

# New College Pontefract

## Sixth form college

|  |                         |                |
|--|-------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Inspection dates</b>                      |                         | 1–4 April 2014 |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>This inspection:</b> | Outstanding-1  |
|  | Previous inspection:    | Good-2         |
| Outcomes for learners                        |                         | Outstanding-1  |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment |                         | Outstanding-1  |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   |                         | Outstanding-1  |

### Summary of key findings for learners

#### This provider is outstanding because:

- Success rates for students have improved and are now very high.
- Students work hard, develop very good learning habits and achieve very high standards.
- Teachers use a wide range of interesting and interactive activities that motivate and challenge students to learn and improve.
- The teachers are well qualified and highly skilled practitioners.
- Assessment is regular and rigorous, and feedback to students helps them make very good progress.
- Individual support and guidance are exceptional.
- The Principal and senior managers have successfully developed a culture of high expectations, innovation, hard work and collaboration.
- The college makes a significant contribution to social cohesion and to the aspirations of the people in the communities it serves.
- Governors provide excellent support to the college.
- Safeguarding has a very high priority and students feel safe and well supported.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is very good.
- Managers and staff value students' views and make extremely good use of them to inform decision making.

## Full report

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

- Maintain the focus on improving the proportion of students achieving high grades on advanced courses.
- Make sure that all students gain a good understanding of the expectations and opportunities in the world of work to complement their academic studies.

### Inspection judgements

|                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Outcomes for learners</b> | Outstanding |
|------------------------------|-------------|

- Outcomes for learners are outstanding. The proportion of students successfully completing their courses has improved over the past three years and in 2012/13 was substantially above the recent average for sixth-form colleges. In particular, outcomes for students on advanced vocational and AS-level courses improved markedly in that year.
- Teachers and managers have worked very hard over the past few years to support and encourage students to complete their courses. Indeed, the proportion of students completing their programmes is high and very few drop out. Attendance and time-keeping are excellent.
- Students work hard, show mature attitudes to study and achieve very high standards. For example, students in English demonstrate exceptionally high levels of debate and discussion when analysing literary texts. A number of students who came to the college with modest attainment in GCSE mathematics have made very good progress in business studies and now show high levels of confidence when dealing with investment appraisal calculations.
- The vast majority of students on advanced programmes gain their qualifications. Pass rates for AS-, A-level and BTEC advanced programmes have improved recently and are now comfortably above sixth-form college averages. In a large number of subjects across the curriculum over half the students attain high grades. However, in a minority the proportion is below the national average. Managers and teachers recognise this and have put in place a number of initiatives, among which is a drive to support under-achieving male students.
- The college recruits a small number of students to intermediate qualifications – mainly GCSE repeats and some vocational programmes. These students, sometimes from areas of social and economic deprivation, make very good progress and a good proportion achieve C grades or above in GCSE English and mathematics. Managers and staff are particularly proud of these learners for whom the GCSE successes open doors to further study and better employment opportunities.
- The progress made by students on advanced programmes, the vast majority of the student body, as measured by value-added calculations, is above that expected from their prior attainment. More detailed analyses reveal that those students who come from areas of social and economic deprivation make very good progress indeed. The high success rates and attainments of the students at New College not only reflect the hard work that teachers and students put in, but also considerably add to the social cohesion and economic prosperity of this area of West Yorkshire.
- Many students leave the college and go on to higher education, further training or employment each year. In 2012/13 around 90% of those who completed their studies progressed to higher education, further training or employment. A large number go on to prestigious universities to study, for example, engineering, medicine, fine arts, literature, or economics. Those who choose not to pursue their studies find employment or progress to apprenticeships.
- Managers and teachers have worked hard to narrow any gaps in achievement shown by specific groups of students. For example, attainment by male students has improved over the past three years and is now broadly in line with that of female students. In addition, attainments by

students with a declared disability and/or difficulty have also improved. However, managers recognise there is still work to be done in this area. A small, but increasing, number of students from minority ethnic backgrounds have attainments broadly in line with those of the whole student body.

- Students benefit from a very wide range of sporting and recreational activities. Many take part in competitive sports each week and a considerable number enjoy recreational sports and cultural activities. To their credit, these students achieve national successes in sporting competitions, national and regional debating events and skills competitions. Especially noteworthy here is the good range of opportunities for students with disabilities. Students and staff also work successfully together on a range of health-related projects, community work and fundraising for charities.
- Students feel safe in the college and report that they appreciate the calm and harmonious atmosphere. In addition, inspectors observed safe working practices in the classrooms, laboratories and studios across the college.

### **The quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Outstanding

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding. All staff are fully committed to ensuring that the standard of provision remains at the highest level across all areas of the college. Teachers have very high expectations for their students, and this builds students' confidence and their motivation to succeed.
- The Principal and senior managers, with the full support of staff, have created a positive and supportive learning culture with a strong focus on motivating and inspiring students to succeed. They encourage teachers to develop creative approaches to their teaching that enable students to make rapid progress and to achieve their aspirations. Teachers successfully develop students' independent learning skills, their ability to study intensively and their enjoyment of learning. They encourage and motivate students to achieve the highest grades in their coursework and examinations.
- Teachers in all subject areas use a wide range of interesting learning activities supported by high-quality resources that engage, motivate and challenge students. They ensure that all students are very active in their learning through participating in lively discussions, delivering presentations to the class and providing support to their peers. Teachers use learning technology extensively and creatively to enhance learning. In most subjects, students make full use of the college's virtual learning environment (VLE) to extend their learning outside the classroom. Teachers plan learning carefully to ensure that activities meet the individual needs of students. They provide very good challenge to the more able students through extension activities and additional help to the students who need it.
- Support for individual students is outstanding for the extent to which it focuses strongly on enabling students to achieve their targets. A wide range of very effective support arrangements ensures that the great majority of students make very good progress. Personal tutors provide very effective support to all students including those aspiring to achieve the highest grades and those at risk of falling behind. Specialist support from highly skilled additional support staff enables students with physical and learning disabilities and/or difficulties to participate fully in college life and make very good progress.
- Students participate fully in a wide range of activities that enrich their learning and enhance their confidence and skills, including sporting activities, public performances, and charity work. Many A-level students have the opportunity to visit employers and gain useful insights into the world of work relating to their academic studies.
- Teachers identify students' starting points successfully and set very challenging targets, which the great majority of students reach, and many exceed. All students are allocated a progress tutor who meets with them regularly to monitor progress, review targets and encourage them to stay on track for the highest possible level of achievement. Monthly tests are very effective in evaluating the progress that students make and identifying targets for further improvement.

- Teachers use self- and peer-assessment very successfully to help students to reflect on the progress they make during lessons. They use probing questions very effectively to check and extend students' understanding. Feedback on assessed work is usually detailed and evaluative. It enables students to know precisely what they need to do to improve. Media studies teachers have introduced an outstanding audio-visual approach to assessment. Students complete assignments by scripting and then producing videos. They then receive their feedback through the same medium.
- The college has an extremely strong focus on ensuring that students develop their English and mathematical skills. Teachers are particularly effective at developing students' confidence to speak in formal situations through delivering presentations and engaging in lively discussions. They consistently correct errors in students' written work. Students who do not have a GCSE grade C in English and/or mathematics receive very effective support to improve their skills, both in their lessons and through additional individual support sessions.
- Staff provide comprehensive advice and guidance that enables students to choose study pathways that meet their needs and aspirations. Students benefit from additional individual support early in their courses. Progress tutors and careers guidance staff provide excellent support to help students progress successfully to higher education, to a higher apprenticeship, or into work.
- Teachers and managers promote an ethos of mutual respect and tolerance very successfully. They ensure that all students are fully included in learning activities. Teachers explore equality and diversity issues with students confidently and sensitively. For example, law students explore the impact of legislation on the lives of people with different backgrounds and lifestyles. In travel and tourism, students consider how tour companies can adapt their services to meet the needs of people with different cultural and religious backgrounds.

## Science, mathematics and statistics

Outstanding

### 16-19 study programmes

- Teaching and learning are outstanding and, as a result, a very high proportion of students successfully complete their courses. Teachers are well qualified, energetic and passionate about teaching, and very knowledgeable about the progress and support needs of each student. They work very cooperatively in subject teams to produce high-quality learning materials. They are highly skilled at planning realistic and challenging learning activities that meet students' learning needs.
- Teaching accommodation is good and practical resources are excellent. Expectations are high and students are very responsive, achieving high attendance, completing substantial independent study to a high standard and contributing fully in lessons. In a successful geology lesson the students made very good progress interpreting data from remote sensors in order to predict if a volcano was about to erupt. The learning materials and complexity of the data were carefully differentiated to meet the needs of all the students.
- Teachers provide excellent and productive support for students, both within lessons and during compulsory support sessions. Attendance at these support sessions is very high and students receive activities tailored to their individual needs. Teachers also give freely of their time outside lessons to help students improve and progress.
- Students make very good progress and develop a deep understanding of both scientific and mathematical concepts. For example, in a very good chemistry lesson the students demonstrated a good understanding of the mechanism underlying the hydrolysis of a halogenated alkane. In physics very good use is made of practical activities which illustrate concepts and deepen understanding. Teachers also use information and learning technology skilfully to deepen learning and provide good opportunities for further study. In a small minority of lessons teachers do not manage group work well enough.

- In many lessons, teachers make extremely good use of short activities to provide suitable starters and to encourage discussion and peer assessment. In a further-mathematics lesson an intriguing problem on moments succeeded in engaging students' curiosity immediately. In a successful biology lesson, the students confirmed definitions of new terminology in ecology and peer assessed each other's work in a very busy session that was also full of humour and hard work.
- Teachers use initial assessments and monitor students' progress very skilfully to ensure that students are placed on the correct courses and that they receive appropriate support. Most teachers use questioning expertly to assess learning and deepen understanding. However, in a small minority of lessons a few students are allowed to dominate and not enough time is given for thinking before answering questions. Teachers assess work frequently and rigorously, and marking contains helpful comments on how to improve.
- Teachers make very good use of the outcomes of assessment to help learners improve through, for example, targeted teaching in follow-up lessons. For example, in a GCSE mathematics lesson, students received excellent support from the teacher while working in pairs on topics they had not answered correctly in a recent homework assignment. Teachers help students develop their English and mathematical skills in a variety of ways. These include terminology displays in classrooms and laboratories, a focus on clarity of meaning during students' spoken contributions in class and through thoroughly-marked written work.
- Teachers make sure that lessons are inclusive and meet the needs of all the students. They treat students fairly and monitor their progress closely against challenging target grades. The students are very positive about the quality of the teaching and enjoy their time in college. Managers and teachers have successfully addressed a gender gap in achievement in mathematics through analysis and targeted additional support.

## Visual arts, media and communication

Outstanding

### 16-19 study programmes

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding. Success rates have steadily improved over the past three years and are now above national averages. Teachers have high expectations of students and the assignments are bold and challenging. Teachers are very well-qualified, display excellent subject knowledge and are highly adept at identifying the potential of their students, directing and advising them accordingly. Attendance and punctuality are very good.
- Teachers ensure that students acquire the fundamental principles of technique in order to support all learning. For example, on the foundation diploma course students develop significant life-drawing skills that underpin and enhance all aspects of their work. Similarly, media students use complex electronic resources with complete confidence and expertise. Enrichment activities and international visits significantly enhance the work of students. For example, after visiting the Palaeontology Museum in Paris art students were able to investigate new forms of visual expression with flair and gruesome originality.
- Teachers plan learning very successfully and insist that students recognise their responsibility to manage their own learning and achievement. Students treat each other with respect and much learning is collaborative. They have a very good understanding of, and awareness for, subject content and they work with imagination and perception. Reflection and self-evaluation are fundamental to the excellent progress they make. In art and fashion, the standard of sketch books is very good with the students taking considerable pride in what they record.
- In all lessons students are highly motivated, on-task and respond to challenges with enthusiasm and vitality. They enjoy attending the college, taking full ownership of their work and meeting, and often exceeding, their targets. They make excellent progress. In addition, students are able to work independently and manage their own learning extremely effectively. However, on rare occasions some students are not always fully prepared for lessons.

- Initial assessment is very good and swiftly identifies those students requiring additional support. Individual learning plans record the close monitoring of students' attendance and prompt action is taken should attendance drop. Long- and short-term targets are identified and students see clearly how they can progress. Teachers frequently give up their own time for the benefit of their students, arranging revision workshops during holiday periods when the college is officially closed.
- Assessment is excellent. Teachers are highly skilled at identifying strengths and areas for improvement in students' performance and are vigilant in tracking progress against current attainment and target grades. They give detailed and focused feedback and help students make sensible action plans to address areas of weakness. For example, art teachers give exhaustive feedback to students who are preparing their final major projects. In media, teachers have developed innovative and outstanding audio-visual assessments in response to students' practical work. Awarding organisations recognise the integrity and accuracy of assessment within the areas of learning.
- Wherever possible, teachers integrate English and mathematical skills in assignments and they are insistent that misspellings and grammatical errors in submitted work are unacceptable. Media students forensically mark the work of their peers against subject-specific criteria.
- Information, advice, guidance and support for students are very good and help motivate students to succeed in their learning and progress. Students appreciate the help they receive from their tutors and teachers and state that their experience of college life exceeds their initial expectations. The recent introduction of new courses, especially the art foundation course, offers students many valuable opportunities to extend their options and specialisms.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is extremely good. Teachers manage the behaviour of students very skilfully. They, in turn, are courteous and respectful to others. In media, teachers successfully highlight situations involving gender misrepresentation and stereotyping in promotional materials.

## Social sciences

### 16-19 study programmes

Outstanding

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding and this is reflected in the high success rates on all courses. Students make excellent progress. They develop very good academic knowledge and understanding and the confidence to apply these in their everyday lives. They are fully prepared to progress successfully to higher education and employment.
- Teachers have consistently high expectations of their students, which inspire them to develop broad interests in their subjects and to strive to achieve outstanding results. Students are acutely aware that staff care about them as individuals. Highly effective recent staff development in teaching, learning and assessment has equipped teachers to make their lessons extremely relevant and very interesting.
- Teachers plan lessons extremely skilfully, often encouraging the students to develop excellent peer-coaching skills. Lessons are always interesting and attendance is high. In a politics lesson, the teacher enabled students to learn from each other by splitting the group into three sections to facilitate three simultaneous debates on the pros and cons of a codified constitution. The students were so engrossed in their discussions, the lesson over-ran into break.
- Teachers develop and use printed resources of very high quality. In psychology, learning resources are outstanding and workbooks combine tests of knowledge, additional tasks to stretch the more able learners, and references to external sources and materials for students to use.
- Assessment is outstanding and is seen as a joint endeavour between students and teachers to monitor and improve knowledge and understanding. In some cases students negotiate both tasks and deadlines, and assess themselves and each other with confidence and accuracy.

Teachers assess learning in diverse ways by using, for example, questions and answers, mini-whiteboards, highly effective electronic voting, quizzes and competitions. In an economics lesson, the teacher asked the learners, 'just for fun', to draw the diagram where the consumer pays all the tax. The students responded with real determination.

- Very effective monitoring of students' progress means teachers and students are able to work in partnership to identify targets and arrive at strategies to meet them. Students with additional learning support needs are identified very promptly and good support is put in place quickly to enable them to succeed.
- Students receive very helpful feedback on what they need to do to improve their knowledge and understanding. This feedback involves a dialogue with students who show an outstanding ability to reflect on their performance. Written feedback identifies weaknesses in spelling, punctuation and grammar but does not always offer guidance on how to improve them.
- Students develop very good specialist vocabulary through their studies. Teachers expect correct terminology and sophisticated language to be used. For example, in a geography lesson, students confidently referred to albedo and anthropogenic influences when discussing human impact on the weather.
- Comprehensive and accurate advice and guidance before, at the start, and during their programmes of study means students know exactly what to expect when they arrive and progress through the college. This helps them to adapt quickly to the responsibility of becoming independent learners. During their time at college they have plentiful opportunities to benefit from the experience of staff to help them make timely and successful choices about their future.
- Equality and diversity are skilfully promoted and fully embedded in the curriculum. Students work very cooperatively and can apply what they learn to everyday life. For example, in a sociology lesson, a student quickly identified gender stereotyping as a possible reason for her grandmother's negative facial expression when she told her she was going to study A-level chemistry.

## English

### 16-19 study programmes

Outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding and result in student success rates which are significantly above national averages. Students make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and GCSE English A\* to C grade pass rates are high. Progression rates from AS- to A-level courses are strong and many students accept university places to study English-related degrees.
- Teachers have very high expectations of students and a culture of aspiration, academic success and endeavour has been firmly established. Teachers care a great deal about their students and are relentless in the pursuit of their success. Students demonstrate high levels of motivation and dedication, are keen to be actively involved in activities and make significant contributions in class. They enjoy their lessons enormously and commit to excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers challenge students very effectively and many students are working significantly above their ambitious targets. The standard of work in lessons is often exceptionally high. Students' analytical skills are rigorously developed and they are confident in offering creative and intelligent interpretations of complex literary texts. In an outstanding lesson, students were highly impressive in their understanding of *The Wife of Bath's Tale* and were able to demonstrate a level of understanding that far exceeded their level of study.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are able to design activities to sustain a very fast pace in lessons. They use a wide variety of learning strategies and high-quality resources to engage students, who demonstrate a thirst for knowledge and an intellectual curiosity that teachers are very keen to embrace. Many opportunities are taken to add to the 'cultural capital'

of students, who are able to discuss literature confidently in relation to historical contexts and critical viewpoints.

- Teachers focus relentlessly on examination techniques and ensure that all students are fully versed in awarding organisations' assessment objectives. These are used successfully to assess the progress of individuals and encourage self-reflection. Students have a firm grasp of linguistic and literary terminology and are able to link writers' techniques to their intended effects extremely effectively.
- Students develop very good oracy and discussion skills, through the encouragement they receive, to express their own ideas. They are keen to engage in debate and do so with the utmost respect for a wide range of different viewpoints. Through extensive peer teaching, they learn a great deal from each other and are confident collaborative learners.
- Assessment practices are exemplary. Teachers monitor learning rigorously and use effective questioning to check how individuals are progressing. They successfully incorporate self-assessment opportunities in lessons and an excellent example of this resulted in students' knowledge of the play *Oleanra* being enhanced with striking impact.
- Students have detailed knowledge of their strengths and areas for development and are able to articulate clear and specific next steps for their own learning. Written assessment is frequent and students receive highly detailed feedback on their work. Systems for tracking and monitoring the progress of students are excellent and teachers use a wide range of information about individuals to inform planning and support from the start of the year.
- Academic support for students is offered in abundance and teachers dedicate a significant amount of time outside lessons to ensuring that the individual needs of students are met. Students appreciate how accessible their teachers are, and support classes for advanced level students are well attended and highly personalised. GCSE support classes are not as sharply focused but address important gaps in students' knowledge.
- Teachers concentrate unremittingly on spelling and punctuation and emphasise strongly the development of basic English skills at GCSE level. Students' develop their independent learning skills through regular homework and extension materials provided by teachers. The use of the VLE as an independent learning tool is adequate but enrichment activities are not yet widely developed.
- Teachers ensure that students have a deep understanding of equality related issues through exploration of a carefully considered choice of texts and through lively classroom displays, which promote respect and individual differences.

## Business

### 16-19 study programmes

Outstanding

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding and this leads to excellent outcomes for students. Success rates on all courses exceed national averages. The standard of students' work is excellent. In 2012/13 the majority of the students in this curriculum area progressed to further or higher education or into relevant employment that continued their training in business management or the law.
- Teachers' excellent subject knowledge and experience motivate and inspire all students. They set interesting and challenging tasks to provide stimulating lessons in which students develop a thorough understanding of complex law and business theories. For example, students discussed with enthusiasm the recent legislation to allow same-sex marriage and focussed on the legal implications of this change. Students extend their learning through extension tasks and the good materials on the VLE. For example, business students, after viewing a video on technological impact on business for homework, were all able to answer very probing questions correctly at the start of the next lesson.



- To develop students' knowledge and understanding of business and law, teachers plan learning activities very skilfully. They successfully manage the individual learning needs of their students through interesting activities and assessments that thoroughly test their understanding. For example, law students were fully conversant with different case-law examples on assault and prepared to discuss and answer questions in class. Students demonstrate high-level debating skills and the pace of lessons is often fast. However, in a small minority of lessons teachers do not check sufficiently that learning has taken place.
- Students receive outstanding assessment and feedback throughout their courses. In many lessons students receive praise and encouragement from the teachers alongside skilful development of their analytical thinking skills. Monthly assessments successfully focus students on revision and progress. Following these regular assessments, students get support to improve, and many attend additional sessions to help them achieve their aspirational target grades.
- Students applying for higher education get very good advice and support during the application process by preparing presentations and developing their personal statements and interview techniques. Teachers actively encourage students to give feedback and to take part in peer assessment.
- Students continue to develop their English and mathematical skills and apply them within the context of business and law. For example, students are confident in calculating ratios to determine shareholder dividends and in selecting appropriate vocabulary for formal written reports. Teachers and students assiduously check each other's spelling, grammar and use of terminology.
- Students develop highly effective employability skills through a range of different activities. They take part in external competitions, and those students who access work experience are sometimes offered full-time employment as trainee managers in national organisations. Law students benefit from visiting speakers ranging from local magistrates to staff from large legal organisations and local universities. Teachers have successfully collaborated with a local law firm to secure interviews for students seeking advanced apprenticeships.
- The promotion of equality and diversity by managers and teachers across all aspects of the curriculum is very good. For example, students who speak English as an additional language receive specific support to achieve their learning goals and law students discussed case law in relation to the treatment of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in court and comments subsequently made by judges. Classroom displays contain positive images of minority groups in high-profile positions. The learning environments are safe and inclusive for business and law students.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

**Outstanding**

- Leadership and management are outstanding. The Principal, senior managers and governors have developed, and successfully communicated, a comprehensive and ambitious strategic vision and direction for the college. Strategic management and planning are highly effective and have resulted in very successful outcomes for students. Managers place a very strong emphasis on inspiring and supporting students to reach their full potential.
- The Principal has strived successfully to develop the culture of the college further by adopting a challenging but supportive leadership style, which has resulted in a culture of academic success and accountability at all levels in the organisation. Clear values and hardworking staff foster an inclusive environment for all students. Communication across all areas of the college is very good, resulting in staff having extremely good opportunities to express their views and contribute to the developments of the college.
- Governance is highly effective. Governors know the college intimately and benefit from carefully prepared reports, which present performance information and data in a readily accessible manner. Governors monitor managers and staff effectively and support developments and improvements. They bring considerable, pertinent expertise to their roles and challenge

managers appropriately. They use their skills effectively in overseeing self-assessment and strategic planning.

- Managers make extremely good use of labour market information and feedback from prospective students to develop and plan new provision such as BTEC courses in performing arts and the foundation art programme. Curriculum development has a high priority and study programmes are carefully thought through and implemented. The college offers a broad curriculum with progression routes at intermediate level including GCSEs and a wide range of AS and A levels and advanced BTEC courses, which are successfully taken in combination by a significant number of students. However, the development of learners' employability skills is underdeveloped in some curriculum areas.
- Highly responsive partnership work with schools, the local authority and higher-education institutions has a very positive impact on people of all age groups in the local community. Managers work innovatively with partners to share best practice to improve the quality of teaching and learning across organisations. In response to requests from headteachers in local primary schools, BTEC sports students undertook community placements where they successfully ran sporting and healthy lifestyle classes. As a result, a school plans to recruit two sports teaching assistants from this student cohort.
- The performance management of staff is outstanding. It is extremely comprehensive and rigorous. Senior staff have a very strong focus on teaching, learning and assessment, and their improvement. The rigorous lesson observation system provides accurate assessments of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Managers and teachers actively discuss action points identified through the observation process. They implement these through one-to-one mentoring, coaching and highly effective training. Managers recognise outstanding teachers and support staff, and reward them appropriately for their contribution to the students and the college.
- Self-assessment arrangements are exceptional. Teachers and managers use data and different sources of evidence, including the views of students and partners, very successfully to contribute to self-assessment. Quality assurance policies and procedures are highly effective. Managers identify and review underperforming courses and individual students thoroughly, and interventions are immediate and have a very positive impact. Students receive high levels of additional support to help them to improve their performance, and senior managers and governors monitor course interventions closely.
- Managers and teachers listen carefully to the students and value their views. Managers collect students' views regularly using student forums, the student assembly and the executive. Managers make very good use of this information to secure improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. For example, the college used feedback from students during the planning and designing of the new learning resource centre to ensure that it had more study space and quiet work areas.
- Managers have been particularly successful in encouraging staff to develop their practice to reflect the college's equal opportunities policies and to embed equality and diversity in their teaching. Students have respect for one another and for staff. They demonstrate exceptional behaviour in lessons, across the campus and on work placements. Staff and managers have successfully reduced the gaps in success rates between different groups of students through a number of focused and timely interventions.
- Managers and teachers place a strong emphasis on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. They respond swiftly to safeguarding issues. Lessons take place in an open and welcoming environment and students feel safe. The college induction and tutorial programme effectively promote students' safety and the safe use of social media and the internet. The college complies with statutory requirements for safeguarding and risk assessment. All staff and governors receive appropriate safeguarding training with regular updating.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### New College Pontefract

|   |         |                           |                           |                        |              |                         |                 |               |                    |
|---|---------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| <p>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</p> <p>1: Outstanding<br/>2: Good<br/>3: Requires improvement<br/>4: Inadequate</p> | Overall | 14-16 part-time provision | 14-16 full-time provision | 16-19 study programmes | Traineeships | 19+ Learning programmes | Apprenticeships | Employability | Community learning |
| Overall effectiveness   | 1       | N/A                       | N/A                       | 1                      | N/A          | N/A                     | N/A             | N/A           | N/A                |
| Outcomes for learners   | 1       | N/A                       | N/A                       | 1                      | N/A          | N/A                     | N/A             | N/A           | N/A                |
| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment  | 1       | N/A                       | N/A                       | 1                      | N/A          | N/A                     | N/A             | N/A           | N/A                |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management  | 1       | N/A                       | N/A                       | 1                      | N/A          | N/A                     | N/A             | N/A           | N/A                |

| Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Grade |
|---|-------|
| <b>Science</b>  | 1     |
| <b>Mathematics and statistics</b>   | 1     |
| <b>Visual arts</b>  | 1     |
| <b>Media and communication</b>  | 1     |
| <b>Social sciences</b>  | 1     |
| <b>English</b>  | 1     |
| <b>Business</b>   | 1     |

## Provider details

|   |                                |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|---|--------------------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|----------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| <b>Type of provider</b>   | Sixth form college             |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Age range of learners</b>  | 16 to 18                       |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>                  | Full-time: 1,895               |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
|   | Part-time: 5                   |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Principal/CEO</b>  | Miss Pauline Hagen             |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>  | February 2008                  |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Website address</b>  | ncpontefract.ac.uk             |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>                                       |                                |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Main course or learning programme level</b>  | <b>Level 1 or below</b>        |     | <b>Level 2</b>  |     | <b>Level 3</b> |     | <b>Level 4 and above</b> |     |
| <b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>                                     | 16-18                          | 19+ | 16-18           | 19+ | 16-18          | 19+ | 16-18                    | 19+ |
| <b>Full-time</b>  | N/A                            | N/A | 75              | N/A | 1,894          | 6   | N/A                      | N/A |
| <b>Part-time</b>  | N/A                            | N/A | N/A             | N/A | N/A            | N/A | N/A                      | N/A |
| <b>Number of traineeships</b>   | 16-19                          |     | 19+             |     | Total          |     |                          |     |
|   | N/A                            |     | N/A             |     | N/A            |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>                                    | <b>Intermediate</b>            |     | <b>Advanced</b> |     | <b>Higher</b>  |     |                          |     |
|   | 16-18                          | 19+ | 16-18           | 19+ | 16-18          | 19+ |                          |     |
|   | N/A                            | N/A | N/A             | N/A | N/A            | N/A |                          |     |
| <b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>  |                                |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Full-time</b>  | N/A                            |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Part-time</b>  | N/A                            |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of community learners</b>   | N/A                            |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Number of employability learners</b>   | N/A                            |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>Funding received from</b>  | Education Funding Agency (EFA) |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |
| <b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b> | None                           |     |                 |     |                |     |                          |     |

## Contextual information

New College is a sixth-form college in Pontefract, West Yorkshire, with around 2,000 students, the vast majority of whom attend full time and are aged 16 to 18. Most students take AS- and A-level courses. Over the past few years, however, a growing proportion of students take vocational programmes and a small minority take intermediate qualifications such as GCSE subjects. The sciences, mathematics, and visual and performing arts are the most popular subject areas. The proportion of students from minority-ethnic backgrounds attending the college is higher than that of the surrounding population. This region of West Yorkshire has relatively high unemployment and areas of high social, economic and educational deprivation. In addition, a large number of students make long journeys each day to attend the college. Educational attainment in local secondary schools is around national averages.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Alex Falconer HMI

Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the Vice Principal as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

## What inspection judgements mean

| Grade   | Judgement            |
|---------|----------------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding          |
| Grade 2 | Good                 |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate           |

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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