

Greenhead College

Inspection report

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Background information

Inspection judgements

Grading

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

The descriptors for the four grades are:

- *grade 1 – outstanding*
- *grade 2 – good*
- *grade 3 – satisfactory*
- *grade 4 – inadequate*

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body; and where appropriate the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits or quality monitoring inspection; and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:

- overall effectiveness of the organisation and its capacity to improve further
- achievement and standards
- quality of provision
- leadership and management.

Description of the provider

1. Greenhead College was established as a sixth form college in 1974. It is located on a single site close to the centre of Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. Within Huddersfield there is another sixth form college and a general further education college. A concordat between the three colleges was agreed in 1998, with the aim of providing a comprehensive curriculum for the local community whilst enabling the colleges to focus on their specialisms. Huddersfield falls within the Kirklees metropolitan district. In 2006, 41% of the district's 16-year-olds achieved five or more GCSEs including maths and English compared to 46% nationally.
2. Greenhead College remains heavily over-subscribed. It enrolls around 70% of students from its 12 partner schools. The remaining students are selected on a competitive basis, predominantly from Kirklees and neighbouring boroughs. The GCSE performance of students at the college is significantly stronger than in the case of most sixth form colleges. In 2005/06, there were 1,772 students on roll of whom virtually all were aged 16 to 18 and approximately 55% were female. The proportion of learners of minority ethnic heritage broadly matched that of the local community. The majority of students study advanced subsidiary level (AS level) and general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) courses. Following the last inspection in 2004, the college was awarded Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Beacon status.
3. The college's mission is to: "provide a supportive environment in which individuals feel valued, grow in confidence and fulfil their potential for academic, moral, social and physical development; to continue to be a centre of excellence for a college of its type, providing education and training within its means of the highest quality for each individual student; and to be a major force in enabling its student community to reach the nationally set foundation learning targets, in particular through the offer of a level 3 curriculum concentrating on A level provision".

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Capacity to improve	Outstanding: Grade 1
Achievement and standards	Outstanding: Grade 1
Quality of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding: Grade 1
<i>Equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Outstanding: Contributory Grade 1</i>

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

4. The overall effectiveness of Greenhead College is outstanding. "Every Student Matters" pervades all aspects of the student experience. Students enjoy their studies and are eager to learn. Pass rates on AS and A level provision are exceptionally high. Retention is high on most courses. Throughout their time at the college the majority of students make excellent progress in relation to their prior attainment and a much higher than average proportion of students achieve high grades in their subjects. Many demonstrate high levels of independent thinking and express their views and ideas with confidence.
5. The quality of provision is outstanding. The development of high quality teaching and learning is at the heart of the college's work. Much outstanding and creative teaching exists across subjects. There is extensive sharing of good teaching practice both in and between departments. The excellent arrangements for monitoring individual progress, identified at the last inspection, have been retained and are very effective in helping each student strive to achieve their potential. The wide range of A level programmes and substantial enrichment opportunities, which involve all learners, provide an outstanding curriculum to meet all needs and interests - in line with the college's mission. There are excellent opportunities for students to take on additional responsibilities and enable them to make a positive contribution, both within the college and to the local community through a range of projects. Support and guidance are outstanding. Both academic and pastoral support are highly effective in encouraging each individual student to meet their own high expectations. Over 94% of students progress to higher education.
6. There is outstanding leadership and management across the college. Staff at all levels share in the college's values and are committed to driving improvement and striving for excellence. Quality assurance and self-assessment are well embedded and generally very effective in maintaining high standards. However, the college does not utilise all available data effectively to monitor aspects of its performance. Resources are managed exceptionally well. The college continues to invest in its workforce, employing highly qualified staff with much expertise in their subject area. Despite a small degree of overcrowding in a minority of lessons, classroom space is used to very good effect. Social areas for students are heavily congested and remain an area for improvement. The college provides outstanding value for money.

Capacity to improve

Outstanding: Grade 1

7. The outstanding performance noted at the last inspection has been maintained. The leadership has aspirational but realistic views of what can be achieved and staff across the organisation share this drive for excellence.

The colleges' self-assessment process is well established and used very effectively as part of a continuous process of review and evaluation. Its judgments regarding the quality of its provision are accurate and well founded. Quality assurance procedures are very effective in promoting improvement and raising standards. A range of data are analysed and used to monitor performance although the use of some data in making judgments about performance are overlooked.

The effectiveness of the steps taken by the college to promote improvement since the last inspection

8. The college has made good progress in addressing the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. A new lift installed in the main building has provided much greater access to learners and staff with restricted mobility. There are now no subjects that are inaccessible to students. A social area for students remains an area for improvement. The main hall and its surrounding corridors are heavily congested at peak times and the problem is particularly notable when the weather restricts students from venturing outside. The arrangements for identifying and supporting students with specific learning needs are now good. Support needs are identified early and swiftly put in place. Newly introduced methods to measure the impact on students who take up support shows they make equal or even better progress than those students who are not in receipt of support.

Key strengths

- very high pass rates on AS and A level programmes
- high retention rates across the college
- the exceptional progress made by the majority of learners in relation to their starting points
- excellent arrangements to ensure every student matters
- high quality teaching and learning
- rigorous and highly effective monitoring of students' progress
- excellent progression rates to higher education
- excellent range of and participation in student enrichment programmes
- outstanding academic support and guidance
- the strong focus on improvement by staff at all levels of the organisation
- outstanding leadership and management.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- the overcrowding of student social areas and in a minority of classrooms
- the use of all available data to monitor aspects of the college's performance.

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Outstanding: Grade 1

9. Students' achievement and standards are outstanding. Success rates at level 3, the college's core provision, have remained exceptionally high and well above the national average over several years. Pass rates on AS and A2 programmes are very high. Excluding general studies, AS pass rates in 2006/07 were 94%, well above average, and A level pass rates, were an impressive 99%. Retention rates are high across most subjects. The college uses a detailed analysis of value-added measures to stretch and challenge the progress of each individual student. The majority of students across all ability levels meet or exceed their target grades. Many more students achieve grades A to B within their AS and A level subjects than in similar colleges. Success rates at GCSE for students who sit or re-sit GCSE mathematics or English improved in 2006/07 and are generally in line with the national average. Achievement in keys skills has improved markedly and is satisfactory. There are no distinct differences in performance by gender, with both male and female students achieving very well. The progress made by Pakistani students on their courses is outstanding. Success rates for Pakistani students, the college's largest minority ethnic group, improved in 2006/07 after a previous dip to be marginally above the latest national average. Other minority ethnic heritage student groups achieve exceptionally well. The college's self-assessment accurately analyses learners' achievement. The college monitors performance by different groups although this is not explicitly reported through the self-assessment report. The standard of students' work remains very high. Attendance is consistently good at around 92%.

Quality of provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

10. The quality of provision is outstanding and has improved further on the high standards reported in the 2004 inspection. A high proportion of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers are enthusiastic, well qualified and highly committed to student success. Students' participation in lessons is excellent, many demonstrate a thorough understanding of their subjects and highly developed communication skills. The developmental approach to the observation of teaching is very accurate and has had a significant impact on improvement and the sharing of good practice. Aspirational targets for improving teaching have been effective in all but a very few subjects. A minority of classrooms are cramped and provide poor learning environments. The assessment and monitoring of students' progress is rigorous and highly effective. Throughout the course students are given challenging estimated grades based on value-added assessments.
11. The extent to which programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of students is outstanding. A wide range of GCE AS and A levels prepare students exceptionally well for progression to university and careers in a wide range of disciplines. The college has a narrow but growing range of

applied A levels. Educational and social inclusion is good. A large proportion of students are recruited from areas of disadvantage. Links with schools effectively promote participation and transition but 14 to 19 curriculum developments are slow. The college is effectively developing projects with local schools to encourage students who are under-represented in certain subjects to consider applying, although it is too early to judge the full impact of these initiatives.

12. The college offers an outstanding range of enrichment opportunities and this has been recognised by a Queens Anniversary Award. There are many different sporting, leisure, music and drama activities as well as general interest, academic extension, additional qualifications and voluntary service work. Take up is excellent and students' experience is considerably enhanced by participating. A raft of opportunities exists to enable students to take responsibility and make a positive contribution such as mentoring in local schools or participation in voluntary services in the community. Links with employers are good. Work shadowing provides more than 600 students annually with a highly valuable insight into real work environments in professions they may pursue in future. This, along with the very high proportion of students who progress to higher education, effectively supports students' future economic well-being.
13. Guidance and support are outstanding. Almost all students are recruited to the right courses. Great care is taken to ensure students study subjects which enable them to work towards their long-term career goals. New students are warmly welcomed into the college by all staff and senior students. A new screening process has been introduced which effectively identifies learning support needs early. Highly individualised programmes of support make use of a good range of very effective methods and resources. The support is closely monitored using value-added approaches. Students receiving support achieve at the same rate as all students. Commitment and support for the pastoral programme is very strong at all levels of the college. The student centred tutorial process is highly effective and strongly based on the college principle that every student is an individual. Liaison between personal tutors, subject teachers and the learning support coordinator are excellent and ensures that the vast majority of students make very good progress. Carefully planned group tutorials are highly effective in raising self-esteem, developing very good personal and communication skills, enhancing study skills and supporting the general well-being of students. There is very good promotion of healthy lifestyles through tutorial and enrichment, particularly around the importance of keeping active and maintaining general well-being. The college recognises there is more work to do around the promotion of healthy eating and measuring its impact.

Leadership and management

Outstanding: Grade 1

Contributory grades:

Equality of opportunity

Outstanding: Grade 1

14. Leadership and management are outstanding. There is a fervent drive for improvement at all levels of the organisation which is very learner focused. The principal's open and supportive leadership style is highly valued by staff and students alike. Communication throughout the college is strong and built on high levels of trust and mutual respect. Students' achievement and standards have remained well above average and the college has maintained its reputation locally and nationally as an outstanding educational provider.
15. Quality assurance and the process of self-assessment are generally very effective in maintaining very high standards and bringing about improvement. The college continues to ensure teachers have sufficient time to prioritise and effectively plan their teaching to maximise students' learning. Excellent staff development exists to further promote improvement and share best practice, both internally and to other educational providers. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process and report. An increasingly wide range of information is used to evaluate how individual subjects are performing and is used in planning further improvement. The self-assessment report is detailed, however, the college does not use all available data to analyse and evaluate aspects of its performance. For example, the use of success rates; one of the new measures of success within further education, is not used routinely as part of the college's analysis. Subsequently, some patterns in student performance are monitored less effectively and areas for action or further celebration are potentially missed.
16. Governance is highly effective. Governors are committed to the college's work and monitor its financial and academic performance well. Financial management is very strong.
17. Accommodation is good and the quality of specialist resources is very good. Adjustments to the main building since the last inspection have increased access for those with restricted mobility. A range of strategies are in place to alleviate the overcrowding in a small number of lessons, which is often due to the size of the rooms available. Social areas for students remain heavily congested, with large numbers of students congregating in the main hall particularly at peak times.
18. The promotion of equality of opportunity is outstanding. There is a strong culture within the college to value each individual student and ensure they achieve their potential. Value-added data shows virtually all groups of learners regardless of gender, ethnicity and learning difficulty or disability make significant progress in their time at the college. Equality and diversity is embedded within the tutorial programme and the achievement of a range of student role models are actively celebrated by the college to further

promote success and raise aspirations. The college's approach to meeting equalities and disabilities legislation is very good. The formal monitoring and analysis of the performance of different groups of learners at strategic level however, is less robust, with not all data being effectively utilised. There are clear policies and procedures for child protection. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and monitored centrally.

Learners' achievement

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

		16-18				19+			
Notional Level	Exp End Year	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	04/05	176	91	64	27				
	05/06	166	94	71	23				
	06/07*	118	92						
GNVQs and precursors	04/05								
	05/06								
	06/07								
NVQs	04/05								
	05/06								
	06/07								
Other	04/05	176	91	63	28				
	05/06	166	94	71	23				
	06/07*	118	92						

* 2006/07 data provided by the college and subject to validation

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

		16-18				19+			
Notional Level	Exp End Year	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
2 Long	04/05	285	77	73	4	3	67	56	11
	05/06	250	81	78	3				
	06/07*	195	79						
GCSEs	04/05	78	79	78	1	1	100	65	35
	05/06	65	77	82	-5				
	06/07*	58	84						
GNVQs and precursors	04/05								
	05/06								
	06/07								
NVQs	04/05								
	05/06								
	06/07								
Other	04/05	207	76	62	14	2	50	52	-2
	05/06	185	82	70	12				
	06/07*	137	77						

* 2006/07 data provided by the college and subject to validation

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
3 Long	04/05	8126	91	82	9	10	80	59	21
	05/06	8096	91	83	8	1	0	65	-65
	06/07*	8140	91						
A/A2 Levels	04/05	3325	94	92	2	8	75	76	-1
	05/06	3306	95	93	2	1	0	78	-78
	06/07*	3242	95						
AS Levels	04/05	4524	89	78	11				
	05/06	4466	89	79	10				
	06/07*	4526	89						
GNVQs and precursors	04/05	127	87	74	13	1	100		
	05/06	78	92	74	18				
	06/07*								
NVQs	04/05								
	05/06								
	06/07								
Other	04/05	150	84	72	12	1	100	56	44
	05/06	246	89	75	14				
	06/07*	372	88						

* 2006/07 data provided by the college and subject to validation