

Fareham College

General further education college

Inspection dates

3–6 October 2017

Overall effectiveness			Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding	16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding	Adult learning programmes	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding	Apprenticeships	Outstanding
Outcomes for learners	Outstanding		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Good

Summary of key findings

This is an outstanding provider

- Senior leaders and managers, including governors, have an ambitious vision for the college; the curriculum closely aligns with local and regional employer and community needs and provides excellent technical and professional opportunities for students and apprentices.
- Excellent and well-established partnerships with employers create a broad range of opportunities, particularly in specialist engineering subjects, and these meet local, regional and national needs very well.
- Particularly effective performance management of teachers results in consistently high quality and engaging learning sessions that students and apprentices enjoy.
- Governors use their expertise and skills effectively to secure the college's financial health and to promote the highest aspirations and standards for students and staff.
- Teachers and assessors prepare students and apprentices for their next steps in education and training and almost all progress into further or higher education, employment or an apprenticeship.
- Senior leaders have very high expectations of all students regardless of their age, starting point or previous attainment. As a result, students and apprentices have an excellent attitude to work and study and take pride in their achievements.
- Students and apprentices make very good progress from their starting points, in achieving their qualifications, and in gaining excellent technical and professional skills.
- The college's modern and well-equipped centre of excellence in engineering, manufacturing and advanced skills training provides an excellent training environment that reflects the highest commercial standards.
- Students and apprentices develop good skills in English and mathematics but achievement in these subjects is not as high as it should be, especially for adults.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Fareham College is a large general further education college situated on the south coast of Hampshire. More young people in Fareham and Gosport achieve better GCSE results than the national and county average and a large majority continues into further education. Unemployment is relatively low. The proportion of the local population from a minority ethnic group is very low. Just over half of the college's provision consists of study programmes, and apprenticeships make up around one third. Adult programmes account for less than 10% of the provision. The number of students on a traineeship programme is very small, as is the number with high needs.
- In 2014, college leaders opened a second campus in Lee-on-the Solent, in collaboration with large regional employers. This provides technical and professional training, including apprenticeships, in a range of engineering specialisms such as automotive, marine, aeronautics and motor sports.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement rates in GCSE English and mathematics by making sure that:
 - students with low prior attainment in these subjects receive challenging and realistic targets to help them achieve a good grade
 - teachers receive high-quality training and development so they are better able to plan and deliver sessions that engage, motivate and enthuse students to achieve
 - teachers set challenging targets and provide consistently effective feedback that extend students' English and mathematics skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders, managers and governors are ambitious for the college, and its students and apprentices. They aim for and achieve excellence in all aspects of the work they do. They maintain a clear and consistent emphasis on preparing students for work or further study. Leaders and managers have the highest expectations of staff and students. They have established an outstanding learning environment where all students and apprentices display exemplary behaviour and take pride in their work and achievements.
- Leaders work very effectively with a wide range of partners. Employers value highly the quality of training their apprentices and employees receive at the college's centre of excellence in engineering, manufacturing and advanced skills training (CEMAST). Managers respond to the needs of employers by designing the professional and technical curriculum to meet their needs, for example by developing paint-spraying qualifications to support the automotive curriculum.
- Employers are key partners of the college and actively support leaders and managers to develop provision. Leaders' strong relationships with employers help to provide exceptional opportunities for apprentices and students to gain work experience and to learn using specialist engineering equipment and technical resources. Leaders have invested in very high quality, industry standard, resources to support learning. Such resources help all students and apprentices develop excellent skills that allow them to make valuable contributions to the workplace.
- Because of their clear strategic focus on professional and technical training, leaders and managers are highly responsive to local and regional skills needs. College leaders have created a well-equipped civil engineering training centre in response to employer demand. The centre provides training and employment opportunities to apprentices in civil engineering, who value the excellent opportunities that it provides.
- Through a very effective professional development and performance management strategy, leaders and managers have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the college. Teachers benefit from a comprehensive menu of development opportunities, aligned well to the outcomes of managers' teaching observations. Managers make sure that staff have up-to-date industrial experience and knowledge and an annual continuing professional development day contributes to achieving this aim.
- Leaders and managers have taken decisive actions to tackle the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. They developed a rigorous self-assessment process, which accurately identifies key strengths and weaknesses of the college. Leaders use their accurate view of the college, including of subcontracted provision, to shape a well-focused quality improvement strategy. It supports managers to make improvements to the quality of education and training and sustain high outcomes for the vast majority of students and apprentices.
- Leaders and managers have very effective systems for tracking and monitoring students' and apprentices' progress. They have access to reliable management information and make excellent use of data to identify performance trends and to tackle any decline in standards. For example, they use this information very well to identify students and apprentices making slow progress and to plan swift and effective interventions that

accelerate progress where required. Sophisticated use of management information means that leaders can hold curriculum managers to account for achievement of students in their areas and make sure that they deal with any concerns promptly.

The governance of the provider

- Governance is outstanding. Governors have a wide range of industry experience and skills that they use to carry out their roles effectively. They provide excellent support and challenge to the senior leadership team. They have been instrumental in securing the college's financial health and delivering significant improvements to the college estate.
- Governors have a detailed understanding of the college's strategic mission. They are strong promoters of employer engagement in the aeronautical, marine and civil engineering sectors.
- Governors examine a range of performance reports and challenge senior leaders where necessary. They have supported the senior leadership team to establish a very high performing, aspirational culture at the college. They have an excellent understanding of the challenges the college faces and make sure that actions taken effectively reduce and mitigate any potential risks.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff who have regular contact with students are suitably checked. The safeguarding team maintain appropriate records of vetting checks.
- The safeguarding team are well qualified and experienced. Staff deal with referrals promptly and have appropriate links with external agencies. All staff and students have lanyards, and staff challenge those not wearing them. Students and apprentices feel safe.
- New and current staff receive training in safeguarding and on the dangers of radicalisation and extremist ideology. This helps them to recognise early signs of potential risk or harm. Students know how to keep themselves safe from bullying and discrimination and they know who to speak to if they feel unsafe or vulnerable. Most understand fundamental British values and the risks posed by extremist ideologies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Highly effective teaching, learning and assessment result in outstanding achievements. Leaders and managers have very high expectations of teachers and have invested in a comprehensive coaching and development programme for staff. This supports newly qualified teachers effectively to develop their teaching career and progress to leadership roles.
- Practical teaching for students on study programmes and for apprentices is of very high quality and closely aligns to apprentices' workplace roles and responsibilities. Teachers are highly experienced in their vocational subjects and they use their skills and enthusiasm to inspire students and apprentices to progress and achieve.

- Students and apprentices enjoy their learning and are very well motivated to succeed. Well-planned sessions allow students to successfully develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge and skills. Almost all students make better-than-expected progress from their starting points.
- Students' and apprentices' technical and professional skills are well developed. Teachers use their industry knowledge to check, develop and extend students' practical skills, knowledge and understanding and to prepare them for their next steps. They use the available information about students to identify their needs and build on previous learning. Apprentices' employers value the skills and the enhanced roles that many apprentices are quickly able to perform in the workplace.
- Marine, automotive and aeronautical engineering equipment in the impressive CEMAST campus is exceptionally high quality. The resources replicate those found in industry and so support learning well. Employers often provide specialist equipment and engineering components to the college so that students can gain essential skills using the most relevant and up-to-date resources. Students on vocational study programmes and apprentices are keen to learn and gain the skills to operate specialist machinery. They work with complex engineering components confidently and independently.
- Students recognise the progress they have made, particularly in their practical skills. They take great pride in their achievements. Apprentices can identify the skills they have gained and know how to use them in their chosen employment.
- Staff support students well during learning sessions and between learning sessions with a range of high-quality interactive online resources and through self-directed study sessions. As a result, students frequently look at their individual learning plan on digital devices, including mobile phones, to check their attendance and progress towards their learning goals.
- Teachers make very effective use of a range of accurate information on students' starting points to help them progress well on their chosen study programme. They set students challenging tasks that develop the skills they need to achieve their qualifications.
- Students receive prompt, effective feedback on work, which helps them to understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. Teachers correct spelling and grammar errors routinely for students on study programmes, but less so for apprentices.
- Staff encourage students to develop their skills and behaviours; teachers provide parents and carers with regular updates on their children's progress and development. Employers receive information on how apprentices are progressing and they work collaboratively with college managers to drive a high-quality curriculum that meets their needs.
- Students are able to demonstrate a good understanding of ways that equality and diversity feature in daily life. Teachers manage discussions on equalities skilfully and sensitively as they arise naturally in lessons. For example, students in a GCSE English class improved their understanding of emotive language by discussing the experience of immigrants newly arriving in the United Kingdom. Teachers successfully encourage students to use language sensitively and respectfully.
- Teachers plan carefully to support the most vulnerable students. Such students thrive on vocational courses with the help of tailored additional learning support. As a result, they progress successfully to higher levels of study or into traineeships or employment. High

needs students integrate fully into learning sessions and benefit from learning support that helps them to work successfully to at least the level of their peers.

- Teaching, learning and assessment in English and mathematics are generally of good quality. They have improved considerably since the previous inspection, especially in mathematics. Leaders and managers acknowledge, however, that the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects is not yet strong across all levels and age groups. They have put in place a range of improvement strategies but it is too soon to assess the impact of these.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

- Staff encourage students and apprentices at every opportunity to take pride in their work and to aim for excellence. College managers frequently host events and exhibitions to highlight students' skills and achievements. Teachers and managers actively promote students' participation in national and regional skills competitions and events in engineering, production arts, uniformed services and performing arts. Motorsport students have built a prototype fuel-efficient 'green power' car as part of a college project. This has helped to promote both the college's specialism in this area and the technical facilities and equipment available to prospective students.
- The college's enrichment programme for students on study programmes provides good opportunities for them to gain a range of personal, social and employability skills. These prepare them very well for the next step in their education and training. The wide range of enrichment activities includes fitness classes, football, dance, music, computer gaming, debating and music.
- Students and apprentices take responsibility for their own learning. They develop confidence, team-working skills and an understanding of the world of work. Apprentices present themselves professionally when at work or college and contribute well to the college's reputation in the community. Managers have been successful in encouraging online and independent learning outside the classroom. For example, students and apprentices benefit from timetabled, directed independent study sessions and a suite of well-used electronic learning resources.
- Students receive good-quality impartial careers advice and guidance. Students can talk clearly about their next steps in education and training. They also have clear career goals and know how to achieve them. Advisers in the college's employability hub help students to write high-quality CVs and letters of application, and help them prepare well for interviews.
- Students develop excellent skills for employment. The college has well-developed links with a wide range of local and regional employers. Such employers have helped to provide high-quality apprenticeship opportunities and work placements for students on study programmes.
- Students demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online, including when using social media. Teachers use tutorials effectively to promote students' personal development, and provide useful advice and guidance that help them stay safe. Through their tutorials, students also learn to demonstrate respect for others, and to behave well in the college and in the workplace.

- Tutors develop students' understanding of British values during tutorial sessions, and a good range of posters and displays in classrooms reinforces these values. The large majority of students and apprentices have a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society. They understand why they should be tolerant and respectful of different cultures.
- Students and apprentices are very well behaved and courteous in classrooms, workshops and in the college's public areas. They work well with each other in class and have good relationships with staff. Students' attendance on study programmes is good, including at tutorials. Apprentices' attendance at off-the-job training is good.

Outcomes for learners

Outstanding

- Outcomes for students on study programmes are outstanding, including on subcontracted provision. Study programmes make up the large majority of college provision. Qualification achievement rates on study programmes have been increasing steadily for the past three years and are now well above those of similar colleges, especially at level 3.
- A very high proportion of apprentices, particularly those studying at level 3, achieve their qualifications and the large majority do so within agreed timescales. Apprentices studying in subcontracted provision achieve as well as those in direct college provision.
- Achievement of functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics in 2016/17 was higher than for similar providers at all levels and age groups, except at level 2, where it was lower.
- The numbers of students on study programmes and apprenticeships who make good progress from their starting points and in improving their skills and achieving their qualifications is high. The very large majority of students on study programmes, at all levels, make very good progress in achieving their educational, qualification and personal development goals.
- The majority of students on the college's traineeship programme, most of whom have significant barriers to learning, progress to an apprenticeship, into further education or employment.
- All 23 students with high needs who enrolled on college programmes in 2016/17 achieved their qualification and progressed to an apprenticeship, specialist further or higher education provision or employment.
- Students and apprentices develop their practical skills well and produce high-quality work. The quality of their work often exceeds the demanding industrial and commercial standards required to achieve their qualifications, especially in marine and aeronautical engineering. Students and apprentices produce high-quality written work, much of which is outstanding.
- Most students and apprentices of all ages progress to positive destinations including employment or further study. A high proportion of students and apprentices progress from lower to higher levels of study. The very large majority of apprentices continue working for their employer after their apprenticeship and many receive promotion or greater responsibilities in their job role.

- Teachers make sure that the very large majority of students and apprentices at all levels and age groups develop good skills in English and mathematics. Such skills help them to succeed in their main programme as well as in their employment. Teachers are particularly skilled in promoting the use of specialist language and vocabulary relevant to students' main programme of study.
- In a very small minority of adult programme subjects, achievement rates are not consistently high. In response, managers have put in place well-planned strategies to bring about rapid improvements.
- Achievement rates in GCSE English and mathematics fell sharply in 2016/17 from the previous year to well below the national rate, especially in English. Managers have carefully investigated the causes of the drop in achievements. They have put in place plans to improve the achievement rate in GCSE English and mathematics, but it is too soon to assess the impact of these.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Outstanding

- The college has 1,458 students on 16 to 19 study programmes, with the very large majority studying a vocational programme at level 2 or 3. Study programmes are the largest provision type offered at the college. In descending order, the subject areas with the largest number of students enrolled are in automotive engineering, information and communication technology, art and design, aeronautical engineering and health and social care.
- Teachers have very high expectations for students. Managers have designed study programmes particularly well to develop students' knowledge and skills and build on their prior experience. As a result, almost all students stay on programme, make very good progress and achieve their qualifications. The large majority progress onto higher-level learning, employment or apprenticeships. Managers monitor students' progress closely. They use the college's management information systems very well to provide students and teachers with accurate and timely data so that students attend well and make good progress. Leaders make sure that students fulfil all aspects of study programme requirements.
- Curriculum leaders have developed excellent employer links. Managers have reshaped the curriculum so that students practise and acquire the skills that employers value. For example, automotive students develop skills in addition to the requirements of their course, such as chassis repair that includes brakes, exhausts, tyres and steering. As a result, students progress successfully to the next level of study, into employment or to an apprenticeship.
- Students benefit from extensive, high-quality work placements that help them to develop their work skills. For example, travel and tourism students work in local holiday resorts and in the new cruise ship terminal in Southampton.
- Students develop good English and mathematical skills. They routinely practise their skills in a variety of ways in the context of their vocational subject. As a result, they gain confidence in their presentation, communication, writing and mental arithmetic skills.

- Students benefit from highly effective impartial advice and guidance and as a result are clear about a variety of learning and career opportunities that closely match their ambitions. Students benefit from weekly tutorials where they receive useful information about higher education and career options. Additionally, teachers use their excellent industry knowledge well to provide students with insightful tips on future progression options.
- Teachers set students work and a range of practical activities that help them to make consistently good progress. The teachers use information about students' starting points well to plan learning that ensures students achieve at the highest possible level.
- Teachers provide useful and constructive feedback on students' written assignments. As a result, students know what they have to do to improve their work and how to achieve the highest grades.
- Students develop a broad understanding of equality and diversity matters, and fundamental British values, during informative tutorials. They receive frequent and supportive one-to-one progress reviews during which they discuss their targets and achievements. Tutors use electronic records of feedback from student assessments very well to inform coaching and mentoring activities that motivate students to achieve their best.
- Students' behaviour and approach to work are exemplary. They work confidently and studiously during learning activities and demonstrate very well developed personal and social skills. Students gain employability skills that employers value, such as problem-solving, professionalism, resilience and working well in teams. Students are respectful of each other and of teachers and visitors.
- Students demonstrate a good awareness of how to work safely during practical activities. They use risk assessments confidently to ensure safe working. Students feel safe. They demonstrate a good understanding of how to stay safe online and a good knowledge of the risks from extremism and radicalisation.

Adult learning programmes

Good

- In 2016/17, the college enrolled 750 adult students on part-time courses in English, mathematics, accountancy, hairdressing and beauty therapy, and a full time Access to Higher Education course. Two subcontractors deliver about one third of the provision. At the time of the inspection, around 300 students were on adult programmes.
- Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They use their skills and experience well to support students with written feedback that helps them achieve. On the Access course, teachers develop students' writing and research skills well. As a result, students gain a deeper understanding of the topics they study.
- Students develop a wide range of personal, social and work skills during practical activities and theory lessons. They gain self-confidence and make good progress in developing job-related skills and knowledge. Teachers prepare Access students well for higher education and a majority go on to study successfully at university.

- The quality of resources to support learning is good. Students benefit from industry-standard resources and in practical sessions the majority of students develop their technical and professional skills well. For example, the college's hairdressing and beauty therapy salons are particularly well equipped. Staff, students and members of the public use the salons.
- College managers have formed strong links with local employers and community organisations. They use these to support adult students' career progression, and they have developed an appropriate range of courses to meet these needs. For example, local employers have provided work experience opportunities in accountancy for adult students without previous experience of this subject who wish to enrol on the college's Association of Accounting Technicians course.
- College managers have worked well with the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership to open a professional development centre at the college. This meets the higher-level skills needs of employers in the region. The centre provides courses for adult students that employers value and which contribute considerably to raising the college's profile in the local community.
- Teachers track and monitor effectively students' progress towards their goals. Written feedback on assessed work is generally of good quality with appropriate attention paid to correcting errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. A good proportion of students progress to further or higher education and many go on to employment of their choice.
- Adult students make good progress in developing their English and mathematics skills. For example, in a hairdressing practical session students worked out the percentage of commission due on each customer bill, and how that would affect their weekly wages.
- Students have a good understanding of equality and diversity topics. They show respect for each other and for staff. Access students explore and debate ethnicity, faith and gender matters. Students behave well and use appropriate language in learning sessions.
- Over time, advice and guidance have been comprehensive and ensured that students enrol onto an appropriate course that matches their skills and career aims. However, managers acknowledge that the quality of advice and guidance in 2016/17 was insufficiently robust and that too many students joined an inappropriate programme. Consequently, achievement rates for adult students fell to below the national rate, particularly in GCSE English and mathematics. Managers took action that resulted in better guidance and good progress for current students. It is too soon to judge the impact of their actions on achievement rates.

Apprenticeships

Outstanding

- At the time of inspection 292 apprentices were studying at intermediate level, 397 at advanced level, and 111 were on a higher apprenticeship programme. Apprentices work for small, medium size and large employers, mostly in engineering-related subjects. Most off-the-job training takes place at CEMAST.
- Provision fully meets the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship programme. Apprentices benefit from excellent, high quality, resources at CEMAST that exceed industry requirements. Management of the apprenticeship is highly effective. Managers engage well with employers and involve them fully to make sure provision meets their

needs and the needs of the local community. Employers were involved in writing the standards for the maritime defence apprenticeship and worked with college managers to adapt the delivery and assessment methods to suit their needs.

- Excellent employer engagement means that apprentices receive relevant high-quality training and development. For example, private aviation industry employers and representatives of the Ministry of Defence work collaboratively with college teaching staff and visit the college weekly to review and monitor apprentices' progress and development.
- Employers are involved in apprenticeship reviews and in the setting of targets to achieve individual units. In many cases, targets help apprentices to develop the wider social skills and behaviours required for their industry. These skills help apprentices communicate better with customers and colleagues.
- Employers value highly the involvement they have with college managers to make sure apprentices complete their studies within the planned timescale. They provide additional training and support to help apprentices gain the full range of specialist skills required by their training programme.
- Teachers make good use of the available information on apprentices' prior achievements so that they enrol on a programme that meets their needs and aspirations. Staff identify additional support needs at an early stage so that apprentices are not disadvantaged or unable to make good progress.
- Apprentices develop excellent practical skills that support their progression to a higher level of study or into employment. They are able to identify the skills they have gained and apply them correctly in the workplace. In an off-the-job session in mechanical engineering, apprentices demonstrated the use of diagnostic equipment to identify faults and to suggest a range of methods to correct them.
- Apprentices develop very good mathematical skills. In most mathematics lessons, teachers effectively make links to the vocational curriculum. Apprentices are confident in their use of mathematics. They can solve complex mathematical equations and say how these are used in their work.
- Apprentices feel safe and know who to contact if they have any concerns. They work safely in workshops. Teachers reinforce safety messages at every available opportunity. For example, they remind apprentices about the correct personal protective equipment requirements when entering the engineering workshops.
- Apprentices understand the 'Prevent' duty and the importance of British values. They can explain the risks of radicalisation and know how to keep themselves safe from the dangers of extremism.
- Apprentices' behaviour in the workplace and in learning sessions is exemplary. They demonstrate a readiness to learn and show respect for each other through a collaborative approach to tasks and by supporting each other to solve problems effectively.
- Attendance and punctuality at work and to lessons are good. College careers staff provide apprentices with high-quality impartial careers advice and guidance. The larger engineering employers supplement this with advice and guidance about the opportunities available from them.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130693
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	3,381
Principal/CEO	Nigel Duncan
Telephone number	01329 815200
Website	www.fareham.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	256	53	528	223	647	269	0	11
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	148	58	256	131	2	33		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	26		3		29			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	29							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Groundworks South Military Mentors Steve Willis Training St Marys Training Centre							

Information about this inspection

The deputy principal, as nominee, assisted the inspection team. 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

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