

Inspection of Shooters Hill Sixth Form College

Inspection dates: 23 to 26 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Education programmes for young people	Good
Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Shooters Hill Sixth Form College is situated in the London Borough of Greenwich. The college serves an area of London with a mix of high levels of deprivation and affluence. The student community reflects the diverse range of ethnic groups in the local area.

At the time of the inspection, there were 1,800 students aged 16 to 19 on entry-level to level 3 courses. Around 40% of students were on a range of academic and vocational courses at level 3. The largest course is in health and social care, followed by vocational courses in digital skills and building services. From September 2023, college leaders introduced T-level qualifications in engineering, digital skills and healthcare. The rest of the students are split between entry, level 1 and level 2 vocational programmes. The college has 244 students with high needs, of whom about half are on vocational programmes, with the others in discrete provision.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Staff have created a vibrant and diverse community, where valuing others, including their beliefs and attitudes, is central to college life. This leads to a calm environment, with a strong culture of respect and tolerance, where students are confident to be themselves. Staff throughout the college have high expectations of students as young adults and, in return, students conduct themselves responsibly and with maturity.

Staff have created an inclusive environment in which students with high needs are fully integrated into the college. For example, the centrally located coffee shop, originally set up to support foundation learning students to gain employability skills, has become popular with students from all over the college. It provides a safe space for students to socialise and spend time.

Students with high needs in discrete provision are challenged by their teachers to develop their independence so that they can contribute to the communities in which they live. Teachers plan courses very well to meet the needs of individual students. This helps each student to increase their confidence and improve their communication skills. These skills have helped a minority of students to gain supported internships or purposeful work experience, which has led to paid employment at the end of their course.

Students display a positive attitude towards their courses and have a strong desire to learn and achieve. They enthusiastically take part in lessons, and most are keen to answer questions and put forward their ideas. They do not hesitate to share their views on their experiences at the college, either with their teachers or through the active student council. They do so knowing that they will be listened to and that staff will take action.

Students feel safe in and around the college. Should they have concerns, they are happy to make staff aware of these without fear of being judged.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders and managers have created suitable programmes of study that meet the needs of the diverse student population very well. They have worked effectively with local partners to plan courses that support the needs of employers in the borough and surrounding area. This has led, for example, to the introduction of motor vehicle courses in response to employer and student demand. Leaders have made very good use of their effective partnerships with employers to introduce T-level courses in a range of priority subjects, including engineering and health and social care.

Leaders and managers have developed well-structured curriculums that have a clear purpose. They have created vocational, technical, and academic pathways that clearly map out individualised learning journeys for their students. Most vocational

courses have progression routes that allow students to continue to higher levels of study. This is also a strong feature of the curriculum for students with high needs. Managers have set up an effective partnership with Greenwich University so that health and social care students can go on to nursing and midwifery degrees and apprenticeships. Students starting their course understand their progression options to further and higher education, training and work.

Teachers have high expectations of students. They plan and teach their subjects effectively and with high expectations for what students should achieve. They set an appropriate level of challenge and adapt their teaching strategies according to the needs of different learners. This includes providing students in sports with the opportunity to gain additional qualifications, such as in sports coaching. Students with high needs in discrete provision are challenged to set up an enterprise programme and, subsequently, they now provide cleaning services around the college.

Teachers skilfully plan and teach lessons so that students develop the knowledge and skills they need to pass their course. For example, teachers on level 1 motor vehicle courses make sure that students fully understand the purpose of the ignition system. They then teach students how the various components work before moving on to basic fault-finding. In hospitality, teachers make sure that students understand different food types and can cook simple dishes to serve in the college canteen before they teach them how to refine their food and cook complex dishes to commercial timescales. Students are then able to practise these techniques in the college's public restaurant.

When necessary, staff provide highly effective one-to-one support to students. They use a range of strategies, including teachers using sign language to communicate with students with hearing impairments. Where in-class support is provided to students who need it, staff work effectively to ensure that students can concentrate during the lesson. In mathematics, support staff help students to break calculations down into manageable steps, enabling them to complete the task successfully.

While most teachers provide clear explanations to students of topics taught, in a few cases, they do not explain topics well enough. This results in misconceptions in students' understanding not being corrected. Teachers in business manage the classroom environment well. Their explanations are clear, and students are able to recall what they had previously learned to answer questions.

Teachers use assessments well to check students' knowledge. They provide helpful feedback so that students know how to make improvements. For subjects assessed through public examinations, teachers make sure that students are well prepared. While the proportion of learners who achieved their qualifications declined during the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders and staff have put in place effective strategies to identify underperforming courses and to bring about improvements in the summer 2023 examination outcomes.

Leaders care and value staff at the college. They are cognisant of the pressures on staff working in education. They have put in place a range of very helpful measures to support staff with their well-being. These are much appreciated by staff, who are positive and enjoy working at the college.

Staff at the college help students to develop as citizens within their local community. This includes students visiting local retirement homes to support older people with social isolation and encourage intergenerational activities. Hair and beauty students also visit to provide haircuts and treatments to residents. At the college's weekly well-being café and termly well-being fair, staff provide students with a range of information and support services, such as sexual health advice and mental health services.

Leaders and managers provide a rich and varied programme of enrichment activities that students can attend. They have put on a wide range of sporting activities, plus the opportunity to gain swimming instructor and life-saving qualifications. Students then use these skills to support community groups during recreational swimming sessions. Students can also learn to play a musical instrument or develop their skills as podcasters, through which they can learn about pertinent social issues. This helps students to pursue their interests or learn something new. However, the proportion of students who participate in these activities is low.

Students have access to effective careers advice and guidance. Careers councillors meet with students to discuss their potential next steps. Subject teachers supplement this by providing additional guidance to students based on their own industry knowledge and experience. In hospitality courses, students learn about careers from various guest speakers, who provide practical demonstrations, work placements and advice on gaining employment in the sector.

Teachers of students with high needs do not always make the purpose of the lesson clear to students, or make sure that students know what they should be able to do by the end of the class. This is particularly the case in discreet provision, where students are on programmes that do not lead to qualifications. Teachers on these programmes do not always ensure that the tasks that students are set are appropriate to their needs, or that they track the progress that students make sufficiently well.

Staff do not ensure that enough students with high needs in discreet provision benefit from high-quality work experience that will help them to develop their confidence and communication skill and support them to become more independent.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Make sure that teachers of students with high needs in discreet provision are clear about what they expect students on non-accredited programmes to achieve.
- Ensure that students with high needs in discrete provision undertake purposeful workful experience.
- Ensure that, in lessons, explanations of tasks and concepts are clear and correct any misconceptions in students' knowledge.

Provider details

Unique reference number	138966
Address	Red Lion Lane Shooters Hill London SE18 4LD
Contact number	02083199700
Website	http://www.shc.ac.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Geoff Osborne
Provider type	16 to 19 academy
Date of previous inspection	1 to 4 October 2019
Main subcontractors	N/A

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

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