

# Highbury College

General further education college

**Inspection dates**

23–26 April 2018

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>	16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Adult learning programmes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Apprenticeships	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for students	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Provision for students with high needs	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Outstanding	

## Summary of key findings

### This is a provider that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have been slow to reverse the college's decline in performance.
- Leaders and managers have not improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Too few students and apprentices make the progress expected of them or achieve their qualifications.
- Too much teaching is uninspiring and attendance at most lessons is low.
- Students and apprentices do not develop and improve their skills in mathematics and English quickly enough.
- Teachers, trainers and assessors do not take sufficient account of the different starting points of students and apprentices or of their potential when planning and delivering learning programmes.
- Too few students are clear about what they have learned and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Trainers and assessors do not identify apprentices who are falling behind quickly enough and are too slow to put interventions in place.
- Too few students and apprentices have a good understanding of British values.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Leaders and managers have very good arrangements for designing the curriculum through highly effective links with employers and other stakeholders.
- Students and apprentices are well behaved, confident and respectful, and a strong culture of safety permeates the college.
- The vast majority of students with high needs achieve greater independence and many progress onto higher-level education programmes, supported internships or employment.
- The majority of adult students make good progress in learning and improve their skills and confidence.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Highbury College is a medium-sized general further education college serving the city of Portsmouth and the surrounding areas of East Hampshire, Fareham, Gosport and Havant. The college has six centres: Highbury Campus, Highbury City of Portsmouth Centre, Highbury Northarbour Centre, Highbury Arundel Centre, Highbury Apprenticeships (Birmingham) and the Solent Marine Academy based in the dockyard of Portsmouth. The college provides education and training programmes in a number of community venues in and around Portsmouth.
- Portsmouth is one of the most densely populated cities in the country. It has the fourth largest economy in the South East, with a broad employment base, and is the national home of the Royal Navy. The city has several areas of high deprivation. Portsmouth has a higher proportion of young people not in education, employment or training compared to Hampshire and the South East region average.

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

- Review the arrangements for evaluating the quality and impact of teaching so that managers focus more closely on assessing students' progress and the standards of their work.
- Ensure that self-assessment and quality improvement plans identify more precisely what needs to be done, and how to do it, to bring about improvements.
- Make sure that students' attendance at classroom-based lessons improves rapidly.
- Ensure that teachers and assessors place a much stronger emphasis on developing and applying students' skills in English and mathematics in all subject areas.
- Confirm that all students have a good understanding of British values and how these relate to their lives.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - making sure that teachers and assessors use the information gathered about students from assessment activities to plan and teach lessons that set high expectations for students and meet their individual learning needs
  - ensuring that teachers and assessors make effective use of methods to monitor and track students' progress and quickly identify students or apprentices falling behind so that support and interventions can be rapidly put in place
  - ensuring that students receive feedback that enables them to understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- At the time of inspection, the college was undergoing a period of some turbulence. A significant restructure of senior and middle leadership was under way. Governance arrangements were being reformed. Leaders were tackling significant financial challenges but had yet to reverse the decline in performance of the past few years.
- Leaders focus successfully on meeting the needs of the local community, including those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable. They place a strong emphasis on providing vocational and other courses that help students to progress to work or further education.
- Leaders' and managers' own evaluation of the quality of provision, particularly teaching, learning and assessment, is overoptimistic. As a consequence, efforts to improve the quality of teaching have had limited success. Too much reliance is placed on graded lesson observations that often result in overgenerous grades. Observers focus too much on checking that teachers meet a list of expectations in relation to process, and do not carry out a perceptive assessment of how much progress students are making, or of the standards of their work. Not enough attention is paid to the impact of factors outside individual lessons that promote good progress.
- Self-assessment reports are too descriptive and do not focus sharply enough on students' progress and outcomes. Managers spend too much time compiling lengthy reports rather than identifying what needs to be done to improve the provision. Their recently produced strategic improvement plans contain an improved focus on most of the key concerns but most fail to place sufficient emphasis on improving teaching. Weaknesses in the arrangements for assessing staff performance mean that teachers are uncertain how to improve their professional practice.
- Leaders and managers have particularly good links with local employers, most of whom run small or medium-sized businesses. Leaders work closely with the local enterprise partnership and the city council to identify key priorities. Frequent meetings on these priorities, led by employers, are highly effective in helping managers to shape the curriculum, including the apprenticeship offer, to reflect employment opportunities. For example, specialist provision in marine engineering, cyber security and MOT testing has been created in response to employer demand. The curriculum also provides good opportunities for the many students and adult learners who are not yet ready to begin vocational training. A very small amount of provision is subcontracted to other providers but this arrangement will end in the current academic year.
- Leaders and managers ensure that, for younger students, the requirements of study programmes are met. Too many students continue to make slow progress in improving their skills in English and mathematics, despite the high priority that leaders place on this.
- Managers maintain a strong focus on promoting equality of opportunity and creating a culture that welcomes diversity. This results in a respectful and harmonious college community. Provision for students with high needs is good, and many vulnerable students achieve very well. Achievement gaps between groups of students and apprentices persist. Strategies to close these gaps are too often ill-defined or not successful.

## The governance of the provider

- Governors have a good oversight of most areas of the college and fulfil all their statutory duties. However, overall performance has declined and they have not been effective in challenging and supporting senior leaders to stem this decline. They are rightly seeking to strengthen their understanding of educational performance, particularly the quality of teaching.
- Governors receive detailed reports from leaders and managers, but these do not always help them to identify the key factors that they need to focus on to check that educational performance is improving.
- At the time of inspection, governors had recently adopted a new governance model as part of their planning process. These changes are designed to help governors to focus more sharply on key priorities; it is too early to assess their impact.
- Governors have close links with key areas of the college, especially those where performance is a concern. However, these links have yet to bring about sufficient improvement in teachers' practice.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff place a strong emphasis on safeguarding students. A culture in which students and apprentices feel safe and protected is well developed across the college.
- The vast majority of students know how to keep themselves and their peers safe from risks, such as being drawn into dangerous or illegal activities by extremist groups. They know what changes in behaviour they might identify if a person were being drawn into such groups and know what to do in the event of a terrorist incident. College managers invited former right-wing extremists into the college to talk with students and broaden their understanding. Managers plan an extensive tutorial programme and themed weeks that help students and apprentices to understand and discuss how these matters relate to their lives.
- Staff and governors receive regular training on safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty and essential topics such as the risks of exploitation of vulnerable children and adults. Staff and students pay good attention to health and safety procedures.
- The safeguarding team track and monitor safeguarding concerns thoroughly. They keep detailed records of their actions and involve external agencies when needed. Procedures for recruiting staff are effective in ensuring that students are safe from harm.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Too much teaching is uninspiring. Too few teachers and assessors encourage students on study programmes and apprentices to gain the skills and knowledge they need to achieve well. Too few study programmes students and apprentices make sufficiently rapid progress towards achieving their qualifications.
- Teachers' and assessors' aspirations for students on study programmes, and for apprentices, are too low. Too few set tasks that encourage students and apprentices to

think for themselves. Work is often too easy. The pace of learning is often too slow, with starter activities taking up too much of the lesson. Teachers and assessors do not motivate students well enough to complete work to a high standard. As a result, too few students on study programmes and apprentices complete work quickly or achieve the grades of which they are capable.

- Most teachers of adults have much higher expectations of their students. They provide stimulating lessons that interest and enthuse students. As a result, many of these students make rapid progress and achieve well.
- Teachers and assessors do not consider well enough what learning will take place in lessons. Learning outcomes for sessions are often vague, unclear or difficult to measure. Too many teachers and assessors plan and provide lessons to achieve unit criteria, rather than thinking about concepts that students need to learn. As a result, they do not know how well students and apprentices have developed their skills and understanding.
- Teachers check learning well in subjects such as floristry, fashion and beauty. They use questioning effectively to motivate students and test their understanding. However, too few teachers in other subjects check students' knowledge sufficiently well before moving on to new learning. Consequently, students are often unclear about what they have learned and how it relates to the aims of the lesson.
- Too few students on study programmes receive feedback from teachers that shows clearly what they need to do to improve. Students in receipt of high needs funding receive good oral feedback but written feedback does not always help them understand how to improve. Although apprentices receive good feedback to enhance their learning and build their confidence, they are not prepared well enough for their practical assessments in the workplace.
- Too few teachers of students on study programmes make effective use of their knowledge of students' starting points. As a result, teachers do not provide sufficiently demanding learning matched to students' needs, and progress is often slow. Activities do not challenge students who are more able, and other students struggle with the level of work. However, most teachers of adult students cater more effectively for their students' differing needs and abilities.
- The majority of teachers and assessors do not plan well enough to help most students and apprentices to develop English and mathematics skills. Teachers question students about English and mathematics in vocational lessons but do not show them how to develop and remember these skills. Teachers of students on study programmes at foundation level develop students' communication and practical mathematics skills well.
- Almost all students and apprentices concentrate, listen carefully, and take part fully in classes. They enjoy their learning. They appreciate the opportunities to improve their practical skills. Students and apprentices behave well and interact well with each other and their teachers. They work harmoniously together. Themed weeks help students to understand topics concerned with equality and improving their understanding of living in a diverse society. Students value the safe and comfortable environment in which they learn.
- Well-qualified vocational teachers and workplace supervisors use their up-to-date industry expertise effectively to help students and apprentices learn good practical skills. Training days enable them to share good workplace practice. Teachers work closely with students

on study programmes to help them improve their practical work. As a result, most students on study programmes produce practical work of a good standard. Standards of work in the workplace are good or better for apprentices.

- Adult students on vocational programmes develop good work-related skills. For example, most adult students studying floristry either progress to the next level of study or go into employment as florists. Teachers work successfully with students at foundation level, as well as those studying hairdressing and construction and those on study programmes in Birmingham, to develop skills needed for employment. Most assessors successfully link theoretical concepts to workplace activity.
- Students in receipt of high-needs funding on foundation and higher-level courses are supported well. Staff successfully help those with challenging behaviours, high anxieties and emotional and behavioural difficulties to access learning. Teachers help students on adult community learning courses to engage successfully with new learning. These students achieve well as a result of this support.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

### Requires improvement

- Students' attendance is low in all subject areas. Managers have identified this as an area for improvement and have introduced a number of interventions, but improvements in attendance this academic year have been very slight.
- Teachers' and assessors' support for students to develop and improve their skills in mathematics and English is not effective. Students need to improve these skills to prepare for employment and to meet employers' needs. Assessors and teachers do not emphasise the importance of these subjects sufficiently.
- The large majority of students and apprentices do not have a good enough understanding of British values. They do not know how these link to work and life in the community, despite managers providing frequent sessions on these topics as part of the tutorial programme.
- The number of students who benefit from meaningful and high-quality work experience linked to their programme of study is still low, despite improvements over the past year. The majority of students on academic programmes have yet to benefit from work experience this year. Students on vocational and foundation courses develop good work-related skills during work experience. These students enjoy their work placements, which help them to make decisions about their futures.
- Students develop effective employment skills during their time at college. Employers visit lessons to talk about the skills that students will need in work. External projects, for example with local leisure complexes, help students to develop the skills they will need in the workplace. Vocational teachers integrate useful employability topics into students' work. For example, hair and beauty students give pampering sessions in a local hospital for the nursing staff.
- Students receive good support and impartial careers guidance, which help them make well-informed decisions about their next steps. For example, a student on an English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) programme has recently learned about apprenticeship opportunities in the pharmaceutical sector and is now planning her studies accordingly. Students studying at level 2 are supported to raise their aspirations and

complete higher-level apprenticeships through a regional higher education network project. However, most apprentices do not receive additional careers guidance once they have started their course.

- Students, who may be vulnerable, benefit from a comprehensive range of support services including a mental health nurse and two college counsellors. Consequently, they complete their studies. The extensive support for students' well-being and mental health helps them stay healthy and develops their resilience. For example, Syrian refugees are given a mentor who meets them frequently to support their integration into life in Britain.
- Apprentices complete additional activities and qualifications that will support them in their work. For example, an early years apprentice has completed qualifications in food hygiene, safeguarding and 'Prevent', paediatric first aid and working with fathers.
- Students and apprentices are well behaved, confident, respectful and courteous. Those that attend demonstrate good attitudes to their studies and are punctual to lessons.

### Outcomes for students

### Requires improvement

- The proportion of students aged 16 to 18 who achieve their qualification has declined significantly over the past three years, and in 2016/17 was below the national rate for similar colleges. The proportion of apprentices who achieve their programme within the expected timescales, although improved, is low and is below the rate for other similar providers.
- Most adult students taking short, part-time courses achieve their qualifications, particularly at level 1. Students on vocational and community learning programmes make good progress. A minority of adult students, for example those on access to higher education programmes, do not make the progress expected of them.
- Too few students and apprentices, other than adults on entry-level programmes, who take functional skills English and mathematics successfully complete their courses. The proportion of adult students and those aged 16 to 18 who achieve high grades in GCSE English and mathematics is low. Very few students on academic programmes achieve high grades.
- The majority of apprentices are making expected progress. However, too many apprentices who are making slow progress get close to the end of their programme before interventions are put in place to support them to successfully complete.
- Significant gaps in achievement exist for groups of students; students of all ages with learning difficulties and/or disabilities perform less well than their peers, particularly on apprenticeships. Male apprentices also perform significantly below their female peers in all age groups. Children looked after by the local authority achieve as well, and often better, than their peers on the same programme and the majority progress onto further study or into employment.
- Students in receipt of high needs funding achieve in line with, and often above, their peers on the same programme in all areas, except in English and mathematics qualifications. These students achieve greater independence and many progress successfully into supported internships, traineeships, employment and internally onto higher-level education programmes.



- Most students develop effective work-related skills and demonstrate these well in practical activities and in the workplace. They are able to link the skills and attitudes they are developing to those required by employers and know why they are important.
- Students and apprentices produce work of a good standard in practical sessions, and in the workplace the standard of their work is good. The quality of too many students' and apprentices' written work requires improvement.
- Most adult students and those aged 16 to 18 receive good advice on their next steps and most develop skills that will help them when they progress into the world of work or onto further study. Students in receipt of high-needs funding benefit from a strong focus on employability. Apprentices are encouraged to undertake additional training and short qualifications by their employers to enhance their employment skills.
- The majority of 16- to 18-year-old students progress to further education, training and employment. The proportion of 16- to 18-year-old students who progress within the college to a higher level of study is good for students on entry-level programmes, but requires improvement for those on levels 1 and 2.

## Types of provision

### 16 to 19 study programmes

### Requires improvement

- The college has around 1,174 students on 16 to 19 study programmes. Courses are available in every subject area and from foundation level to level 3.
- Teachers' expectations of students are too low. Too much teaching is lacklustre, and does not inspire students to attend, enable them to make good progress or acquire the skills and knowledge they need to achieve well. A minority of teachers make good use of their vocational or subject expertise to stimulate students' interest and bring topics to life.
- Too many teachers pay insufficient attention to the information they have about students' starting points and their individual needs when planning and providing learning. Teachers do not consistently check that students have achieved the targets they set for them. Teachers do not focus tasks and activities to help students achieve their individual targets, make good progress and understand concepts before moving on to the next topic.
- Too many teachers set learning outcomes that are too broad and often at an inappropriate level, for example, too demanding for those on foundation courses or too easy for those at advanced level. Too often, learning outcomes identify what students will do in the lesson rather than what they will learn. They are not effective in helping students to assess their progress in learning.
- Students' attendance at classes is low. Despite swift intervention when students fail to arrive at lessons, teachers rarely achieve full attendance, and many students are persistent poor attenders. Students who attend regularly find the poor attendance of others disruptive.
- Managers have been slow to respond to some of the requirements of the study programme. As a result, the provision of English and mathematics in vocational teaching is not well established and students' progress in these subjects is slow.



- Managers do not do enough to collect, analyse and evaluate the range of work-related activities provided for all students on study programmes, especially if they are not attending an external work placement.
- The majority of teachers develop students' practical and work-related skills very effectively, preparing them well for progression to employment or further study. Students on foundation-level programmes and on the information technology engineer's programme in Birmingham are particularly well prepared. Teachers are careful to stress the importance of good working methods when applying practical skills at work. In hairdressing, students understand the importance of good communication and teamwork when working with clients.
- Most teachers provide effective coaching and guidance for students during practical work and group exercises. They give constructive feedback on practical work. Learning support assistants give students good support in classes to help them progress.
- Teachers often give students detailed feedback explaining what they have done well, but do not consistently identify the errors that students have made. Their feedback gives insufficient information on how students might improve, and as a result, students are unclear about what they should do.
- Students work effectively and independently in practical sessions, they are enthusiastic and confident. Hairdressing students are highly motivated by competitions, producing imaginative designs and concentrating intently on delivering them. Plumbing students work on a range of projects skilfully and with high levels of commitment, to produce work of a good standard.
- Students who attend enrichment activities develop the skills needed by employers. For example, students use bomb disposal simulations to develop their communication and team-working skills under pressure.

## Adult learning programmes

**Good**

- The college has around 1,518 adult students, 369 are studying full time and the rest are following part-time programmes.
- Teachers on vocational and adult community learning (ACL) programmes have high expectations of students. Students enjoy learning; they make good progress in lessons and improve their skills and confidence. For example, several students have gained employment with further training (including a teaching qualification) at a training academy for chefs in exclusive hotels. A good proportion of adult students undertake work experience placements secured by the college.
- Leaders and managers have designed an adult curriculum that meets local needs well due to their strong links with employers, Jobcentre Plus and Portsmouth City and Hampshire Council. Employer advice boards influence curriculum design and help managers identify and run courses that successfully meet the needs of local residents. For example, local employers identified that there was a skills shortage in computer security. The college reacted to this shortfall and provided courses to meet this demand.
- Adult students on vocational programmes develop good work-related skills. Effective links with employers prepare students well for the world of work. For example, catering students develop a range of industry skills that have a positive impact on their learning.

Adult students in a floristry class, who have returned to education after several years, plan to go into business and become self-employed.

- Most teachers plan interesting activities in lessons that motivate those students who attend. Teachers use a wide range of resources that stimulate students and deepen their understanding of the subject. These enable many of them to achieve above their predicted grade. Students on ACL courses quickly develop good skills and understanding in subjects that they have not previously studied.
- Teachers support older students on ACL programmes well and help them to engage in new learning. The social stimulation that this learning brings to their lives helps them to remain active and independent within the community.
- Students are polite and respectful of each other and of staff. They value their learning and can describe how it has improved their personal and social skills and developed their confidence. For example, students on ESOL programmes are confident to speak aloud without fear of embarrassment while they are developing their spoken English skills.
- Most teachers give students helpful feedback that enables them to improve their work. However, in a minority of lessons, feedback does not provide sufficient detail to allow students to reflect on what they did well or what they need to do to improve their work.
- Students on access to higher education courses benefit from good information on progression to higher education that helps them plan their next steps effectively.
- Teachers of ESOL do not always set clear lesson objectives that help students to understand what is required of them. They do not challenge students to make sufficiently fast progress, and they focus too narrowly on the completion of targets that lead to an assessment. ESOL students do not always understand the reason they are completing an activity or how this relates to their targets and learning needs. For example, ESOL students were completing a reading task that some of the students did not understand; as a result, they were unable to learn from the activity.
- Too few teachers help adult students on vocational programmes to develop their English and mathematics skills swiftly enough. In the small minority of lessons where mathematics and English are woven into the context of a vocational subject, students develop the skills needed for employment. For example, students returning to education, developed mathematics skills that allowed them to work out cost and value-added tax in relation to buying materials.
- Student attendance in lessons is low and punctuality in a minority of lessons is poor. This has a negative impact on the pace of learning for all students at the start of the lesson.

## Apprenticeships

## Requires improvement

- The college has around 923 apprentices, 140 of whom are on standards-based apprenticeships, and the remainder are on frameworks.
- Trainers and assessors do not have consistently high expectations of what apprentices can achieve. Too few apprentices have individualised training plans that build on their starting points. A significant majority of apprentices are on programmes of the same length, irrespective of their prior skills and experiences.
- Too few teachers plan classroom-based learning sessions sufficiently well to ensure that

all apprentices make rapid progress. The pace of lessons is often slow and uninspiring, particularly in theory lessons. Too often, teachers provide the same learning activities for all apprentices and do not recognise that individuals have different starting points and learning potential. The vast majority of teachers do not set work that is challenging enough to help apprentices make better progress.

- A minority of teachers plan and provide learning effectively and produce resources that enable apprentices to make good progress. They use starter activities to stimulate interest and set the scene for further learning. They use a range of interactive learning tasks that help apprentices maintain their interest and make good progress.
- A minority of apprentices make slow progress in the workplace. Employers in these cases do not have a clear picture of the expected progress of their apprentices. Employers are unaware of how to plan and provide their on-site training and unsure of which skills their apprentices need to develop. Trainers and assessors do not identify apprentices who are falling behind quickly enough. Interventions are set up at the end of the apprenticeship rather than as soon as it becomes clear that progress is slowing.
- No targets are in place for developing and practising English, mathematics and digital skills in the workplace or during classroom-based learning. Too little feedback relates to improving English and mathematics and assessors do not provide enough coaching in these essential skills. Too few apprentices who are required to do so achieve their English and mathematics qualifications.
- Too few trainers prepare apprentices well enough for their practical skills assessments. For example, early years and electrical installation apprentices do not practise their skills enough and have not been coached sufficiently prior to assessment.
- The majority of apprentices are making the expected progress. Most are aware of their individual progress and know what they need to do to achieve. Apprentices value the personalised support from their trainers and assessors to help them succeed. On programmes that are well planned and managed, for example in marine engineering, apprentices have aspirational targets and are encouraged to achieve high grades.
- The vast majority of apprentices progress into sustained employment at the end of their programme. Apprentices make a strong contribution to their workplaces and settle quickly. Many have already secured employment before the end of their apprenticeship or are in discussions for their next steps.
- The majority of trainers, assessors and workplace supervisors are knowledgeable and experienced in their sectors and ensure that apprentices develop the correct skills and behaviours to do their jobs well. Employers have high expectations and want apprentices to succeed.
- Trainers mark students' work accurately. They provide students with helpful guidance and oral feedback on how they might improve their technical skills and knowledge. Most students resubmit work promptly following feedback.
- Apprentices feel safe in the workplace and at college. They benefit from a comprehensive induction in health and safety and safeguarding.
- College managers have successfully introduced new standards apprenticeships. However, on-the-job training plans have yet to be set up on some courses and the measurement of progress against behaviours is yet to be determined. On a minority of courses, for

example journalism, apprentices benefit from a well-planned and managed course. Employers play an active role in developing their employees to meet their business needs. Apprentices develop good skills and behaviours through a range of stretching work-based learning activities. The employer regularly reviews their progress.

## Provision for students with high needs

**Good**

- The college has 54 students with high needs. Most students are on independent living, employability and life skills courses from entry level 2 to level 1. The remaining students are on a range of college courses from level 1 to level 3.
- Leaders and managers have a clear strategy for the development of provision for students with high needs. They use the allocated additional funding effectively to provide individualised learning programmes, so that students develop their personal, social, communication and employability skills well.
- Managers and teachers ensure that students move from school to college successfully through effective working with the local authority, schools and other support agencies. Students value the opportunity to visit the college before full-time enrolment; they visit during holiday periods to help them to overcome their anxieties about attending. Staff assess the abilities and support needs of students well and put appropriate support in place.
- Support for most students with high needs on foundation and higher-level courses is good. This allows many students to take study programmes in a wide range of academic and vocational areas. Students benefit from good dyslexia, speech and communication support, and behaviour management. They make effective use of adaptive technology and other resources to integrate into higher-level vocational and academic courses.
- Students with challenging behaviours, high anxieties, and emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported well by staff. Vulnerable students work closely with staff mentors to ensure that they can re-engage with learning after periods of disengagement. These students initially attend for shorter periods of time at a small specialist centre and progress to the main campus when ready.
- Staff focus well on improving students' employment skills. Students undertake work experience and work tasters, or a range of projects in college. These include community-based projects and an art workshop where students produce craft materials. Students on the supported internship programme develop good skills and most progress to voluntary and paid employment.
- Tutors do not consistently use the available information about students' individual needs when planning and providing learning. For example, some teachers require students with limited reading skills to read aloud in class. In a small minority of lessons, teachers set activities that are too easy and do not routinely check students' understanding.
- Parents and carers are not always clear about the progress a student is making; some students are not clear about their own progress. Student reviews are not always effective. They do not readily demonstrate how students are achieving the outcomes listed in their education, health and care plan. Interventions by communication and behaviour support staff are not measured against any starting points and students' progress over time cannot be easily shown.

- Most students are supported effectively by learning support assistants, who know their students well. In the minority of lessons where support is less effective, staff complete tasks for students, despite them being able to do the task themselves. In such cases students rely too much on staff and teachers and do not develop independence skills.
- Teachers' oral feedback to students is helpful and shows them how to improve. However, teachers' written feedback to students does not always tell them what they need to do to improve or how well they have done. Some written feedback is too complicated for students to understand.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	130697
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of students	16+
Approximate number of all students over the previous full contract year	6,752
Principal/CEO	Stella Mbubaegbu
Telephone number	02392383131
Website	<a href="http://www.highbury.ac.uk">www.highbury.ac.uk</a>

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of students (excluding apprenticeships)	372	1,283	350	446	373	262	–	42
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	227	158	208	257	18	46		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	6		9		15			
Number of students aged 14 to 16	–							
Number of students for which the provider receives high-needs funding	56							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	IBM United Kingdom Limited Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner Hampshire Police and Crime Commissioner							

## Information about this inspection

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

Judy Lye-Forster, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alan Hinchliffe	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kate Hill	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andy Fitt	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alun Maddocks	Ofsted Inspector
Lynda Pickering	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Herbert	Ofsted Inspector
Penelope Horner	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Bennett	Ofsted Inspector



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### **Student View**

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

### **Employer View**

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