

Craven College

General further education college

Inspection dates	2–5 February 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Adult learning programmes	Requires improvement
Apprenticeships	Outstanding
Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Outcomes for students on 16 to 19 study programmes and a small number of adult programmes are not good enough and too few students on 16 to 19 study programmes who study GCSE English and mathematics achieve a grade C or above.
- The management of work experience for study programmes is not effectively coordinated across all areas.
- Teachers do not make enough use of initial assessment to plan learning to meet individual needs, especially for 16- to 19-year-olds and adults.
- Improvements are too slow. Leadership strategies to improve teaching, learning and assessment have not had enough impact.
- Behaviour and attitudes to learning for a small minority of 16- to 19-year-olds need to improve.

The provider has the following strengths

- Apprenticeship provision is outstanding, with very high-quality delivery and apprentices making excellent progress.
- Discrete provision for high-needs learners is good, with well-organised, individualised provision leading to good outcomes.
- Senior managers engage well with employers and the local community and have developed provision that is well matched to local priorities and skills needs.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Craven College is a large general further education college based in Skipton, with additional centres at Leeds Bradford International Airport, Ripon and Scarborough. The college has substantial apprenticeship provision, with most apprentices based with employers in north and west Yorkshire.
- The majority of enrolments at the college are from the local area. Students aged 16 to 19 make up the majority of those learning full time, with the large majority of these on courses at level 3. Around 180 adults study full time at the college and a large number attend community and distance learning courses. Nearly three quarters of students aged 16 to 19 who enrol at the college do not have a GCSE at grade C or above in English and/or mathematics.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that teachers use all relevant information to plan lessons to meet students' differing needs, particularly those of the most able, and check understanding of learning regularly
 - consistently implementing leadership and management strategies across all areas and sharing good practice effectively
 - ensuring that teachers set high expectations for behaviour, attitudes to learning and standards of work and reinforce these expectations consistently.
- Improve outcomes on level 3 courses for 16- to 19-year-olds and adults which are not yet good and the success rates for those aged 16 to 19 studying GCSE English and mathematics.
- Improve and consistently implement the strategy for work experience for students on 16 to 19 study programmes, ensuring that it is coherently managed across all areas and that students gain relevant experiences to match their aspirations.
- Ensure that leaders and managers implement strategies, supported by precise and well-understood improvement targets, so that weaker aspects of provision improve quickly and consistently and so that these strategies are effectively and regularly evaluated to measure success.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have not acted quickly enough to rectify some of the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Success rates still require improvement and, although teaching and learning are strong for apprentices and students with high needs, they are not yet good across all types of provision. Senior managers' self-assessment is optimistic. Quality improvement plans and the operational plan lack sufficiently challenging targets. Performance management of staff is insufficiently rigorous.
 - The senior leadership team has recently been strengthened with new post-holders who are implementing new strategies to bring about improvement to the quality of the provision. However, it is too early to see the full impact. A number of systematic and evidence-based strategies to manage and improve the curriculum have been recently introduced. Targets and key performance indicators have been disseminated but are not yet consistently understood or used by managers to bring about improvement at curriculum level.
 - A key strategic goal is to deliver good-value, high-quality learning for all students, leading to successful outcomes and progression. While there are pockets of good teaching and learning, strategies for sharing good practice are not well developed. Systems to improve the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observation, support for teachers and subsequent performance management, although successful in a number of areas, are not yet consistently applied. Areas for improvement identified during lesson observations are not always precise enough to enable teachers to understand exactly what they need to do to improve.
 - Apprenticeship provision is excellent. Timely success rates have improved and are now high. The provision is expanding both in the number of apprentices and the range of provision. The management of sub-contractors is effective. Management of study programmes for learners aged 16 to 19 is not sufficiently coordinated and not all aspects are of high enough quality. For example, the management of work placements is not effectively coordinated across all areas, and the quality of teaching and learning in discrete English and mathematics provision is not yet good enough.
 - The Principal and governors have set a clear strategic direction for the college, which has stabilised the college budget, and have invested in new buildings and learning resources for the benefit of students. The college is a key partner in the growth of the local economy by providing a skilled and employable workforce, for example in the construction and hospitality and catering industries. The college works very well with a wide range of partners, including universities, the local council, employers and community groups, and provides a well-planned range of provision from entry level to higher qualifications, in both classroom-based and work-based learning. Community provision is extensive and meets the needs of the rural community and the conurbations of Keighley and Bradford.
- **The governance of the provider**
- The governing body uses its experience well to support and challenge the Principal and senior leaders to bring about improvement to the college's financial position and to the physical resources of the college. Governors have initiated improvement activities, such as learning walks and commissioning in-depth reports on college performance, for example on success rates for functional skills and GCSE English and mathematics, which they scrutinise and challenge managers to drive forward improvement.
 - Governors recognise that despite the many initiatives recently implemented, the pace of improvement to teaching and learning and students' success rates has been slow. More needs to be done to increase the pace of change and ensure that students make the progress expected of them.
- **The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.**
- Managers and teachers are well aware of their responsibilities and they work closely together when they identify learners who may need help or who might be at risk of harm. There is strong emphasis on, and staff have a good awareness of, local issues. Managers work very well with external partners to ensure the safety of students.
 - Staff development on safeguarding, British values and the Prevent duty has been extensive. Good records are kept, but the college has not yet implemented systems to monitor the impact of this training on students and apprentices. The college community is diverse and harmonious and a cross-college tutorial and enrichment programme raises students' awareness of cultural diversity.

- Safe recruitment process are effective and staff records are thorough. Health and safety processes are thorough; apprentices know how to keep themselves safe in the workplace and students keep themselves safe in lessons.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- There is too much variation in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teaching is much stronger for apprentices and high-needs students, especially those on discrete provision, but it is weaker for adults and 16- to 19-year-olds on study programmes.
- Initial assessments accurately identify students' levels of literacy and numeracy. These ensure that teachers have a sound understanding of their students' needs; teachers do not always make good use of this information to plan learning to meet the differing needs of students, particularly most-able students. When specific barriers to learning are identified, such as dyslexia, teachers do not always ensure that they plan activities to support students to overcome these barriers.
- Teachers' questioning skills need further development. Although the majority of teachers question effectively and encourage deeper thinking, in too many cases their checking of students' understanding is superficial and they readily accept students' initial responses without supplementary questions that encourage students to elaborate. This means that students' understanding is not fully checked and misconceptions are not picked up so that they can be addressed.
- Teachers' use of resources to support learning is very variable. Most teachers make good use of a wide range of materials to enliven learning and engage students. A minority rely heavily on exposition, sometimes without concrete examples to illustrate their point, so that students struggle to understand and lose concentration, limiting progress. Teachers do not do enough to accelerate the pace of learning when it is slow. When students are working independently or in groups, not all teachers are astute at monitoring their work. Although the majority of teachers quickly detect problems, such as misunderstandings, and intervene to remedy these, others do not check thoroughly enough and some interventions are not assertive enough, which limits students' progress.
- Teachers are well qualified and have good subject and vocational expertise, which they use well to engage and motivate students, particularly adults and apprentices, with a range of teaching and learning approaches. Teachers skilfully plan activities for adult and high-needs students that successfully develop their confidence and enhance their chance of gaining employment. On study programmes, teaching is characterised by inconsistencies so that although examples of very effective teaching are seen, there are also examples of weaker practice. Teachers' expectations of both the quality and quantity of students' work are not always high enough. Teachers do not always routinely check students' understanding effectively before moving on.
- Teachers assess students' work regularly. Assessment practices are particularly effective for apprentices. In a small minority of classroom-based lessons, teachers do not provide enough guidance to students about how to improve their work. Not enough written feedback gives students clear and specific advice to help students improve.
- In English and mathematics classes, which often include students working at different levels, teachers do not always do enough to match their teaching to meet individual needs. For example, teachers give the same materials to all students, irrespective of their ability, causing the least-able students to struggle and the most-able students to lose interest. Mathematical skills are well developed by vocational teachers. Teachers give good attention to subject-specific terminology, which helps broaden students' vocabulary.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

- Students and apprentices feel safe in college and the workplace, and know whom to go to if they have a concern. Most have not yet developed a detailed understanding about how radicalisation and extremism relate to them and their lives. High-needs students have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a wide range of situations.
- The great majority of students and apprentices have positive attitudes to learning. A small minority of students on 16 to 19 study programmes do not always behave well around the college and in lessons. In a small minority of lessons for 16- to 19-year-olds, there is low-level disruption, such as students chattering when they should be listening, which hinders learning. The beginnings of lessons are also disrupted on a small minority of occasions by 16- to 19-year-old students arriving late, and this lack of punctuality is not always effectively addressed by teachers.

- Students and apprentices are positive about how helpful pre-course information, advice and guidance are in ensuring that they are on the right course. Students with high needs and apprentices are clear about their progression opportunities and what they need to do to achieve them. Those on study programmes are well supported when applying to higher education. Students on study programmes who do not wish to progress to higher education, and adult students, are not always clear about the information, advice and guidance available regarding the progression options available to them.
- Apprentices, students with high needs, students on adult provision and the large majority of students on study programmes develop good employability skills. They work well in teams, develop self-confidence and are keen to make progress in their studies, arriving for lessons well prepared for study. Apprentices, in particular, develop good skills that mean they are well regarded by their employers and colleagues in the workplace. For example, advanced information technology apprentices develop a very secure understanding of computer network layout to produce professional and accurate network installation diagrams. Work experience for students with high needs is well developed and beneficial, supporting the development of skills. Work experience for students on 16 to 19 study programmes is improving, although the organisation of it is not yet effectively coordinated and plans are not fully implemented in all areas. Managers are aware of this and are working to improve the situation.

Outcomes for learners

require improvement

- Outcomes vary for students on different provision types from weak to strong.
- For students on 16 to 19 study programmes, outcomes require improvement. The majority of students study subjects at advanced level and success rates for these courses have remained relatively static over the last three years at around the national rate, with a key factor being weak retention. Retention and attendance for the large majority of areas are higher to date this year than at the same time last year. Historical data show that students on vocational courses make at least the progress expected of them, with students in a number of subjects making good progress. Students on a number of AS- and A-level courses make less than expected progress. High numbers of students take GCSE mathematics and English qualifications, but too few of them achieve a grade of A* to C. Those taking functional skills qualifications make better progress.
- Adult students achieve well on certain courses, for example success rates are high for those on distance learning provision. Many students overcome significant barriers to learning, re-engage with study and improve their confidence and employability skills. Adult students on advanced-level courses do not always make the progress they are capable of and success rates for access courses have recently declined.
- High-needs students make good progress in achieving the goals they set at the start of their course. They develop their social skills and particularly their communication skills well. Most progress to further study or employment, or are able to lead more independent lives following their course.
- Apprentices make excellent progress and achieve high success rates on their course, both for overall achievement and for achieving their qualification in the set timeframe. They develop high levels of skills, which match or exceed industry standards, with many apprentices taking additional qualifications to improve their worth in the job market.
- Data show that there are achievement gaps between different groups of students. Further analysis shows that these gaps relate to the range of courses the individual students take, rather than any individual characteristics.
- College staff have worked hard to find out destination data for their students and apprentices, asking for planned destinations and then following this up a number of months later to see whether the destination has been achieved and retained. This shows that well over 90% of apprentices achieve sustained employment, with many having additional responsibilities or achieving promotion and some moving on to higher qualifications. The large majority of students who complete study programmes also move on to positive destinations such as higher education or employment.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- The college provides study programmes in a wide range of subject areas at levels 1, 2 and 3. Currently, students on study programmes make up the majority of the college's provision. The large majority of students are on vocational programmes. The college also provides AS- and A-level programmes.

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment on 16 to 19 study programmes requires improvement. Teachers do not always take sufficient account of individual learning needs when planning for learning. In a small minority of lessons, the activities are not challenging enough for the most-able students. As a result, a few learners do not make the progress they are capable of during these lessons. In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not always check all students' understanding before moving on to the next activity. This means that a few students are unclear and this slows their progress. A minority of teachers do not provide written feedback that is detailed and specific enough. Consequently, not all students are sufficiently aware of how they could improve their work.
- Attendance, punctuality and student conduct require improvement. In a small minority of lessons, attendance is not high enough and students arrive late. Teachers do not always challenge effectively the low-level disruption that occurs in a small minority of lessons, which distracts students so they do not all make the progress they should.
- The large majority of students who have previously achieved a grade D in GCSE English and/or mathematics do not make the progress they should in improving their English and mathematical skills and qualification grade. Those students who take functional skills make better progress in improving their skills. In vocational lessons, teachers integrate mathematical skills effectively to help students achieve their vocational qualification. For example, students on a carpentry and joinery course learn how to estimate the area of a room so that they can work out how much wood is needed to cover the floor. Teachers also support students well in their understanding and use of subject-specific terminology, for example using scientific language effectively to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of nuclear reactors.
- Students indicate that they feel safe in the college and know whom to contact if they have a concern for themselves or their friends.
- Students on vocational courses develop a good range of useful practical skills. Consequently, they improve their chances of gaining employment. For example, catering students develop knife skills to prepare fruit, vegetables and meat.
- Students benefit from good information, advice and guidance to help them choose their study programme. As a result, most students are on study programmes that take account of their prior attainment and their career aspirations. Information, advice and guidance for students who intend to go to university are also good.
- The majority of students who stay in college and complete their study programme progress to a higher level of study, an apprenticeship or employment. In previous years, not enough students completed their study programme. College data for the current year show that attendance and punctuality are higher than for the same period last year.

Adult learning programmes

require improvement

- At the time of inspection, there were approximately 2,500 adult students on college provision. Courses for adults are available in most subject areas, on full-time and part-time programmes at college sites and in community-based programmes, which include work-based learning delivered by sub-contractors.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across adult provision is too inconsistent. Attendance is good, but in a minority of cases students turn up late to sessions and this is not effectively challenged. Teachers do not always use initial and diagnostic test results to identify students' individual starting points and plan to meet individual students' needs effectively. Student targets are not always set and where they are set, they are not always appropriate, which hinders the progress of some students.
- A small minority of teachers are not sufficiently skilled at checking the learning and understanding of individual students in sessions; this is particularly significant in classes where there is a wide range of levels of ability across the different students in the group. For example, after teaching new concepts, teachers move on without being sure that all students have fully understood, and without sufficient reinforcement of the learning.
- Students benefit from a wide range of activities and well-produced learning resources that they find interesting and enjoyable and that often promote good levels of confidence and speaking and listening skills. The quality of written feedback on students' work is not always consistently clear or helpful and does not always identify clearly what students have done well and what they have to do to improve.
- Adult students are well motivated, enjoy their learning and their standards of behaviour are good. They demonstrate respect for their teachers and peers and have a good understanding of how to stay safe. Students do not always have a well-developed knowledge of British values.
- The development of students' employability skills is good. The vast majority of teachers have good industrial and technical knowledge, which they use skilfully to develop students' practical skills. For example, students on health and social care courses learn how to use correct communication skills for people with different disabilities.

- The adult learning provision meets local and national priorities well and provides flexible opportunities for students in a wide range of community venues, in the workplace and on college sites across north Yorkshire. The college has good partnership arrangements and works collaboratively and effectively with its sub-contractors in the best interests of learners, employers and local communities.

Apprenticeships

are outstanding

- The college has over 800 apprentices; around a quarter are trained by a sub-contractor. The majority of apprentices follow programmes in engineering and manufacturing, construction, business administration, hairdressing, hospitality, motor vehicle, accounting and social care.
- Apprenticeship programmes are very well managed and are effectively designed to meet the needs of local employers and apprentices' own ambitious goals and aspirations. Managers work hard to monitor and improve the quality of provision, reducing achievement gaps between different groups. Programmes fully meet the principles and requirements of an apprenticeship.
- Most apprentices complete their apprenticeships, with the large majority doing so within the planned timeframe. An effective combination of well-planned on- and off-the-job training from experienced trainers and workplace mentors ensures that a very large majority of apprentices make sustained and substantial progress.
- Apprentices benefit from very high-quality care and support from assessors, coordinators, employers and workplace mentors. Together, they very effectively reinforce high expectations, monitor progress and set clear and challenging targets. Apprentices benefit from frequent workplace visits, reviews and assessments, which ensure that they have a very good understanding of what they must do to develop, improve and succeed.
- Apprentices are professional, caring and respectful of others. They attend training sessions regularly and the vast majority are punctual. They enjoy their learning, develop confidence quickly and learn how to foster productive and effective working relationships as part of an efficient team.
- Apprentices develop very effective practical and technical skills that are highly valued by their employers. For example, construction apprentices develop their speed, precision and technical accuracy when completing practical jobs on site. Hairdressing apprentices quickly develop their communication and people skills and begin to build their own client base.
- Most apprentices achieve their qualifications in English and mathematics. Around a quarter go on to achieve at a higher level than they are required to. In training sessions and reviews, assessors and trainers use very effective activities and strategies to support learners in developing their applied English and mathematical skills. For example, in a bricklaying theory session, learners developed their skills in calculating area, perimeter and volume.
- Apprentices receive appropriate advice and guidance before starting their programmes. Apprentices are ambitious and have clear plans for progression and their next steps. They complete a range of additional qualifications, for example in professional accounting software, food safety, environmental awareness, safe use of pesticides and paediatric first aid, to enhance their chances of employment in industry. The large majority progress to higher level apprenticeships, sustained employment, or gain promotion or take on additional responsibilities at work.
- Apprentices feel safe and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe in the workplace. They are aware of their rights and responsibilities as employees, including an understanding of diversity and the importance of being mutually respectful and tolerant. Apprentices often take on individual projects that challenge them to apply and consolidate their excellent vocational knowledge and skills, as well as developing their independence, autonomy and initiative.

Provision for learners with high needs

is good

- The college currently has around 80 students receiving high-needs funding from six local authorities; around 30 of these are taking discrete learning development programmes, such as the Evolve programme, and around 50 students are taking vocational courses.
- Students on discrete learning programmes make good progress, particularly in terms of developing confidence in communicating and working with others that will help them in their future lives. Many have clear personal goals for their next steps on courses or in careers. Teachers plan a range of activities towards life skills qualifications that are realistic and relevant to students' needs.
- The development of students' employability skills, particularly on the Evolve programme, is extremely effective. Students take part in a variety of challenging and enjoyable work-experience opportunities including in charity shops, toy-making cooperatives, coffee shops and a timber yard, which develop their confidence well.

- Students' behaviour and attitudes to their work are positive, and staff reinforce expectations of behaviour and consideration for others. Staff encourage students to give and develop their opinions on topics including personal safety, health and citizenship, and to have high expectations of what they are able to achieve in life. As a result, students develop confidence well to make informed decisions and to progress in their learning.
- Students benefit from good information, advice and guidance. They are particularly positive about the range of support they receive in college, including counselling, study support and help with financial matters. Students are prepared well for their transition to college through visits and inductions, and they settle in quickly to college life.
- Students benefit from a calm environment that is resourced well by staff, including progression support assistants who know their students extremely well and work very effectively with them, providing continuity of support that is valued by less confident students. A dedicated learning support team also includes a specialist speech and language therapist who helps with assistive technology, and specialists in dyslexia and in autistic spectrum disorders. Students make good progress as a result of this support.
- Students benefit from frequent opportunities to develop their English skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. In English classes, teachers skilfully target questions according to student ability and need. They use stimulating visual resources well to challenge students to develop their spoken responses. In more effective mathematics lessons, imaginative investigations into eye colour enthused and motivated students in handling and recording data. In a small minority of classes, learning is pitched too high in terms of literacy. As a result, students are over-reliant on support to make meaningful contributions.
- Assessment of learning and progress is particularly effective in the Evolve programme, where students engage very well in using their paper-based individual learning plans to track and monitor their own progress. All teachers assess students thoroughly at the start of their programme and use this information to set appropriate targets. Monitoring of progress towards achieving these targets for those students not on the Evolve programme using the college's electronic system is often imprecise, meaning students' awareness of their own development is less clear.

Provider details

Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	14+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	7,028
Principal	Mr Robert Bellfield
Website address	www.craven-college.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	77	140	373	1,231	957	134	3	12
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	271	130	226	204	2	19		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
Number of learners aged 14–16	6							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of the inspection, the provider contracts with the following main sub-contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Derwent Training ■ Yorkshire Training Services ■ Aspire Sporting Academy. 							

Information about this inspection

Inspection team

Heather Barnett, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ruth James	Her Majesty's Inspector
Bryan Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Brenda Clayton	Ofsted Inspector
Stella Owen	Ofsted Inspector
Steven Ingle	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Jackson	Ofsted Inspector
Ian Frear	Ofsted Inspector

The above team was assisted by the vice-principal, curriculum and quality, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the college'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 college.

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