

North Lindsey College

Inspection report

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Name of lead inspector: Tim Gardner HMI

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Type of provider: General Further Education college

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Information about the provider

1. North Lindsey College (NLC) is a general further education college offering courses to the North Lincolnshire community. Established in 1953 as a technical college, North Lindsey College was originally closely linked to the steel industry. It has since developed and expanded to offer provision in 17 subject areas. The main campus is in Scunthorpe with an outreach centre in Ashby. The college's strategy to engage with businesses has resulted in significant provision being offered in manufacturing industry employer premises locally and nationally.
2. The North Lincolnshire population is around 159,000. Motorway connections are good. However, public transport by bus and train is poor. The college provides coaches in conjunction with John Leggott College for students in surrounding towns and villages. The area supports a minority ethnic community representing 2.5% of the population, although this excludes the more recent growth in immigrants from Eastern Europe.
3. Yorkshire and Humber has one of the lowest levels of attainment of five A* to C GCSEs including English and mathematics. Although considerable improvement has been made over the last 10 years, it still remains below the national average. At 7.7%, the proportion of the region's 16 to 18 year-olds who are considered not to be in education, employment or training is higher than the national average of 5.6%.
4. The college provides training on behalf of the following providers:
 - Huddersfield University
 - C Skills
 - North Lincolnshire Council

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
Young learner provision: 14-16	473 learners
Further education (16-18) including Foundation Learning	1,626 full-time learners 123 part-time learners
Entry to Employment (E2E)	168 learners
Adult learner provision: Further education (19+)	366 full-time learners 1,084 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	4,308 learners 401 apprentices
Informal adult learning	110 learners

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 1
Capacity to improve	Grade 1
Aspect	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	1
Leadership and management	1
Safeguarding	1
Equality and diversity	2
Subject Areas	Grade
Early years and playwork	1
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	2
Sport, leisure and recreation	1
Employability skills	2

Overall effectiveness

5. North Lindsey College has improved considerably since the last inspection and it is now outstanding. Outcomes for learners are good overall and in some areas, they are outstanding. In particular, outcomes for 14 to 16 year-old learners are excellent, and in key skills and functional skills they are very high. Advanced apprentices also achieve outstandingly well.
6. Learners develop and improve their personal and social skills. They also develop excellent vocational skills enabling them to progress further and be successful in their career aspirations. The college places a very strong focus both on improving the economic and social well-being of learners and on supporting the economic regeneration of the local area by regularly reviewing the curriculum to ensure that it is up-to-date and relevant. It makes exceptionally good use of local intelligence and national priorities to meet emerging local requirements.

7. The college has demonstrated that it has an outstanding capacity to improve. It has successfully remedied the areas identified as needing improvement at the last inspection and some of these areas are now key strengths of the college. The processes for quality improvement are meticulous, using many systems to collect and collate information to support further improvements.
8. Teaching and learning are good overall but include some inspirational features. The way the college works with its partners is excellent, as is the care, guidance and support for learners.
9. Leadership, management and governance are excellent and have resulted in significant improvements to outcomes for learners as well as to college facilities and resources. Safeguarding is outstanding and the approach to equality and diversity is good. The college promotes sustainability by ensuring that both new buildings and refurbishment to existing buildings incorporate best practice in future sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Main findings

- Overall, outcomes for learners are good. Over the last three years, success rates have improved in nearly all aspects of the college's provision. Outcomes for learners aged 16 to 18 on both long and short courses are now above the national average.
- Success rates for adult learners on long courses have also improved to above the national average. Success rates on apprenticeships are satisfactory but for advanced apprentices they are outstanding. Although success rates on Train to Gain level 2 programmes declined in 2008/09, they improved again in 2009/10, and are now satisfactory.
- Provision for 14 to 16 year-old learners is outstanding. Both retention and pass rates are extremely high. High numbers progress to other college provision and a significant proportion remain in learning. Key skills and functional skills success rates are outstanding.
- Learners develop good personal and social skills. The college has developed good provision to support learners at a new 'Success Centre'. Learners are happy at the college and are positive about their experiences. North Lindsey College is good at improving the economic and social well-being of learners. It is outstanding at enabling learners to make informed choices about their own health and well-being.
- The college does not currently have a systematic college-wide process in place to capture the learner starting points on individual learning plans or for monitoring progress against challenging achievement targets.
- Learners' contributions to the community are good. They engage in much fundraising activity for a range of national and local charities. Governors also participate in and support these activities well.
- Teaching and learning are good with some inspirational features. In the best lessons, learners take responsibility and make very good progress. However, in

a small number of weaker lessons, tutors do not always focus sufficiently on individual learning needs and do not use information and learning technology effectively.

- The college's provision to meet the needs and interests of users is outstanding. The college uses its excellent local intelligence to review the curriculum regularly and thoroughly to ensure it is up-to-date and relevant. The college offers an extensive range of courses. Partnership work is outstanding. Work with schools and the local authority led to the establishment of a very successful skills centre to meet the needs of learners aged 14 to 16. A second centre opened this year for learners who live a considerable distance from the college. The college's response to the needs of employers is outstanding.
- Support for students is outstanding. A significant proportion of learners come from areas identified as having high levels of deprivation. More than half receive an educational maintenance allowance. Students benefit from a wide range of high quality support services. The college's 'Success Centre' provides very good additional support for students who need help with literacy and numeracy or a range of other support needs.
- The Principal and Governors provide outstanding strategic leadership. They have set ambitious goals for the college and ensured that they have made strong progress towards their achievement. Staff and students are highly motivated to achieve excellence.
- Safeguarding is outstanding. Learners feel extremely safe and take responsibility for their own safety. Arrangements to support safeguarding across the college are exemplary and all necessary checks and statutory requirements are meticulously undertaken and recorded.
- The college's promotion of equality and diversity is good. It ensures that all its students are valued, supported, and work in an environment of mutual respect. The college's Equality and Diversity group coordinates all aspects of its work in this area. Publicity emphasises the priority the college attaches to equality and makes clear the practical support available to those with a disability.
- Quality improvement arrangements are outstanding. All staff meticulously identify where they can make improvements through good use of data and learners' views. Improvement plans are comprehensive, carefully monitored and carried through to completion. However, neither curriculum reviews nor the full college self-assessment reports sufficiently capture all the key strengths and weaknesses of the provision.

What does North Lindsey College need to do to improve further?

- Maintain a strong focus on improving success rates for learners, especially on the employer responsive provision.
- Fully implement and embed a college-wide scheme to capture learners' abilities at the start of their programmes so that the college can accurately monitor their distance travelled and value-added measures and use these to recognise and take action to deal with underperformance.

- Improve teaching and learning by focusing better on individual learning needs and by the more creative use of information and learning technologies.
- Ensure that the self-assessment report provides a more thorough, detailed and self-critical view of each curriculum area, better linked to the contents of quality improvement plans.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the very supportive tutors
- the flexible timetabling arrangements
- the new common room and the new entrance
- the good quality, safe environment
- the opportunity to take additional qualifications that are enjoyable and useful to increase the chances of getting employed
- the college 'Moodle' system
- the good induction process that introduces them to the college
- practical activities in the classes
- the tutorials.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the opportunities to access enrichment activities and the way they are organised
- the quality of some of the teaching
- better structuring and delivery of the work-based learning programmes so that more formal teaching takes place
- access to more lockers
- more sports facilities.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the way the college sends them well motivated and willing students
- the way the college responds to their needs
- the collaborative work to improve staff skills and the way this impacts on profitability
- the development of bespoke training to meet their needs
- the great communication.

What employers would like to see improved:

- to see tutors more often
- to know who will visit them and when.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 1

10. The college's capacity to make and sustain improvements is outstanding. It has made substantial progress towards realising its ambitions for excellence and has successfully remedied the areas for improvement from the last inspection, many of which are now key strengths. A whole college approach to improving attendance and retention has been very successful. Success rates have improved for three successive years for both young people and adults and are now above the national average. Of the college cohort, 40% are identified as coming from areas of high social and economic deprivation and 63% receive an educational maintenance allowance.
11. There are outstanding arrangements to support quality improvement. Their thorough implementation has contributed significantly to raising the quality of provision and the success of learners. The college's ambition is reflected in challenging targets for the performance of both teaching and support teams. Staff meet regularly as part of the college's annual quality cycle to review their performance using a wide range of evidence, including high quality data and feedback from learners. Staff are meticulous in identifying and prioritising issues for improvement. Standardised quality improvement plans are extremely detailed, carefully monitored and followed through to completion.
12. The governors and Principal provide strong and challenging leadership. Their ambitions are embraced by staff throughout the college. The views of learners and employers are thoroughly reflected in new developments. Excellent partnership working enables the college to respond strongly to local and national priorities.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

13. Outcomes for learners are good. Over the last three years, success rates have improved in nearly all aspects of the provision and are now high. For 16 to 18 year-old learners on long courses, success rates have improved and are now above the national average. On short courses, they have also improved and are high at 87%. For adult learners on long courses, success rates exceed the national average of 75%. Retention and achievement rates have also improved and exceed the high 2008/09 national average.
14. Advanced apprenticeship success rates for learners aged 16 to 18 have improved and in 2008/09 were outstanding. Success rates on apprenticeships have been consistently around the national average and are satisfactory. Advanced apprenticeship rates for adult learners are outstanding at 90%. Apprenticeships have improved and these are satisfactory at 67%. Achievement within the expected timescales is satisfactory.
15. On Train to Gain level 2 programmes, success rates declined from 76% to 66% in 2008/09. These improved again in 2009/10 to 74%, which is just below the

national average. A significant number of learners have recently completed qualifications but at the time of the inspection, published data did not include them.

16. Key skills and functional skills success rates are outstanding. Provision for 14 to 16 year-old learners is outstanding. High numbers progress to other college provision and a significant proportion of these remain in learning.
17. Learners develop good personal and social skills. They are happy at the college and respond positively to questions regarding their experiences. Learners make good progress from their starting points on their courses. However, the college does not currently have a systematic college-wide process in place to capture learners' starting points on individual learning plans to enable them to monitor progress against challenging achievement targets.
18. The college is good at improving learners' economic and social well-being. It has received a Beacon award for employer engagement which recognises excellence and innovation in how it engages with employers to support its learners. It organises and delivers events designed to develop employability skills, such as a hairdressing skills showcase in preparation for participation in the WorldSkills 2010 event. An annual careers event promotes employment opportunities in the region, and annual vocational competitions further develop and enhance vocational and employability skill levels.
19. Learners feel extremely safe at the college. All settings across the college adopt safe working practices. Learners benefit from extremely thorough risk-assessments when they undertake work placements and educational visits, and are encouraged to complete their own risk-assessments. The college offers a welcoming and secure environment. Learners understand and use internet safety measures and the college effectively reinforces these through tutorials.
20. The college is outstanding at enabling learners to make informed choices about their own health and well-being. It has developed and implemented a detailed and comprehensive healthy college strategy. NHS North Lincolnshire and other stakeholders recognised the detailed action plan as deserving an award. A clinic is regularly available to learners providing extensive sexual health advice and support.
21. The learners' contributions to the community are good. Much fundraising activity for a range of both national and local charitable support takes place. Learners also raise funds to support other learners and their family members when need is identified.

The quality of provision

Grade 1

22. Teaching and learning are good with some inspirational features. At the last inspection, the management of teaching and learning was exemplary and this remains the case. Particularly accurate and comprehensive teaching observations help to assure a year-on-year improvement in the quality of

- teaching. Staff are well supported by staff development opportunities and the sharing of good practice is embedded effectively across the college by advanced practitioners. Teaching staff are well qualified and have appropriate skills and expertise. Most staff use technology confidently in the classroom and most students have good access to teaching materials through the college intranet.
23. Initial assessment is used well to plan various approaches to teaching and these help to inspire and challenge learners. Teachers pay good attention to health and safety in the classroom and equality and diversity are reinforced. In the better lessons, learners are actively engaged and make effective contributions, working well independently and cooperatively in groups. Teachers ask well directed questions and adapt their style to ensure that learners reach their full potential. In the small number of weaker lessons, classroom management is ineffective, learners are passive, the pace of learning is too slow, and teachers do not vary their teaching strategies to suit each individual learner's needs. Information and learning technologies are not used well or creatively to support learning.
 24. Assessment practice and reviews of learners' progress are well managed across the college. Learners receive constructive, timely feedback on their work. They are clear about how to improve. Internal verification procedures follow awarding body requirements and actions from external verifiers are carefully monitored. Appropriate arrangements are in place to provide additional learning support.
 25. College provision meets the needs and interests of users very effectively. Regular and thorough review of the curriculum takes place to ensure it is up-to-date and relevant. This process is exceptionally well informed by local intelligence and national priorities. For example, new provision is being introduced to meet skills shortages in science and technology and with regard to sustainability. Students benefit from innovative aspects of the curriculum, such as an industry sponsored car care centre that provides a real working environment. The college plays a significant role in economic regeneration in the local area and is very effective at meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups.
 26. Partnership work is excellent and is fundamental to the way in which the curriculum is developed. Work with schools and the local authority led to the establishment of a very successful skills centre for learners aged 14 to 16. The college works very well with schools to provide bespoke courses to meet the needs of pupils. Initiatives with the local authority and the schools contribute significantly to reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training when they leave school.
 27. Work with employers is outstanding. The college works with an extensive number and range of employers, both locally and nationally. It delivers funded and bespoke provision to meet the specific needs of employers. Employers identify the skills developed by employees as a result of training and the positive impact these skills have on their businesses. The college has received Beacon award status for its work with employers.

28. Enrichment opportunities for learners at the college have improved this year and are now good. Many students benefit from the extensive range of activities they can join. A wide range of work placements is well matched to learners' needs and an increasing number of learners also participate in volunteering activities. Of particular note is the benefit students derive from the college's international links.
29. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Learners settle quickly into college as a result of very effective initial guidance and induction. Pastoral support is excellent and contributes well to improving retention rates. Learners benefit from a wide range of high quality services, including counsellors and mentors, and from significant practical help with childcare, finance and transport. The college's 'Success Centre' provides very good additional support for those needing help with literacy and numeracy.
30. Student advisers work alongside course tutors to provide group tutorials on a range of personal development issues. Individual tutorials on either academic or personal issues take place frequently. External links to enhance support for students are excellent, including a wide range of organisations that visit the college to run sessions or clinics. Advice and guidance to help students progress to higher education are very good.
31. Work-based learners are well supported. Reviews are frequent and quickly identify any support needs the learners may have. However, review documents do not fully record health and safety or equality issues effectively.

Leadership and management

Grade 1

32. The Principal provides outstanding leadership and direction for the college. He has developed an ambitious vision that governors, managers and staff strongly support. The college bases this vision upon the pursuit of excellence to raise aspirations and enhance local prosperity. Planning takes full account of the local context, including regional skills needs.
33. Governance is outstanding. Governors have set a clear and ambitious strategic direction based on a thorough analysis of available options. They strongly support the Principal and senior managers but also rigorously challenge them with regard to both financial and academic performance. The governors and senior staff monitor these against precise and challenging targets. Governors have developed a thorough understanding of the college's work and the student population. Risk management is outstanding. The governing body has renewed its membership and now contains a wide range of skills and experience.
34. The college has made good progress in raising standards. Managers agree challenging and realistic targets across the college, and staff are fully committed and highly motivated to make them succeed. Curriculum management is good. The extensive and well developed staff development programme reflects the strong college culture of support for staff. Potential leaders have been

- encouraged through the college's Talent Academy. This is a popular scheme of mentoring and training with open application for all staff.
35. Arrangements for safeguarding are outstanding and are prioritised throughout the college. The college is meticulous in meeting all legislative requirements. All staff are trained to level one and understand how to recognise abuse and make appropriate referrals. The college has very effective links with the local safeguarding board and other partners to ensure swift and appropriate action is taken when necessary. The designated officer is trained appropriately and works well with the most vulnerable learners and support staff. Careful records are kept of the most 'at risk' learners and the actions taken to support them. Staff recruitment and selection practice is very sound with detailed records kept and all staff and subcontractors undergo the required checks. All safeguarding matters are regularly reported to the senior managers and to the corporation. This has led to year-on-year improvements in safeguarding arrangements across the college.
 36. The college attaches a high priority to promoting equality and diversity. It ensures that all its students are valued, supported and work within an environment of mutual respect. Students themselves feel this has been very successful and they value it highly. The college's Equality and Diversity group coordinates all aspects of its work in this area. The ethnic profile of students, staff and governors matches that of the local community. Publicity emphasises the priority the college attaches to equality and makes clear the practical support available to those with a disability. There are examples of courses that have recruited from underrepresented gender groups, but the college takes little systematic action on this across its provision.
 37. Managers review thoroughly and regularly the recruitment and success patterns of different groups of learners. Action is taken to address significant differences between groups and none is allowed to persist. The college recognises that more remains to be done to ensure that equality and diversity are fully embedded in all its teaching. All staff receive training in equality and diversity when they are appointed. Further training is provided through 'Tool Kit' sessions for staff throughout the year.
 38. Arrangements to support quality improvement are outstanding. Their thorough implementation has contributed significantly to raising the quality of provision and the success of learners. The college's ambition is reflected in challenging targets for the performance of both teaching and support teams. Staff meet regularly as part of the college's annual quality cycle to review their performance using a wide range of evidence, including high-quality data and feedback from learners. They are meticulous in identifying and prioritising issues for improvement. Standardised quality improvement plans are extremely detailed, carefully monitored and followed through to completion. They are used as a vital tool by all managers. This thoroughness is not sufficiently mirrored in the self-assessment report. It is broadly accurate but sometimes lacks a balanced account of relevant strengths and weaknesses.

39. Action to improve attendance and retention is systematic and thorough. An electronic attendance monitoring system provides feedback on absences very quickly to curriculum managers. They draw upon a wide range of student support systems to intervene appropriately.
40. All quality improvement plans are reviewed formally by senior managers twice a year. A scrutiny panel, led by the Principal and other senior managers, meets with all managers and staff in each curriculum and business support team. They provide a good opportunity for direct discussion about the concerns and achievement of all the participants.
41. The college is outstanding at collecting the views of learners. It uses a variety of systems and methods and uses the information to make significant improvements to the provision for learners. Extremely enthusiastic student representatives attend course team meetings and other student bodies. The college staff make very good use of their views in the quality improvement plans. The college communicates very effectively the actions it takes in response to the students' feedback.
42. Financial management and value for money are outstanding. Governors and senior managers monitor costs extremely carefully. An operating surplus has been achieved for a number of years. Specialist equipment and accommodation have been gradually renewed. The college is committed to sustainability and has begun to implement its strategy.

Subject areas

Early years and playwork

Grade 1

Context

43. The college offers full-time and part-time courses in child care and early years programmes from foundation to advanced level. Of the 203 learners enrolled on learner-responsive provision, 157 are aged 16 to 18 and 46 are adults. Most 16 to 18 year-olds study full-time, while adults mainly study on part-time programmes. Ninety-seven per cent of the learners are female and 4% are from minority ethnic groups.

Key findings

- Success rates on most courses improved between 2007 and 2009 and were high. In 2009/10, success rates on entry and foundation qualifications were outstanding at 92% and 93% respectively. Retention on significant intermediate and advanced level courses declined in 2009/10. However, on the advanced programme retention remains significantly above the national rate. Attendance is good at 92%.
- Learners make good progress, often attaining higher standards than predicted by their entry qualifications. Standards of work are high and learners develop self-confidence and very good workplace skills. Teachers have high expectations of their learners and behaviour in the classroom is exemplary at all levels. Learners feel safe, know who to contact and are confident that staff will deal with issues, such as bullying, promptly.
- Progression is excellent with a high number of learners progressing to the next level course, to higher education or into employment.
- Teaching and learning are good. In the better lessons, teachers make excellent links to learners' placement experiences that develop their professional skills. In a few lessons, teachers pay insufficient attention to matching activities to the needs of individual learners and do not sufficiently check progress. In some lessons, the use of information and learning technology is underdeveloped.
- Assessment is good. Assignments are marked promptly and learners receive detailed constructive feedback on their work that specifies what they need to do to improve the grades. However, tutors do not use the targets on individual learning plans to raise learners' aspirations.
- The college has outstanding links with employers. The college's Kingsway Children's Centre supports learners' achievement by providing high quality work placements. Learners demonstrated their skills by leading a song session in which the children taught them some new songs. The college is extremely responsive to government initiatives and regularly reviews the curriculum and introduces new qualifications.

- The range of courses and pathways is good and additional qualifications increase learners' employability. Learners benefit from a programme of visits, trips, guest speakers and activities, including planning and managing external weddings and Christmas crèches.
- Tutorial support for learners is good. Placement officers and tutors review the learner's placement diary at every one-to-one tutorial and include feedback from the placement supervisor. A placement action plan encourages learners to reflect on their personal and social skills as well as their vocational skills. A 'learner at risk' monitoring system is effective and individual action plans support achievement.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. Communication is excellent and the team demonstrates a strong commitment to continuous improvement and a focus on learners' achievement and welfare. Teachers are flexible and responsive to change. The college supports them well in their continuing professional development and drive to improve.
- Learners benefit from the significant college investment in resources, including a virtual baby nursery. They are active partners in the self-assessment process and many teachers collect valuable feedback at the end of the sessions. Although self-assessment is accurate, it does not identify areas for improvement. However, the quality improvement plan does identify relevant actions.
- Safeguarding is outstanding. The college promotes it extremely well and it has a high priority. Health and safety assessment and monitoring in the workplace are strong. The team uses referral systems effectively. Safeguarding is a key area of induction and this emphasis continues throughout the year. Advanced level learners complete the local safeguarding children's board online level one training programme.
- Equality and diversity have a high profile in most lessons. Tutors promote the themes well through learning activities and materials and these reinforce positive images of different groups of learners and take account of cultural differences.

What does North Lindsey College need to do to improve further?

- Involve learners more in lessons by increasing the use of the interactive features of the electronic whiteboard.
- Monitor and support learners to improve retention on intermediate and advanced courses so that success rates improve even further.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

Grade 2

Context

44. At the time of the inspection, 254 learners had enrolled on hairdressing or beauty therapy courses. The college provides beauty therapy courses from foundation to advanced levels and hairdressing courses at intermediate and advanced levels. A small number of employer responsive learners follow an apprenticeship programme. The remainder follow full-time NVQ courses.

Key findings

- Success rates are excellent for the minority of learners on advanced level courses. For the majority of learners on long intermediate level courses, with the exception of the certificate in nail treatments, success rates are high. Managers have developed strategies to improve retention on these programmes and there is evidence that these are having a positive impact.
- The standard of learners' work is good and learners demonstrate high levels of professionalism in both their personal appearance and their work. All learners participate in work experience in local salons and they develop employability skills well. Community links are outstanding and include strong links with local schools. Progression rates between the levels of learning are good.
- Teaching and learning are good. The better lessons are well planned and designed to maintain interest and support learning. Learning checks feature in good or better teaching. Most tutors pay attention to health and safety but in weaker sessions there is a lack of such detail and no evidence of coordination of plans between subject tutors and pastoral tutors.
- Learners feel extremely safe and enjoy the wide range of enrichment activities. They are encouraged to participate in competitions and have been successful. One learner achieved second place in a national competition, while a further two learners had hair designs published in the Hairdressers' Journal. City and Guilds awarded one young learner the Medal for Excellence, highly commended, for outstanding performance in NVQ at level 1.
- Learners feel well supported. They value tutorials and welcome the monitoring and review of progress targets. Tutors send the individual learning plan targets, outcomes and progress comments to parents or guardians at three points during the academic year. In addition, there are organised parents evenings. Learners particularly value the learning support available through the link tutor.
- Initial advice and guidance are good. Staff identify and provide highly effective support strategies for learners. For example, on the advanced level beauty therapy (spa route) course, not all learners meet the standard entry requirements. However, staff have timetabled additional support and have supported these learners effectively. The 'Success Centre', which learners consider a particularly strong support mechanism, is very good.
- The range of courses is good and it meets the needs of most learners. However, there are no barbering courses, although the college is introducing

them in 2011. Managers have remodelled the curriculum to improve retention, including the introduction of apprenticeship frameworks.

- Leadership and management are good and communication is effective. A new management team has introduced a series of effective strategies to improve retention and teaching and learning. Targets are set for retention and achievement and managers monitor these through the appraisal process. Targets are also set and monitored for salon services and retail income.
- The self-assessment report did not identify significant areas for improvement. However, the detailed development plan is more effective and identifies nine areas for improvement, including retention. Staff monitor this regularly. Learners have a variety of opportunities to feed back their opinions and they are able to cite examples of improvements made by the college.
- All staff have been trained in safeguarding. Learners understand and appreciate equality and diversity. The college has made adjustments to ensure it also fully meets the needs of a transgender learner.
- The quality of resources is good, with purpose built accommodation comprising large salons and well equipped teaching rooms. Resources to support learning are of a good quality and available on the virtual learning environment. Learners value the opportunity to access learning materials from home and to communicate with tutors remotely.

What does North Lindsey College need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the improvements in retention and continue to monitor the effectiveness of the strategies to improve success rates.
- Review the self-assessment process for hairdressing and beauty therapy to identify the key areas for improvement more accurately so that the quality improvement plan relates more closely to it.

Sport, leisure and recreation

Grade 1

Context

45. A total of 112 learners are currently enrolled on courses in sports and recreation. The majority of these learners are on full-time courses and are aged between 16 and 18. Courses are offered from foundation to advanced levels and include BTEC national qualifications, NVQs and industry specific qualifications. The college is also involved in sports provision at entry level and higher education level.

Key findings

- Learners' outcomes are outstanding. Most programmes have very high success rates, well above the national average. Almost all learners who complete the course are successful. Retention rates are good overall and have improved year-on-year. Strategies for improving courses with lower retention rates have been effective. However, some of the higher retention rates declined slightly in 2009/10. The standard of work produced is very good.
- Many learners make excellent progress, well above expectations based on their qualifications when starting the course. Progression rates into work or further study are very good. Many learners progress to higher levels of education and employment. Learners use safe working practices while at college and in placements.
- Learners are able to make an outstanding contribution to their local community through a wide range of voluntary opportunities and charity events. For example, they coach youngsters in local schools and support local events.
- Teaching and learning are good, with outstanding features. In most lessons, learners work hard and enjoy completing the challenging and interesting activities. Initial assessment is thorough and used effectively to plan lessons. Teachers have high expectations and enable learners to manage their own learning better. However, the use of information and learning technology is not fully maximised in all lessons.
- Sports facilities and equipment are good. These include a well-equipped fitness suite, massage spa, fitness centre, playing fields and a hard surfaced pitch. The college has recently invested in an assault course and has developed strong links with local providers to gain access to state-of-the-art sporting resources.
- Assessment of learners' work is regular and thorough. Oral and written feedback from teachers and assessors is supportive and constructive and sets learners clear targets. The monitoring of their progress is accurate and kept up-to-date. Teachers use good questioning techniques to develop and check learning.
- The college has outstanding arrangements with local and national partners. Extensive partnerships with local businesses, the local authority, schools and charities create real projects that have a high impact on both the learners and the immediate community.

- Support for learners is outstanding and sensitive to their individual needs. Learners value the pre-course advice and guidance to help them choose their programme. The college is inclusive in providing appropriate support for those learners with additional needs, ensuring that they are realistic about their career goals and are able to attain them. Learning support staff provide particularly effective support in classes.
- Operational management is excellent. Managers have a very good, open and effective relationship with staff that fosters positive lines of communication. The college has good and productive links with a wide range of industry representatives. Staff morale is extremely high. A culture of continuous improvement is established. There are outstanding strategies to engage with users to support and promote improvements.
- The self-assessment process is inclusive and staff take an active role in quality improvement. The quality improvement plan is detailed and time-bound, with appropriate milestones and targets. However, links between the self-assessment report and the improvement plan are not explicit.
- Procedures to safeguard learners are well established and are good. Staff support vulnerable learners effectively. All learners are encouraged to be safe during theory and practical lessons. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and are fully aware of their obligations. They manage the use of the available resources well and have outstanding arrangements to access a variety of external resources.
- All staff promote equality and diversity well and they have a high priority in the area. Teachers promote equality of opportunity in a positive manner within lessons. Well established systems celebrate learners' achievements. Outside speakers and staff act as role models. Learners have a good understanding of equal opportunities. Tutors listen to learners' views and they take action where appropriate.

What does North Lindsey College need to do to improve further?

- Improve retention further by effectively monitoring and amending current strategies to ensure that learners stay on programme for the duration of their course. Ensure that the retention strategy includes all courses and not just those that have the lower results.
- Continue to improve teaching and assessment by reviewing and improving the use of information and learning technology resources to engage learners creatively in the learning process.
- Ensure that self-assessment fully reflects the specific needs and findings of the curriculum area.

Employability training

Grade 2

Context

46. The inspection focused on the foundation studies programmes consisting of 95 learners, 75% of whom are male and 2% are from a minority ethnic background. Of these, 75 learners have declared a learning difficulty and/or disability. The inspection also included the Entry to Employment (E2E) programme with 15 learners. The curriculum offer includes: life skills, mathematics, English, information and communication technology, as well as vocational tasters in construction, woodcrafts, brickwork, motor vehicle, painting and decorating, sport, and care. The inspection also included the key and functional skills programmes. The college enrolls all full-time learners on at least one key skill or functional skill.

Key findings

- Outcomes for E2E learners were outstanding in 2008/09 at 74%. This is 20% above the national average. Progression into further education is high at 88%. Success rates for key skills and functional skills are also outstanding. Retention rates and progression on to further courses or supported employment in foundation studies are good.
- The personal and social development in foundation studies and E2E are outstanding. Learners develop confidence and self-esteem. They identify a change in attitude to learning brought about by the programme and demonstrate a good understanding of their improved employability skills. Foundation studies learners take part in team enterprise and develop a good understanding of business and team roles.
- Learners appreciate work experience that closely matches their preferred choice. In 2008/09, all learners took part in work experience.
- Learners across all programmes feel safe in college and are clear about what to do if they identify bullying or harassment. Learners appreciate their individual comments book where they can record complaints and offer ideas for improvement. Tutors respond to each of these in writing and learners have identified improvements resulting from this system.
- Learners have a good involvement in community projects. Fundraising events enable learners in foundation studies and E2E to develop community awareness and improve team-working skills.
- Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons, tutors design activities to stimulate learning and maintain interest. They use relevant examples linked to real life situations to challenge learners. They also use available technology effectively to improve learners' skills.
- In the weaker lessons, tutors pay insufficient attention to meeting individual learning needs. The tutors give all learners the same tasks, with no reference to prior knowledge, which does not sufficiently challenge learners who are more able. The use of technology is underdeveloped in the weaker lessons.

- The foundation studies and E2E curriculum offer is good. It offers flexible courses that allow learners to improve skills, gain qualifications and progress to other courses within the college.
- Highly effective partnerships aid transition into college for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Productive relationships with employers open up work experience opportunities that have led to employment for some learners.
- Staff provide excellent support for learners across all programmes in the area. Learners speak highly of the help and guidance given, both before and while on the course. The 'Success Centre' offers timetabled support for learners needing help with the development of their literacy and numeracy skills. Learners on foundation studies and E2E are clear about their potential progression routes.
- Operational management is generally good. Communication is effective and curriculum staff are clear about the process of quality improvement. They are fully involved in course review and evaluation and in the production of development and quality improvement plans.
- Staff and managers make good use of a range of plans to monitor improvement. A recent management restructuring has effectively allocated new roles and responsibilities across all three areas. It is too early to measure the impact of these changes.
- The college has implemented a comprehensive staff development programme to support vocational tutors teaching functional skills. College managers plan further follow-up programmes to ensure that all staff are able to attend.

What does North Lindsey College need to do to improve further?

- Maintain a strong focus on the improvement of teaching and learning through better lesson planning to meet individual learning needs and the improved use of technology to enhance learning.

Information about the inspection

47. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's Director of Quality and Learner Services as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
48. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gain the views of learners and employers. They also looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed for the provider. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
North Lindsey College

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; 16-18 Learner responsive: FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; 19+ responsive: FE full- and part-time courses; Employer responsive: Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
Approximate number of enrolled learners					
Full-time learners	2,005	0	1,725	280	0
Part-time learners	3,587	296	75	234	2,982
Overall effectiveness	1	1	1	1	2
Capacity to improve	1				
Outcomes for learners	2	1	2	2	3
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2				
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2				
How well do learners progress?	2				
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2				
How safe do learners feel?	1				
Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*	1				
How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*	2				
Quality of provision	1	1	1	1	1
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	1				
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	1				
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	1				
Leadership and management	1	1	1	1	2
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	1				
How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*	1				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	1				
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2				
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	1				
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	1				
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	1				

*where applicable to the type of provision

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