance appraisals. However, they do not monitor the impact of this feedback on learners' progress over time to judge if suggestions for improvement are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders and managers work effectively with the local authority, employers and other partners to provide a range of programmes that ensure good opportunities for local learners to study and improve their employment chances. For example, they offer business administration apprenticeships from level 2 to degree level in partnership with the local authority and university, and established the Logistics and Skills Alliance, to meet the skills requirements in logistics, warehousing and transportation.
- Senior leaders and governors ensure that learners benefit from good-quality, industry-standard workshops, classrooms and learning resources. Resources in hairdressing and

beauty therapy, media and performing arts and the skills centre for construction trades are particularly good.

- The principal and governors have established a clear vision for the future of the college and communicated this well to staff and learners. A positive and welcoming ethos resonates across the college and learner behaviour is very good. Learners feel happy, safe and enjoy their time at college immensely.

### **The governance of the provider**

- Governors' actions have not resulted in significant improvements since the previous inspection. Governors have not challenged leaders and managers sufficiently well to maintain and improve the standard of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Governors have an appropriate range of skills, experience and expertise. They monitor the financial health of the college closely and well, and ensure that the standard of resources for learning is high. With the principal, they have shaped effectively the skills strategy for the college.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Learners feel safe and know to whom they should report any concerns. Senior leaders and staff ensure that the college sites are secure environments. Learners understand how to work safely and observe safe working practices in workshops, lessons and in the workplace. Learners on supported learning programmes learn and apply basic health and hygiene rules effectively.
- Managers responsible for overseeing safeguarding record and monitor incidents well. Safeguarding officers have good links with referral agencies, including the local authority, the 'Prevent' regional coordinator and the police; they use these links highly effectively.
- Staff and governors receive appropriate training to reinforce their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding principles and procedures. They use this knowledge effectively to inform and safeguard students against the potential risks associated with radicalisation.
- Leaders and managers have implemented their responsibilities under the 'Prevent' duty effectively. While most learners receive detailed information on the risks posed by radicalisation at induction and through the tutorial programme, a small minority of adult learners on evening programmes have a cursory understanding of how this affects their daily lives.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- Teachers do not focus closely enough on ensuring that learning on 16 to 19 study programmes and apprenticeship programmes is of good quality. Too few ensure that their teaching results in learners making good progress from their starting points. Too few learners improve their skills and knowledge sufficiently or achieve high grade passes.

Much effective teaching, learning and assessment is evident in the smaller proportion of programmes in adult ESOL, access to HE and on full-time 14 to 16 programmes.

- On 16 to 19 study programmes, teachers do not give learners prompt and well-timed feedback on their assignments to enable them to improve their work and achieve high grade passes. Too often, learners are unclear as to how to improve their work further. Assessors give adequate verbal feedback to apprentices on their skills development but scant written feedback to apprentices or their employers. This prevents apprentices from identifying what tasks and activities they need to complete in the workplace to improve further.
- On level 2 and 3 programmes, teachers do not have high enough expectations for their learners. Too few ensure that theoretical learning is demanding for the most able learners, or is sufficiently well-paced and carefully structured for learners who need more help to complete their learning successfully. Teachers do not make effective use of the information they have about learners' skills, knowledge and current progress to ensure that learning adequately meets their individual requirements.
- On 16 to 19 study programmes, too few teachers integrate mathematics skills development effectively into vocational learning. In mathematics lessons, teachers do not ensure that learning that is well matched to the skills that learners need to develop.
- Teachers pay appropriate attention to developing learners' and apprentices' English skills and knowledge. In 2016/17, more learners now achieve high grade passes in their GCSE exams, although not enough learners achieve their functional skills qualifications. Learners are confident to debate a wide range of topics, and develop good discursive skills and technical language.
- Teachers are very adept at maintaining a positive and harmonious learning environment. They develop skilfully learners' understanding of how the diverse local population contributes very well to the economic prosperity of London.
- Learners benefit from very good personal help and advice from their teachers and tutors. This ensures that many learners, who are at risk of leaving their learning early, continue and achieve their qualification; learners value this help highly.
- Vocationally well-qualified teachers make effective use of high-quality, industry-standard accommodation and well-developed resources to ensure that learners and apprentices develop good practical skills. In engineering, media, hairdressing and beauty therapy, the standard of practical teaching is high. Teachers link practical teaching well to work and employment scenarios to meet the high expectations of employers and industry very effectively.
- Teachers focus closely and well on developing the essential skills that learners need for work that employers seek. Teachers emphasise the importance of developing these skills effectively through discussing future employment prospects and potential career pathways routinely in lessons. Learners have a good understanding of how to give good customer service and how to communicate effectively with their clients, co-workers and managers. For example, a teacher used a video of a person suffering with dementia effectively to highlight the importance of clear verbal communication and calm body language to health and social care apprentices.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

- Learners' attendance at lessons requires improvement; too few learners on 16 to 19 study programmes attend lessons regularly enough to make good or better progress in their learning. Managers' and teachers' careful monitoring of, and their actions to improve, learners' attendance have had limited impact. Learners' attendance in English and mathematics lessons has improved, but remains below their attendance on the vocational elements of their programmes.
- Not enough learners on 16 to 19 study programmes have placements with employers to enable them to practise the skills and knowledge they have learned in college. They do not have sufficient opportunity to gain an experience of work that relates closely to their chosen career. Learners benefit from visits and trips to employers, visiting speakers and a range of employment-related activities in tutorial lessons.
- Learners' behaviour in lessons and around college is good. Learners are respectful and courteous to their peers, teachers and to college staff.
- Careers advice and the ongoing guidance offered to pupils on 14 to 16 full-time programmes, learners on 16 to 19 study programmes, access to HE programmes and Jobcentre Plus programmes are effective. Staff prepare these learners well for their next steps into further learning, employment and HE. For example, learners benefit from practice interviews, curriculum vitae writing and learn how to research a job and present themselves professionally at an interview.
- Learners develop good verbal communication skills and good technical language that they use effectively in lessons, in the workplace and with clients and customers. For example, adult learners on beauty therapy studies can speak with confidence to their clients about the benefits of a wide range of treatments. When speaking to their teachers, they use complex technical language to identify accurately the anatomy of the human body.
- A minority of learners benefit from a good range of additional activities to improve their physical fitness and well-being. Sport and fitness coaches organise team sports and competitions that include targeted women-only fitness events. Learners on 16 to 19 study programmes receive good information about the dangers of drug and alcohol misuse, and know how to maintain their sexual and mental health. Pupils on 14 to 16 full-time programmes have an underdeveloped understanding of how to ensure their own physical and mental well-being.
- Learners feel safe in and around college. Security staff and teachers are vigilant, monitoring access to the college closely and ensuring that learners wear their identity passes always while in college.
- Learners participate well in activities where they develop their understanding of all aspects of British values. They contribute to a wide range of activities outside of lessons that include charity events, external trips to employers and to cultural venues that enhance and extend their understanding of life in modern Britain.

## Outcomes for learners

## Requires improvement

- Managers' own data shows that in 2016/17, although the proportion of learners who achieved their qualification improved, it remained low overall on level 2 programmes. The

achievement of qualifications by the small proportion of learners on apprenticeship programmes is inadequate.

- Not enough learners on 16 to 19 study programmes have high achievement. While most learners studying at level 1 achieve their qualifications, too few learners on level 2 programmes do so. Most learners on level 3 programmes achieve their qualifications, but too few achieve high grade passes or achieve the grades expected of them based on their prior attainment.
- The proportion of learners who achieve their English and mathematics functional skills qualifications at levels 1 and 2, and at GCSE grade 4 and above, while improving, remains low. The achievement of learners on entry-level qualifications in English and mathematics is high.
- Learners aged 14 to 16 on full-time programmes make good progress in their learning. All have English as an additional language, and improve their spoken, reading and written English skills well. Most continue in their learning at college on reaching 16 years of age. The proportion of these learners who achieve their core GCSE qualifications in English, mathematics and science is low.
- Too few apprentices achieve their qualification within the time planned, and the proportion who achieved their qualification overall in 2016/17 continued to decline. Too few learners on apprenticeship programmes who need to improve their skills in English and mathematics do so successfully. Their achievement of functional skills qualifications is low. Most current apprentices make expected progress, apart from the small minority working towards qualifications in business and health and social care who make slow progress.
- Learners do not achieve their qualifications equally well. For example, learners on programmes in construction, hospitality and catering, science and health and social care do not achieve well, while those in engineering and hairdressing have high achievement. Those learners who require additional help to complete their studies have low achievement, while learners in receipt of high-needs funding on vocational programmes achieve very well. The small proportion of learners in the care of the local authority and those in receipt of free school meals achieve as well as, or better than, their peers.
- The proportion of adult learners who achieve their qualification at levels 1 and 3 is very high. Learners on ESOL programmes and the small proportion of learners on access to HE programmes have particularly high achievement.
- The proportion of learners who continue in learning within the college is high. Most learners on level 3 programmes continue into HE, although few gain places at prestigious universities or work towards higher apprenticeship qualifications. Managers do not monitor or track whether learners' next steps in education, training and/or employment relate well to their studies.
- The standards of learners' practical work are high. Learners on 16 to 19 study programmes at levels 1 and 2, and those on adult programmes, produce work above the level expected. In engineering, computer animation, hairdressing and beauty therapy, learners demonstrate high levels of technical skills, producing work to the standard demanded by employers.

## Types of provision

### 16 to 19 study programmes

**Requires improvement**

- Around 2,000 learners are enrolled on 16 to 19 study programmes and study across a range of vocational areas including: engineering; information and communication technology (ICT); health and social care; construction; hairdressing and beauty therapy; visual, media and performing arts; hospitality and catering and business administration. Qualifications range from entry level to level 3.
- Teachers do not take learners' starting points, existing knowledge and skills into account sufficiently when providing learning. The most able learners do not do work of a sufficiently challenging nature and less-able learners find the work too hard. Teachers frequently set tasks that are too easy, and give the same tasks and activities irrespective of learners' development needs. For example, in a mathematics lesson using statistics, all learners worked on the same task, regardless of whether they understood how to apply mode, mean and median.
- Teachers do not routinely or effectively assess learning in lessons. The most able and confident learners dominate question and answer activities. Teachers do not check the learning of all learners systematically, especially when learners are quiet and fail to contribute fully to tasks and activities. Teachers do not keep learners on task when they lose interest, or give remedial help when they struggle to complete work.
- Teachers do not manage learning well. Too many learners at level 3 have assignment work that requires amendments or have missed deadlines for handing work in to teachers to be marked. This results in work being graded as a pass when learners' starting points indicate they are capable of higher grades.
- The tracking and monitoring of learners' progress are insufficient. Teachers do not use management monitoring systems effectively to monitor whether learners are making good or slow progress in their coursework, or to set appropriately challenging personal and academic targets.
- Teachers use their good practical skills and knowledge very well to ensure that practical teaching is of a high standard. Learners develop good practical skills as a result and produce work of a high standard.
- Learners benefit from effective advice and guidance that help them plan their next steps in learning and life well. Comprehensive and well-structured careers advice and guidance enable learners to have a clear understanding of the potential job roles they could aspire to. Learners write professional curriculum vitae, prepare well for job and university interviews, and understand how to present themselves in a positive and professional manner.
- Teachers offer effective help and advice to learners in classes dedicated to private study and research. Learners make good use of the college information technology resources to extend their learning and develop their ability to study and work independently. Most learners are confident, well motivated to learn and eager to succeed.
- Teachers link practical learning well to the world of work. They reinforce health and safety rigorously. Learners understand and comply with health and safety requirements. Learners know how to work safely with a wide range of machinery, develop good



customer and client skills, and work well in teams to solve problems and complete practical activities.

- Learners enjoy and value their tutorial sessions. A well-structured programme of events and activities complements their learning. For example, tutors use an interfaith week as an opportunity to discuss religion, cultural beliefs and values to good effect. Learners are respectful, kind to each other and enjoy their time at college.

## Adult learning programmes

**Good**

- Around 3,000 adult learners are enrolled at the college, mostly for part-time adult programmes. The largest group of learners study on ESOL programmes, including programmes designed for those seeking employment. A small proportion study on full-time access to HE programmes in health, social care and radiography, with the remaining learners studying on a wide range of vocational programmes.
- Managers plan adult provision very effectively so that it meets well the needs of local employers, individual learners and the wider community. Staff work closely with local partners to ensure that provision meets identified employment opportunities and gives access to learning for those unable to attend college-based programmes.
- Teachers plan learning well, with clear learning objectives and interesting activities. As a result, learners make good progress and achieve well. In vocational learning, learners can explain clearly what task they are undertaking and how it contributes towards the development of their skills and qualifications. In lessons for ESOL, teachers use a good variety of learning activities to maintain most learners' interest and enable them to make good progress.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the individual challenges that learners have and ensure that learning meets these needs effectively. For example, teachers of ESOL have a good understanding of the barriers to learning which many learners face and skilfully manage lessons to help learners overcome them.
- Teachers ensure that learners achieve good standards in their work and in the development of their practical skills. In adult vocational learning and ESOL, standards are particularly high. In these lessons especially, learners take great pride in their work and are highly motivated to succeed.
- Teachers use questioning well to check learning. In the large majority of lessons, homework and assignments are assessed thoroughly with good feedback to enable learners to improve. Teachers use peer assessment well to develop critical thinking skills.
- Learners' development of skills in mathematics is appropriate, and particularly effective in vocational adult part-time learning. For example, in a practical hairdressing lesson, where learners used chemical colouring agents, the teacher reinforced learners' understanding of ratio and proportion very effectively, while checking the accuracy of their measurement skills.
- In vocational learning and access to HE, teachers do not help learners well enough to develop and improve their skills in English. For example, they do not consistently correct learners' poor use of grammar or weak oral presentation skills.

- Managers do not ensure that most adult learners benefit from sufficient ongoing careers advice and guidance. While information is widely available through learner services, learners do not benefit from a planned programme of advice on potential careers and further training opportunities. In contrast, advice and guidance for access to HE learners are extensive and thorough.

## **Apprenticeships**

## **Requires improvement**

- Approximately 200 apprentices are working towards intermediate and advanced framework qualifications in the following subjects: business administration; health and social care; teaching assistant; customer service; plumbing; engineering; logistics; hospitality and catering. Most apprenticeships study directly with the college, with a small minority studying with the college subcontractor partner. Managers plan programmes to meet fully the apprenticeship requirements.
- The leadership of apprenticeship provision is weak. Senior leaders do not have sufficient oversight of the slow progress apprentices make in their learning. A new manager has very recently joined the college with previous experience of managing good-quality apprenticeship learning. It is too soon to measure any impact.
- Most current learners make the progress expected of them, few make good progress. Learners on business administration programmes with one large employer, and a small minority of learners working in local hospitals, make slow progress.
- The teaching, learning and assessment of functional skills qualifications are insufficient to prepare learners well for their external tests. Too few learners pass their tests on the first attempt or within the time planned for completing their apprenticeship qualification. Learners do not develop the English and mathematics skills they need to become effective employees.
- Assessors do not plan and teach apprenticeships effectively. They do not identify apprentices' starting points accurately or ensure that they develop new skills. When assessing learners' work, they provide scant information to enable learners to understand the progress they are making or to enable them to make good progress.
- Learners develop good technical language and know how to communicate effectively with a range of clients, their peers and workplace supervisors. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on learners' use of language, and the correct use of spelling, pronunciation and grammar. In class discussions they frequently use workplace examples to clarify and extend learners' understanding of technical language. For example, learners on health and social care programmes researched and discussed skin complaints such as dermatitis and psoriasis.
- Employers benefit from the good practical and customer service skills that learners develop. Learners work well together in teams to solve practical and technical problems. Learners take great pride in their work.
- Learners with restricted mobility and wheelchair users benefit from good practical assistance. Learners have individual evacuation plans for emergency situations and college-based learning is timetabled to enable them to access classes and workshops easily.

## Provision for learners with high needs

## Requires improvement

- Approximately 200 learners are funded for high needs programmes. Eighty-two learners study on supported learning programmes, 82 study on 16 to 19 study programmes, 14 study on adult learning programmes and 18 work with local employers on supported internships.
- Teaching, learning and assessment on supported learning programmes are weak. Teachers fail to explain clearly to learners the tasks and activities they are going to complete or the skills they will develop and improve. In lessons, teachers frequently leave learners for long periods of time doing very little. They do not make effective use of teaching assistants to help and guide learners with their studies.
- Teaching assistants do not allow learners to develop their independent learning skills and hinder learners from making good progress. They frequently prompt learners or do the tasks for them, rather than allowing learners to complete activities and improve their own time-keeping and decision-making skills.
- Teachers are weak at setting learning targets that enable learners to make good or better progress. When providing whole-group activities, such as in cookery classes or external trips and visits, teachers focus too much on the requirements of the qualification and not enough on the individual development needs of the learners.
- In supported learning, teachers use verbal and written vocabulary that is too complex. Teachers frequently give information and instructions at too fast a pace for learners to absorb and understand. In mathematics lessons, teachers do not use tangible examples that learners can understand to enable them to make good progress in their number work.
- The supported internship programme is highly effective. Managers and teachers work closely with a local charity and a large employer to design individual training with on-the-job coaching. Learners are helped to negotiate a very wide range of job roles and set personal development targets that enable them to gain permanent employment. Most learners move into sustainable employment in jobs such as switchboard operator, coffee barista, security guard and data input clerk.
- Learners studying on 16 to 19 study programmes receive effective help and guidance from vocational specialists that enable them to make good progress in their learning. Teaching help is matched well to learners' needs and interests. For example, teaching assistants on media and music programmes have experience of film production and music.
- Learners make good progress in improving their personal communication skills and making decisions and choices about their future life and work. In supported learning, learners practise their public speaking through taking part in wider college activities and local community and enterprise activities. Learners speak positively about how having their voice heard publicly has improved their self-worth and how it motivates them to take control of their lives and their decisions about their future.
- The information and advice that learners receive before joining their programme are good. Staff carefully assess learners' personal, social and learning needs and involve specialist agencies, carers and parents well. They compressively evaluate learners' previous educational experience to ensure that they have a clear picture of what learners

can already do. Teachers use this information well to set personal learning and development targets. As a result, learners quickly settle into their programme.

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

**Good**

- Sixteen Year 11 pupils are enrolled on full-time direct entry programmes at the college. All have English as an additional language and study ESOL as the English component of their programme.
- Teachers have high expectations of their learners. They ensure that, in almost all cases, learning opportunities are matched well to learners' individual needs and abilities. As a result, learners make good progress during their courses, relative to their starting points. In 2016/17 the majority remained at college to study on level 1 programmes.
- Teachers inspire learners with the activities they teach; for example, by developing their writing skills composing 'tweets' or by teaching prepositions through a lively and tactile quiz.
- Teachers link effectively the various skills learners develop across their curriculum. They pay good attention to developing personal and social skills during lessons, such as e-safety and understanding British values. Teachers focus on the risks of sharing personal data when online and the importance of showing respect for others when providing peers with feedback.
- Teachers know learners well and set them personal targets that are useful in helping them develop their English and mathematics skills. For example, they set targets related to using the right units of measurement or accurate sentence structure. Teachers frequently remind learners of these targets during lessons, particularly where they make related errors, enabling learners to focus on improving their work.
- Teachers and tutors ensure that most learners have a clear understanding of the college's shared values; learners benefit from the valuable tutorial and enrichment programme. They understand the relevance to their daily lives of the topics covered, for example the damaging impact of anti-social behaviour.
- Learners value the English speaking skills they develop on their programme, and the confidence this gives them in everyday situations, such as meeting new people and shopping.
- For most learners, attendance rates are high; in almost all cases they arrive ready to learn well before the start of lessons. They behave well and are positive about their learning. They frequently work together to check their work and make sensible suggestions for improvement.
- Managers ensure that learners receive good-quality careers advice and help them with their next steps. Learners benefit from an array of external speakers and webinars, and visits to vocational areas of learning within the college.
- Learners' spiritual understanding is underdeveloped because managers have been too slow to implement fully all the requirements of 14 to 16 full-time provision. Managers and teachers do not ensure that learners have a good understanding of sexual health, and how to maintain their own physical and mental health and well-being.

- Learners' programmes now meet the statutory requirements for key stage 4, enabling them to make progress in their academic skills and personal development. However, the vocational provision within the curriculum is small.
- Learners feel safe at college, and are aware of how to report any concerns.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	130447
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	14+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	5,225
Principal	Tracy Aust
Telephone number	0208 326 2000
Website	<a href="http://www.west-thames.ac.uk">www.west-thames.ac.uk</a>

## 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)	383	1,106	595	559	742	207	–	10
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	20	96	20	84	–	–		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	–		–		–			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	16							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	196							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Knights Training Academy Limited Gurdwara Shri Guru Singh Sabha							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the executive director for performance, development and student experience, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners 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

Jules Steele, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jane Hughes	Her Majesty's Inspector
Saul Pope	Ofsted Inspector
Allan Shaw	Ofsted Inspector
David Baber	Ofsted Inspector
Philippa Firth	Ofsted Inspector
Margaret Garai	Ofsted Inspector
Philida Schellekens	Ofsted Inspector

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### **Learner View**

Learner View is a website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too. To find out more go to [www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk).

### **Employer View**

Employer View is a website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too. To find out more go to [www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk).

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