

Waltham Forest College

General further education college

Inspection dates

6–9 February 2018

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

Summary of key findings

This provider is good

- Leaders, managers and governors ensure that the college contributes well to meeting the education and training needs of Waltham Forest, and achieves good outcomes for learners.
- All staff and governors have an unwavering commitment to improving the college, which has raised standards since the previous inspection, and secured good-quality provision across the college.
- Learners' behaviour is exemplary; learners are self-assured, ambitious and motivated, which enables them to grow in confidence and make good progress.
- The large majority of teachers set interesting, relevant work, and use a wide range of teaching strategies which engage learners, and help them to develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.
- Learners develop particularly good practical skills, which meet industry standards and improve their opportunities for progression to further study or employment.
- Managers have developed the range of apprenticeships well to meet local skills shortages in areas including creative industries, construction and railway engineering.
- Most learners improve their literacy and numeracy skills well in vocational subjects, and know how to use these skills for work in subjects such as engineering, hairdressing and health and social care.
- Learners with high needs develop excellent independent living and work skills; a high proportion completing internships at a local hospital trust successfully gain employment after their programmes.
- The good range and high quality of adult provision enable learners to improve their life chances and develop valuable personal, social and work-related skills.
- Learners' attendance on many courses is too low.
- Teachers do not consistently set learners sufficiently detailed targets or learning goals to ensure that they all make good progress in relation to their prior achievement.
- A small minority of learners on study programmes do not attend external work placements; of those who complete placements, too few evaluate the benefits they gain from their experience.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Waltham Forest College is a medium-sized general further education college in East London. At the time of the inspection, about 1,260 learners aged 16 to 18 were following full-time study programmes. Of these, around two thirds were studying courses up to level 2, and the remainder at level 3. Some 2,450 adult learners were attending the college, most of whom were on part-time courses. In addition, there were 920 learners on apprenticeships.
- The borough of Waltham Forest is diverse, both ethnically and socially, with 97 languages spoken by learners at the college. About half the local residents are from a minority ethnic background. The significant majority of businesses in the area are micro-businesses, employing fewer than 10 people. The average salary in the borough is lower than the London average. The proportion of pupils at local schools who achieve five GCSEs with high grades is below the national rate, and below the average for schools in London. The significant majority of learners who choose to attend Waltham Forest College have not yet achieved high grades in GCSE English and mathematics.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve learners' attendance by developing new strategies to tackle this problem; in particular, all teachers should reinforce the same high expectations on the importance of attendance at college.
- Through staff development priorities:
 - work with teachers to ensure a consistent and suitable level of detail and challenge in the targets they set for learners
 - ensure that teachers provide suitably detailed feedback to learners so learners know what actions to take to improve their work.
- Ensure that managers and teachers strengthen further their links with employers, use them to create further work experience opportunities for learners on study programmes, and ensure that learners use the work experience appropriately to develop their employability skills.
- Extend the accessibility of careers guidance to apprentices more and, where appropriate, promote apprenticeships more widely as a career option for other learners.
- Ensure that assessors work more closely with apprentices to raise their awareness of how to stay safe online.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Strong leadership has positively influenced the culture of the college over the last two years. Managers and staff are committed to the college's refreshed vision and mission, placing the needs of learners and the local community at the heart of the college's priorities. Leaders and governors have successfully promoted high ambitions and aspirations for students. Staff have worked hard to raise the overall quality and effectiveness of provision across the college, which is now good. As a result, most learners make good progress and achieve their goals.
- Since the previous inspection, governors and senior managers have reviewed the college's financial and strategic position. They have carefully considered the best organisational options for the college, including merger with other colleges. Their work has helped assure longer-term sustainability and suitability of provision, to address the needs of its learners and the local communities.
- Leaders and governors are working to ensure that the accommodation and resources at the college continues to meet industry standards. They have fostered strong and productive partnerships in the area, which are benefiting learners; for example, they have negotiated an ambitious initiative, funded jointly with local business partners, to help maintain and improve the quality of accommodation and resources for learners over the longer term.
- Leaders and managers continue to use the views of employers well in determining the curriculum and in identifying local skills gaps. However, this work with employers is not yet securing sufficient work placement opportunities for learners. Managers are seeking to work more with employer organisations to improve this.
- Managers evaluate effectively the performance of individual staff and support them to improve. Managers have used procedures well to promote opportunities for staff progression and tackle underperformance, both for teachers and for curriculum managers.
- Managers have ensured that staff implement quality improvement actions thoroughly and effectively, including in subcontracted provision. Leaders' and managers' own self-assessment has further improved since the previous inspection and forms a good basis for thorough action planning for improvement. Managers continue to improve their own skills in self-assessment, but their reports are occasionally too descriptive and insufficiently evaluative.
- Leaders and managers have focused relentlessly on pinpointing poorer-performing courses, and monitor improvements very closely. The principal has also focused attention on monitoring the performance of individual learners, to identify those most at risk of failing. Managers use the information from these reviews to put in place suitable strategies for improvement.
- Managers have established a highly effective lesson observation process to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They use the resulting information well to identify and share best practice, and inform the high-profile programme of continuing

professional development for staff. As a result, the quality and consistency of teaching, learning and assessment have improved across the college.

- Leaders and managers ensure that learners receive good, impartial, careers guidance. The college's well-qualified information, advice and guidance team provides high-quality careers guidance to learners, which complements the sound guidance from vocational teachers. Staff do not yet promote apprenticeships sufficiently well as a progression option for learners, and careers advice and guidance for existing apprentices requires further development.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the promotion of equality and the celebration of diversity are a priority for staff and learners in this inclusive college. Teachers prepare learners well for life in modern Britain.

The governance of the provider

- Governors are very much at the heart of reviewing and setting a very clear strategic direction and mission for the college, with a strong emphasis on meeting the needs and priorities of Waltham Forest residents.
- Governors have a good understanding of the educational performance of the college and make good use of the detailed and accurate performance reports they receive, to identify areas of concern and to prompt greater action by managers when necessary. Governors fulfil their obligations in relation to the safeguarding of learners and fully contribute to the effective safeguarding in the college.

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have ensured that the college's safeguarding arrangements have kept pace with national priorities, and have successfully identified and considered local safeguarding risks.
- Learners know what to do should they have any safeguarding concerns. They have a sound understanding of safeguarding risks, which teachers introduce to them at induction and reinforce in tutorials. Apprentices' understanding of online risks are not sufficiently developed in their reviews. Managers and teachers maintain good contacts with local expert safeguarding agencies and work closely with them to identify local safeguarding risks.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The vast majority of teachers support learners well to achieve their learning goals. Learning support assistants provide good levels of additional support, where required.
- Teachers develop learners' practical skills to a good level, which meet industry requirements. For example, learners on motor vehicle study programmes develop sound basic knowledge of cylinder compression testing, and removal and fitting of alternator and starter motors. Adult learners studying hairdressing develop their skills on commercial clients in colouring, colour correction and layering.

- Teachers have appropriate qualifications, good subject knowledge and a broad range of relevant experience. They use their skills and knowledge effectively to plan activities to meet learners' needs. For example, in building maintenance, teachers explain the importance of completing a task to meet the customer's requirements.
- Teachers develop learners' literacy skills well through their vocational subjects. For example, motor vehicle learners learn technical terms, and talk confidently about 'top-dead-centre' and why this is important in setting valve clearances in engines to manufacturers' specifications. Similarly, adult learners in hairdressing develop their literacy skills through the accurate completion of client consultation sheets.
- Teachers develop learners' numeracy skills well through the embedding of mathematics in their vocational courses. For example, electrical installation learners accurately measure and record resistance readings for ring mains and lighting circuits; catering learners calculate accurately the weight of ingredients in order to produce bulk orders of food.
- Staff reinforce well the need for learners to work safely and wear appropriate protective clothing. As a result, learners know how to keep themselves safe in the workplace.
- Teachers use a broad range of teaching strategies in lessons to enhance learners' understanding. For example, in a childcare lesson, learners explored the importance of diversity through a thought-provoking and effective video. As a result, learners develop a good understanding of the key topics, and make good progress.
- The large majority of learners produce work of a good quality, which reflects the standard expected for their level of study. In a few lessons, teachers do not have consistently high expectations of learners, and as a result, not all learners' work meets the same exacting standards.
- Learners benefit from high-quality, well-maintained learning facilities and resources. For example, motor vehicle workshops, hair salons and beauty therapy rooms are well equipped, and meet the standards that learners will find in the workplace.
- A small minority of learners in a few subject areas, including engineering, motor vehicle, childcare and catering, are not fully aware of the grades they are aiming to achieve in their qualifications. As a result, these learners are not clear about the progress they are making towards achieving their goals.
- Teachers do not always set learners sufficiently detailed learning targets. On occasion targets are too general. Similarly, teachers' feedback does not always provide the level of detail that learners need to ensure that they know how to improve their work and meet the desired standard.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Learners are self-assured, ambitious and enjoy their learning. In lessons, teachers ensure that those of all abilities participate in activities and debates. As a result, learners are motivated, produce work of a high standard, make good progress and increase in confidence. Learners recognise how their time at college improves their job prospects, creates opportunities for them to progress to university and helps develop their vocational knowledge and skills.

- Teachers place a high emphasis on the development of learners' employability skills, for example time-keeping, teamwork, problem-solving and decision-making. Learners further extend these skills through visits from guest speakers and links with suppliers and manufacturers. For example, in hairdressing, visits from product suppliers allow learners to discuss and learn about specific treatments and styles.
- The large majority of learners improve their skills in the use of literacy and numeracy in lessons. Teachers skilfully emphasise the relevance of these skills in the workplace, encouraging learners to reflect on their importance and application. In a health and social care lesson for example, learners calculated weekly food costs for children in a nursery, balancing the price, nutritional value and shelf-life of various options.
- Learners' behaviour in classes and in communal areas of the college is exemplary. Staff readily challenge any rare occurrences of poor behaviour or bad language. The college is clean and tidy and provides a good learning environment. On occasion, security staff contribute to events such as 'Protect Your Mate' week, delivering workshops on topics such as how to diffuse confrontation.
- Learners are very aware of how to remain physically and emotionally healthy. Through the tutorial programme, learners are well informed about topics including personal welfare, stress management, exercise, healthy eating and sexual health.
- Learners have a good knowledge of how to stay safe. They wear the correct protective equipment, and adhere to safe working practices, in practical sessions and at work. Teachers ensure that learners understand the 'Prevent' duty in relation to the local issues of gang culture and potential radicalisation. The large majority of learners have a good understanding of how to stay safe online.
- Learners have a good knowledge of equality, and the benefits of living in a diverse society. All learners are clear about who they should see if they feel they have been unfairly treated.
- Teachers maintain a good focus on the progress of individual learners, and monitor those at risk of leaving their courses. Staff regularly review learners' attendance, barriers to progress, personal issues and any possible safeguarding concerns.
- Learners' attendance overall is too low, particularly in English and mathematics lessons. While teachers and managers have made progress in challenging absence using text messages, making contact with parents and adjusting the timing of sessions, these actions have yet to make a significant impact on improving overall attendance.
- Learners do not complete records of work placements and work experience well, and fail to capture in sufficient detail how they have developed their personal and vocational skills. Where learners have completed their records, teachers do not evaluate these in sufficient detail to help extract the learning points of the work activity, or to correct errors in spelling and grammar.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- Over the past two years, the proportion of learners aged 16 to 18 on study programmes, and adult learners who successfully achieve their qualifications has continued to rise and is high. These improvements are consistent at all levels of study, across most curriculum

areas. Managers are aware of the few courses that are not performing to the same level. They are implementing detailed strategies to raise standards in these areas.

- Learners make good progress in lessons. Through the acquisition of a good level of knowledge and range of skills, they gain confidence and insight into their respective areas of study. For example, engineering learners demonstrate confidence and proficiency in the use of hand tools, and carry out tasks such as draw-filing and tapping to a high standard.
- The proportion of learners who successfully achieve high grades in GCSE English and/or mathematics is broadly in line with the low national rates. The proportion of learners who successfully complete functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics has improved and is high.
- Apprentices make good progress, and a high proportion successfully complete their apprenticeship programme within the stipulated timescale. This rate has remained consistent for the past two years. These learners broaden their skills and insights into the businesses in which they work. As a result, they develop their career aspirations further, and increase their opportunities to gain promotion. For example, one apprentice successfully gained a placement with a leading tailoring company in Saville Row as a result of acquiring high-level skills on equipment such as over-lockers and flatbed sewing machines.
- Learners with high needs make very good progress. Learners on college-based independent living courses develop skills such as cooking, cleaning, ironing and general domestic skills, which significantly increase their chances of becoming more self-reliant. Similarly, a high proportion of learners on work placements in the local health trust develop valuable employability skills. As a result, many successfully gain employment with the trust on completion of their placements.
- Leaders and managers are aware of slight variations in achievement between different groups of learners, and are working to tackle these. For example, in 2017, male learners aged 16 to 18 did not perform as well as female learners. Conversely, female adult learners, and apprentices generally, did not achieve as well as adult male learners.
- Not all learners on study programmes at level 3 make the progress of which they are capable, based on their qualifications when they join the college. Managers are aware of this and are in the process of reviewing how they can use data more effectively to introduce strategies to improve the progress made by learners.
- On completion of their courses at college, a high proportion of learners successfully progress to the next stage of their education and training, or into employment. Many learners progress to a higher level of course at the college, or other local colleges. In addition, an increasing proportion of adult learners from access courses, and learners aged 16 to 18 on study programmes at level 3, successfully gain places at universities. Relatively few current learners progress on to apprenticeships.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The college provides study programmes for approximately 1,260 learners aged 16 to 18. Around a third of learners study at entry level and level 1, with similar proportions

studying at level 2 and at level 3. The largest curriculum areas include construction, engineering and sport.

- Leaders have ensured that a higher proportion of learners on study programmes achieve their qualifications than at the time of the previous inspection. However, the proportion of learners on level 3 courses who achieve the grades expected of them, given their qualifications when they start at the college, remains too low.
- Courses meet the principles of the 16 to 19 study programmes. Learners improve their literacy and numeracy skills well; teachers successfully encourage them to see these skills as relevant to their vocational subject area. For example, in GCSE mathematics, learners from different subjects relate the 'theory of angles' effectively to different scenarios: business learners consider the ergonomics of sitting at a computer screen; hairdressing learners explore how to cut an angled bob hairstyle; and construction learners explore the safe angles to use a ladder.
- The large majority of teachers set interesting, relevant activities which motivate and engage learners who play an active part in lessons. Teachers skilfully enthuse learners to contribute to discussions; they ask questions that deepen learners' understanding, and encourage them to take notes on salient points.
- Most teachers set learners work that can be adapted to learners' differing abilities and skills. For example, in an assessed session in catering, learners produced 'pommes Anna' or mashed potato, depending on their confidence and skill level.
- Teachers provide feedback to learners that helps them improve the standards of their work. Learners who need additional help receive this during lessons. Teachers track learners' progress closely, and their assessment of learners' completed work is timely and thorough.
- Teachers in subject areas that have previously been weaker, such as health and social care, have reviewed their assignments to ensure that they provide learners with greater opportunities to develop their knowledge. As a result, a higher proportion of learners in these areas are now achieving good grades than in previous years.
- Most learners develop their knowledge of their chosen industry well. For example, motor vehicle learners develop a sound range of skills in cylinder compression testing, removal and fitting of alternators and starter motors. As a result, learners are increasingly confident in demonstrating good practical skills, and aspire to reach professional standards.
- Learners feel safe and gain a good understanding of the threats they face from radicalisation and extremism. Managers have revised the tutorial programme to ensure that it contains topics that are highly relevant to learners.
- Teachers use their knowledge of industry well to provide learners with insight into the jobs into which they may progress. For example, in sport, a teacher referred to local examples of sports organisations to bring relevance to a discussion about organisational structures in the sports industries.
- Teachers organise for learners a good range of activities such as informative presentations from visiting professionals, visits to industry, projects with external clients and volunteering opportunities. These help learners gain insight into different careers in

areas such as catering and security. However, a minority of learners do not have sufficient opportunities to carry out meaningful external work placements.

- On a small number of courses, learners have not developed the skills or aspirations to produce work of the highest quality. A small minority of teachers set work which is not sufficiently challenging; they do not expect learners to work quickly enough, and sometimes set tasks that are peripheral to the main purpose of the lesson. They do not check that learners understand the technical language which they introduce. As a result, on occasion, learners lose interest, and teachers do not change their approach in order to recapture learners' attention.
- Learners' attendance during the week of the inspection was too low and has dropped since the previous year. A small number of learners arrive late to lessons for no good reason.

Adult learning programmes

Good

- At the time of the inspection, there were around 2,450 adult learners enrolled at the college, the significant majority of whom were studying on short courses, and on a part-time basis. Teachers deliver around three quarters of the adult provision at the college. Subcontractors deliver the remaining provision in a range of local community settings across London. The largest areas of adult provision include English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), English and mathematics functional skills courses, and a broad range of vocational courses, mainly from entry level to level 2.
- Managers have improved the quality of adult provision since the last inspection and taken swift actions to remedy identified weaknesses.
- Adult learners develop a good range of skills to help prepare them for employment. For example, unemployed adults referred by the job centre benefit from valuable work experience, and acquire the necessary skills and qualifications to cut and fit a range of carpets and vinyl floor coverings in domestic and commercial settings. These newly-acquired skills significantly improve learners' employment prospects.
- The majority of adult learners at the college on ESOL, English and mathematics courses make good progress, and learners receive thorough feedback in lessons, which helps them make good progress towards achieving their qualifications. For example, a group of ESOL learners discussed with increasing fluency and confidence the merits of voluntary work in helping them prepare for future employment. On completion of their courses, many successfully progress to higher levels of study at the college, or into work.
- When learners commence their courses at the college, teachers analyse and assess their needs well. Teachers then use this information effectively to plan for the wide range of skills and abilities in lessons. For example, in a literacy lesson, the teacher varied the range of work to suit each learner's competence and capability. As a result, all learners were able to work at a suitable pace to extend their vocabulary and literacy skills.
- Teachers successfully use a wide variety of assessment methods and questioning techniques to monitor learners' understanding. For example, in a biology lesson, the teacher asked learners to explain how the digestive system works and share their insights with the group. The teacher then asked each learner to summarise what they had

learned, and consolidate their learning by producing and labelling a diagram of the digestive tract.

- In most lessons, learners work constructively and collaboratively together; these activities help learners progress at a good pace and take the initiative. For example, learners on a business course used peer review effectively to analyse their work and present well-constructed narratives to the rest of the group.
- Learners benefit from good personal and academic support. Teachers accurately identify learners' potential barriers to learning and support needs when they commence their courses, and ensure that they receive any necessary support. Specialist information, advice and guidance staff provide a broad range of personal, welfare, counselling, interpreting and careers guidance to help learners remain on programme and ensure that they are suitably prepared for their future career choices.
- The vast majority of adult learners are highly motivated and positive about the learning opportunities on offer, which help them improve their life chances, and develop personal, social and employability skills. Learners become more independent and confident about how to gain promotion at work or become self-employed. For example, learners on a fashion course became skilled at designing and making garments to fit a variety of sizes for their personal use and to sell locally.
- Learners feel very safe at college. They appreciate the security on the main campus. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe online, and of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. A well-established safeguarding team responds swiftly to learners' concerns.
- Managers have increased the locally-based college and specialist vocational provision in response to the needs of employers and the local community, and reduced the amount of subcontracting work. This change has improved the quality of the provision. It has also targeted the needs of disadvantaged and hard-to-reach learners better, and also meets regional educational needs more effectively, particularly in ESOL, English and mathematics.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not show the relevance of literacy and numeracy skills to vocational learning sufficiently well. On occasion they set learning targets which are too broad; targets focus mainly on the completion of tasks, and do not identify what learners need to do to improve.
- A few learners do not arrive in lessons ready to learn. For example, they wear coats, consume food and drink in classrooms, and do not engage fully in lesson activities.
- Learners' attendance is not good enough. Teachers closely monitor the attendance and punctuality of learners, and follow up any absences, but these actions have not succeeded in improving attendance rates.

Apprenticeships

Good

- At the time of the inspection, around 920 learners were involved in apprenticeship programmes. The significant majority of apprentices work via subcontracted arrangements, with a relatively small minority studying programmes provided directly by the college. Apprentices cover a broad range of work areas, mainly at intermediate and advanced levels, including health and social care, construction, manufacturing, business

and hairdressing. Virtually all learners are taking apprenticeships based on the established frameworks, with a very small proportion following programmes based on the new apprenticeship standards.

- Apprentices make good progress and produce work of a high standard. For example, a group of apprentices confidently and skilfully set up instruments and microphones for a band performance. Apprentices work autonomously for much of the time, and receive effective assistance from their assessors and employers where required.
- Managers have implemented robust procedures for tracking apprentices' progress, and take prompt action if they are not progressing as well as expected. Assessors check apprentices' progress on a frequent basis, and plan suitable individual work programmes with each apprentice.
- Vocational specialist resources are good, and staff maintain strong partnerships with employers. For example, apprentices learning about railway construction have access to a short stretch of railway track and appropriate tools at the college, so they can develop their practical skills. Fashion learners benefit from access to a garment production factory. As a result, apprentices develop effective professional standards and practical skills.
- Managers ensure that the apprenticeship provision meets regional training needs well. For example, they have ensured that programmes are well matched to the local demand for training in construction, creative arts, health and social care and manufacturing.
- Teachers and assessors are experienced industry specialists. They are well-qualified, and regularly maintain their expertise through suitable continuous professional development activities. This training helps them contextualise apprentices' learning well in relation to their chosen industries.
- Apprentices develop suitable literacy and numeracy skills, and most successfully complete their English and mathematics functional skills qualifications.
- Apprentices work well together and support each other, thus developing good teamwork skills. For example, brickwork apprentices, working independently of their tutors, helped each other to set plumb lines and prepare mortar. Apprentices develop their confidence and are able to speak clearly about their work, using appropriate vocational language.
- Apprentices feel safe at work and when they are learning; staff deal with any personal concerns from learners promptly and effectively. Apprentices also employ safe working practices whether at work, college or another learning environment. They use appropriate personal protective equipment.
- The majority of apprentices gain added benefit from relevant enrichment activities. For example, music apprentices have attended specialist masterclasses in the creative industries, and fashion apprentices have visited the Victoria and Albert Museum.
- Managers carefully review the performance and quality of provision delivered by subcontractors. They hold monthly meetings at which they carefully review apprentices' progress and consider the views of learners. Staff working with subcontractors have good access to the college's programme of continuous professional development. This also creates good opportunities for sharing good practice between the partners and college staff.
- In a minority of reviews with apprentices, assessors set insufficiently stretching targets. While their comments are generally supportive, their comments are limited to task

completion, and do not provide enough information for apprentices on how they might extend their personal or vocational skills further.

- While staff make reference to equality and diversity, safeguarding, health and safety, 'Prevent' and British values, in their reviews with apprentices, on occasion they do not go into enough detail to extend apprentices' knowledge and understanding of these areas sufficiently. For example, a few apprentices were unclear about online safety.
- Apprentices at the college have good access to suitable careers guidance. However, many of the apprentices being trained by subcontractors have only limited access to careers guidance. For a minority of these apprentices, careers information is limited to signposting learners to websites.

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

- At the time of inspection, there were 96 learners with high needs enrolled at the college. About half the learners were studying on entry-level courses, focusing on the development of learners' independent living, literacy and numeracy skills. Around a third of learners were on vocational courses such as carpentry, construction, childcare, cookery and information technology (IT). The remaining learners were involved in a one-year internship programme with the local hospital trust, developing employability skills in roles such as catering, data inputting and working as porters.
- Teachers use practical tasks well on college-based provision to develop learners' ability to live more independently. For example, in a cookery lesson, learners with profound learning needs learned to cut vegetables safely, and to prepare and cook vegetable pasties. They also learned the names of vegetables, and how to use scales to weigh ingredients. As a result, learners developed increased confidence and acquired useful skills.
- Teachers and support workers have suitable qualifications and specialist experience. Staff have had recent training on collaborative working which they found useful, and which has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Staff accurately identify the particular support needs of each learner, and use this information well to teach lessons in which learners receive well-targeted support. Where appropriate, staff allow learners to work independently, providing support where required. For example, in one lesson the teacher and support staff worked with small groups of learners to develop practical measurement skills, and explored the concept of volume with the more able learners. Learners with high needs, studying on vocational courses, work well alongside their peers.
- Students on entry-level courses learn in a realistic domestic environment, including bedroom, kitchen and living area. This resource enables learners to practise domestic skills such as making beds, cooking and ironing. Learners also broaden their skills well by working in a shop designed specifically to enable them to practise number skills, money handling, and retail and customer service skills. Teachers use these facilities highly effectively to develop learners' independent living and employment skills.
- In addition to in-house provision, teachers make very good use of partnerships with local organisations which give learners access to facilities outside the college. For example, a group of learners regularly attends the partnership programme with the local premier

league football club to develop work skills, such as teamwork and customer service. Other learners attend a community horticulture centre where they are able to develop their knowledge and skills in gardening, something which they enjoy very much. Teachers make effective use of these external visits to help learners get used to travelling and visiting new environments.

- All staff skilfully plan and support learners in the transition from school to college, and from college to employment. Staff consider the learners' next steps and provide suitable support and specialist advice, including guiding learners on to further study and apprenticeships. Staff involve parents and carers well during learners' time at the college.
- Managers have developed a high-quality supported internship programme in partnership with the local hospital trust. This creates excellent opportunities for learners to progress into employment. While many learners find the transition from college to the work environment very challenging, excellent support from staff helps them adjust well. As a result, interns develop a very good range of work and communication skills, become much more confident and enjoy their work. On completion of their internship, the vast majority of learners successfully transfer into full-time employment with the trust.
- Teachers and support workers have a good understanding of safeguarding and their role in keeping learners safe. They monitor learners' behaviour effectively and take appropriate action to safeguard learners' welfare. Learners feel safe, understand online safety and have an understanding of the 'Prevent' themes.
- Teachers and support staff encourage learners to work together well and to be tolerant towards each other. For example, learners gave each other positive and constructive feedback when they each made presentations on different sports.
- In a small minority of lessons teachers do not plan sufficiently to address the individual development needs of all the group, particularly for those more able learners. In these lessons, teachers' targets are too general. In a few lessons, learners do not receive feedback on the accuracy and legibility of their writing, or use assistive technology if they are unable to write legibly.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130456
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	5,160
Principal/CEO	Penny Wycherley
Telephone number	0208 501 8000
Website	www.waltham.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	447	1,497	376	516	435	433	0	3
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	121	345	66	350	2	42		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	n/a		n/a		n/a			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for whom the provider receives high-needs funding	96							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	AZTAK Solutions Ltd. Big Creative Training Care First Training Ltd. Fashion – Enter Ltd. Floortrain (GB) Ltd. Hairproject Foundation Leyton Orient Trust MTC Learning				Skillbank Ltd. Train'd Up Whitefield Schools and Centre			

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the assistant principal, learning and quality, 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 learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

Peter Nelson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Steve Lambert	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Martin	Her Majesty's Inspector
Steve Tucker	Her Majesty's Inspector
Philida Schellekens	Ofsted Inspector
Kanwaljit Dhillon	Ofsted Inspector
Heather Barrett-Mold	Ofsted Inspector
David Baber	Ofsted Inspector
James Wilson	Ofsted Inspector

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Learner View

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