

Craven College

General further education college

Inspection dates

16–19 January 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	Outstanding
Outcomes for learners	Good	Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Leaders and managers have implemented a clear and effective plan to address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection; as a result, the quality of education and training has improved.
- Staff provide excellent pastoral support to students, including those with high needs, which enables them to overcome barriers to learning and complete their courses successfully.
- Managers have maintained the very high standard of training provided to apprentices, and have further increased the very high numbers who complete their apprenticeship within the planned timescale.
- Students' achievement is good. The proportion of students who complete their courses successfully has improved and is now high.
- Students receive very good impartial careers advice and guidance which enable them to make informed decisions about their next steps.
- Managers have carefully designed a curriculum which very effectively meets the needs of students.
- Almost all students on 16 to 19 study programmes take part in good-quality work experience, which develops their skills and enhances their understanding of the world of work.
- Attendance is not high enough for students on 16 to 19 study programmes and for adult students.
- In a minority of lessons on 16 to 19 study programmes at levels 1 and 2, teachers provide insufficiently challenging learning activities for the most able students who, as a result, do not progress rapidly enough to fulfil their potential.
- Too many adult students, students with high needs and apprentices are insufficiently clear about the dangers of extremist views and how to recognise the signs of radicalisation.
- Too few students on 16 to 19 study programmes achieve high grades in GCSE English and mathematics.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Craven College is a general further education college based in Skipton, North Yorkshire. Additional learning centres exist at Leeds Bradford International Airport, Ripon and Scarborough. The majority of students at the college follow 16 to 19 study programmes in a wide range of vocational subjects, while a small number of students take A-level programmes. The college also provides adult learning programmes and apprenticeships in a variety of subjects, and courses for students with high needs.
- The number of people in the Craven area who are unemployed is significantly below the local authority and national average. The proportion of individuals with qualifications at levels 2, 3 and 4 is above that found nationally.
- A number of selective grammar schools, and schools with large sixth forms, exist in and around Skipton. The proportion of young people gaining GCSE mathematics and English at grade 4 in the North Yorkshire local authority is above the national average. Around half of the students on 16 to 19 study programmes at Craven College study GCSE mathematics, English or both.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the proportion of students who attend regularly by:
 - examining fully the reasons for poor attendance and implementing strategies to tackle and overcome these
 - improving the way in which attendance is reported to the parents of students aged 16 to 18.
- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers provide activities that challenge the most able students at levels 1 and 2, so that these students make the progress of which they are capable.
- Further develop strategies to ensure that adult students, students with high needs and apprentices develop a sound understanding of the dangers of extremism and radicalisation.
- Continue to improve the teaching of GCSE mathematics and English to increase the proportion of students who gain a high grade.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have made good progress in realising their vision to provide high-quality education and training for students and apprentices. Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have focused unrelentingly on tackling weaknesses. They have put in place a wide range of largely successful strategies and actions for improvement. As a result, the achievements of adults and students on 16 to 19 study programmes have improved markedly and are now above those of similar providers. The number of apprentices completing their programmes in the planned time is very high, as has been the case for a number of years.
- Leaders and managers have introduced a more robust system for reviewing and improving the work of teaching staff, and they now have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They put in place comprehensive, individualised support for any teachers who need to do better. For example, teachers benefit from observation and support from their peers, and voluntary video recording of their lessons in order to improve their practice, supported by mentors. Teachers speak highly of the way that this support has helped them to improve their practice. Managers have taken effective action in the small number of cases where teachers have not improved sufficiently.
- Managers ensure that all staff benefit from appropriate support and professional staff development. Teachers' attendance at professional development sessions is high and they take advantage of extensive sharing of good practice which helps to improve their teaching, learning and assessment.
- The management of subcontracted provision is strong. Managers monitor this provision closely and regularly, and take steps to assure the quality of provision in the same way as for directly delivered courses. Managers take effective action where the performance of subcontractors is not good enough. When necessary, managers do not renew contracts with underperforming subcontractors. As a result, a very high proportion of students on subcontracted courses make good progress.
- Leaders work well with partners and stakeholders to plan and deliver a broad and inclusive curriculum which very closely matches the needs of local employers and students. Employers are very appreciative of the professional education and training provided by college managers and staff.
- Leaders and managers have taken effective steps to reduce differences in achievement between groups of students. Consequently, achievement gaps between most groups of students have decreased rapidly, and are now small. However, the proportion of adult students from a Pakistani background achieving their qualifications, while improving, remains too far below that of their peers.
- Leaders and managers have ensured that students benefit from individualised and helpful advice and guidance with regard to their choice of course and future careers. Staff enrol most students onto courses which are well suited to their abilities and career aspirations. As a result, the number of students remaining on programme and successfully completing their qualifications has improved and is now good for a very high proportion of students and apprentices. Managers have ensured that the provision of

impartial careers advice and guidance is also strong and as a result, the large majority of apprentices and students progress to positive destinations.

- Leaders and managers use self-assessment well to improve the quality of education received by students and apprentices at the college. Senior and departmental managers have an in-depth and realistic understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the college and their departments. Managers consult a wide range of stakeholders, including staff, students and, where appropriate, employers, to evaluate the quality of courses. Managers implement the resulting well-focused quality improvement plans effectively to improve the quality of education and training. They make good use of data to monitor students' and apprentices' progress and ensure that the large majority are doing well. However, not enough improvement has been made in the quality of A levels and health and social care 16 to 19 study programme courses, or in outcomes on English and mathematics courses.
- Senior leaders have not ensured that enough students improve their qualifications in English and mathematics. They have recently prioritised actions for improving students' skills, which is having a positive impact on current students' progress in these subjects.

The governance of the provider

- Governors have a firm understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the college, which they use to set the strategic direction. Managers provide governors with regular and appropriately detailed information about the college's performance, and regularly update governors on emerging national and local issues which may affect the college. Governors use this information very well to provide effective and critical challenge to leaders and managers.
- Governors come from a wide and relevant range of backgrounds in industry and education. Both staff and governors benefit from the increasing number of governor visits to college events, lessons and departments. As a result, governors are better able to understand the problems facing departments, and staff have an improved understanding of how and why governors make decisions.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Managers carry out appropriate employment checks for all staff, including those working for agencies. These include criminal records and right-to-work checks. Managers conduct and implement effective risk assessments for the very small number of staff awaiting a full employment check who start work at the college at short notice.
- Staff at the college are knowledgeable about, and give a high priority to, the safeguarding of students. Staff have up-to-date safeguarding and Channel training, and the designated safeguarding lead officers are appropriately trained and qualified. Students feel safe and know to whom they should report any safeguarding concerns. Managers make appropriate referrals to external agencies, including the police, with whom they have excellent relationships. The current safeguarding policy is comprehensive and up to date.

- The large majority of students on programmes have a secure understanding of the 'Prevent' duty and know how to keep themselves safe from the risks of extremism and radicalisation. Adults on part-time courses, students with high needs and apprentices do not have a high enough level of understanding of these risks and how they might affect them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Most teachers have high expectations of students; they carefully plan and deliver teaching and learning, probing students' understanding and consolidating their learning. As a result, the vast majority of students make at least the expected progress.
- Teachers and assessors make good use of well-resourced classrooms and learning environments. For example, students benefit from a high-quality commercial hairdressing and barbering salon located in the local high street, and a realistic working environment at the airport for aviation students. Art and design studios are visually stimulating, displaying high-quality student work. Students on information and communication technology courses benefit from industry-standard equipment. These resources and environments inspire students to achieve, and support the development of good vocational skills.
- Well-qualified, highly experienced teachers and assessors use their industry experience to provide well-designed work-related learning for students and apprentices. Assessors often continue to work in their vocational field; their current experience makes lessons lively and interesting, and motivates apprentices so that they enjoy learning.
- Teachers carefully plan activities that promote the development of independent learning skills. They set well-planned research and preparation tasks that consolidate and extend learning. Students value these tasks, and the large majority complete them successfully.
- Teachers and assessors quickly and accurately identify students and apprentices who would benefit from additional learning support. Good-quality learning support is put in place for those who need it, and this enables them to make good progress.
- Teachers and assessors provide effective feedback to students and apprentices, helping them to improve their work, think more deeply and develop their knowledge and skills well. Apprentices use feedback from assessors to improve their work to a very high standard. In a small minority of cases, the assessment of students' work is not accurate and, as a result, these students are less clear about how to improve.
- Staff use a range of information to identify accurately students' starting points. They ensure that teaching, learning and assessment activities build on prior learning and enable the vast majority of students and apprentices to make at least the expected progress. Many apprentices make very good progress.
- In a minority of lessons on 16 to 19 study programmes, mainly at levels 1 and 2, learning activities are insufficiently challenging for the most able. As a result, not enough students make the progress of which they are capable.
- Managers do not ensure that teachers produce reports to parents and carers which communicate clearly enough the overall progress of students aged 16 to 18 years. They

do not make clear whether individual students are on track to achieve their qualifications at the grade they are capable of, or highlight where their attendance is too low.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Students and apprentices enjoy their learning, develop high levels of self-confidence, and gain knowledge and skills which will enable them to be successful in further study or at work.
- Behaviour in class, around the college and at work is very good. The vast majority of students are respectful to staff and other students, and thus contribute to a welcoming and positive learning environment.
- Information, advice and guidance are good. Staff ensure that students and apprentices are enrolled appropriately, taking into account their previous qualifications and future goals. As a result, most students and apprentices stay on their chosen programmes and achieve their qualifications.
- Staff provide very good impartial careers guidance to students and apprentices about the range of educational and career options open to them. Students and apprentices are well prepared for their next steps. Careers staff work closely with teachers to plan good-quality careers education that further develops students' understanding of the world of work and related skills. For example, well-planned events ensure that catering students gain a good awareness of the broad range of local career opportunities open to them. Teachers provide good support to adult students to develop their job-seeking skills.
- Progress coaches and assessors provide high-quality pastoral support for students and apprentices; consequently, the proportion of students and apprentices who stay on their courses is high. Students have good access to counselling services. Staff work with a range of agencies to support students and apprentices to overcome personal difficulties which inhibit learning and to achieve.
- Students who attend college on a full-time basis participate in a range of enrichment activities which complement their main course of study and develop their vocational and personal skills further. For example, students on public services courses benefit from a wide range of guest speakers, enabling them to fully understand the different job roles in that vocational area. Aviation students value highly their interesting and informative visit to an international airline in London, giving them a realistic insight into working at a busy airport.
- Managers ensure that apprentices benefit from additional training and qualifications which significantly improve their skills. For example, apprentices in agriculture take a qualification in towing a trailer and have many opportunities to visit different farms. Business administration apprentices have good access to training in managing conflict.
- Managers have developed a set of 'united' values to promote to students and apprentices the principles of respect and tolerance, as well as an understanding of equality of opportunity, democratic principles and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Full-time students demonstrate a good understanding of these values, but apprentices and part-time adult students are less clear about them and why they are important.

- Students on 16 to 19 study programmes and adult students do not attend their classes regularly enough. Apprentices' attendance at college-based off-the-job training in motor vehicle and hairdressing, and on subcontracted provision at Derwent Training Association, is not high enough. Managers have implemented a range of initiatives to improve attendance but the rate of improvement is too slow.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- The proportion of students who successfully complete their 16 to 19 study programme has improved and is now high. Achievement has increased in almost all subjects but remains too low in health and social care. The achievement of the small number of students on AS and A levels has declined and is below that seen nationally.
- The proportion of apprentices across almost all vocational areas who achieve their qualification and do so in the planned timescale is very high. Managers track the progress of apprentices very carefully and have ensured that apprentices at the subcontractor Derwent Training Association make very good progress, in line with that of college-based apprentices. The overall achievement rate of apprentices aged over 24 years has declined, although it remains similar to that seen nationally. The number of apprentices in this age group has also decreased significantly as a consequence of the college strategy to recruit younger apprentices.
- The proportion of adult students who achieve their qualification has improved and is high. The number of adult students gaining a qualification in English and mathematics improved significantly in 2016/17. The achievement of adult students with learning difficulties and disabilities has improved and is now better than that of their peers.
- Too few students on 16 to 19 study programmes studying GCSE mathematics and English achieved a high grade in 2016/17. Current students are making better progress towards improving their grade.
- Most students on 16 to 19 study programmes make the expected progress and develop good vocational skills. The small number of students on A level programmes make slow progress compared to their starting points.
- The vast majority of students progress to further education, higher education or employment. Almost all apprentices who complete their programmes remain in permanent employment and many gain additional responsibilities. Students on 16 to 19 study programmes progress well to higher-level courses.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Currently around 1,100 students are enrolled on 16 to 19 study programmes from entry level to level 3. Almost half study vocational subjects at level 3, with the most significant numbers following courses in aviation, animal care, art and design, sport and health, and social care.
- Managers carefully plan 16 to 19 study programmes to ensure that students follow a suitably individualised programme that builds on their previous qualifications and future

aspirations. Consequently, the proportion of students who stay to the end of their programme, complete their qualifications and move to positive destinations has improved.

- Students feel safe and know how to report any concerns that they have; they report that staff deal effectively with any issues that they raise. Students demonstrate a sound understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and threats of extremism.
- Students are eager to learn, arrive at lessons well prepared and display good attitudes to learning. For example, students in aviation enjoy learning, are dressed professionally in their uniforms and take the many opportunities that they have to learn from each other; as a result, they rapidly develop their confidence and make good progress.
- The large majority of students produce written and practical work of a high standard. They develop vocational skills to industry standards and are rightly proud of their work. For example, students apply professional make-up techniques to a high standard in beauty therapy. Textile students quickly learn new techniques such as working with fabric paints. Students in a range of vocational areas develop good skills in communicating with clients and customers.
- Comprehensive arrangements are in place to provide work experience, and a very high proportion of students take part in relevant, meaningful work placements. Staff prepare students well for work and students have a thorough awareness of employers' expectations. Students develop a good understanding of what it is like to work in their chosen vocational areas.
- In the large majority of lessons, teachers design activities that develop students' knowledge and skills well. Teaching is particularly effective at level 3, where teachers expertly challenge and question students to deepen their understanding. However, teaching on a minority of level 1 and level 2 courses and the small number of A levels is insufficiently challenging for the most able.
- Teachers provide helpful feedback to students in lessons and on their work, which ensures that students know what they need to do to improve. In hairdressing and barbering, students effectively use clients' feedback to plan and make improvements to their practical work. Teachers provide good feedback to students on GCSE mathematics and English courses which very clearly identifies the improvements that students need to make.
- Teachers and progress coaches ensure that students develop a good understanding of life in modern Britain. Progress coaches cover key issues during induction sessions and in group tutorials, and teachers reinforce students' understanding effectively in lessons and through useful wall displays.
- Staff monitor students' progress systematically using a recently introduced electronic recording system. This enables teachers to put support in place quickly for students who are at risk of failure or are making slow progress. As a result, the large majority of students are making the expected progress.
- Teachers develop well the mathematical skills which students need for work. However, they are less successful in developing students' English skills in vocational areas.

Adult learning programmes

Good

- Adult learning provision includes vocational training, courses to develop employability skills, and community learning courses. At present, around 700 students follow adult learning programmes, with 120 studying on a full-time basis. A large proportion of the provision is taught by distance learning courses that cover topics such as awareness of mental health issues, end-of-life care, and nutrition and health.
- Students enjoy their studies and the new skills that they learn, and they value the opportunities available to them at college. Staff support students to achieve their personal and career goals, and the vast majority of students complete their courses successfully.
- Teachers plan learning effectively, taking into account the existing knowledge and understanding of students. Students work on tasks confidently, developing good work-related, academic and independent learning skills. They complete homework and research activities to a high standard.
- On most courses, teachers check students' understanding very well, enabling them to extend and deepen their knowledge. Teachers on courses delivered in community settings plan sessions which meet individual students' needs very well and, as a result, these students improve their skills and gain in confidence.
- Managers track the progress of students on distance learning programmes frequently and very effectively. Students who fall behind receive good personalised support to catch up.
- Teachers develop students' English and communication skills well. For example, in creative writing, students improve their speaking and listening skills by reading their work aloud and giving constructive feedback to each other. Students in community settings develop their vocabulary well to enhance their job applications.
- Students feel safe, and in practical lessons demonstrate a very good understanding of safe working practices. Students do not demonstrate a thorough understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.
- Managers have developed a curriculum relevant to local and national priorities and which very effectively meets the needs and aspirations of adult students. For example, they have developed good-quality 'first step' provision in English and mathematics in the community, which prepares students well to progress to higher levels.
- Teachers ensure that employability courses develop the skills that students require to progress successfully into employment. Students develop positive thinking and assertiveness skills and learn how to overcome stressful situations. Teachers at college and in subcontracted provision give effective support to students completing job applications; students' rates of progression into employment are good.

Apprenticeships

Outstanding

- Currently, 630 apprentices are in learning; of these, 83 are following programmes based on the new national standards. Over half of apprentices are aged 16 to 18, around a third are aged 19 to 23 and a small number are aged over 24. The largest subject areas

are construction, health and social care, hairdressing, motor vehicle, customer service and business administration. At present, 125 apprentices are studying apprenticeships in engineering and manufacturing with the subcontractor Derwent Training Association.

- Apprentices benefit from high-quality workplaces and very supportive employers. These advantages ensure that apprentices develop excellent skills and complete their programmes successfully.
- The apprenticeship manager, apprenticeship coordinators and assessors have an exceptional understanding of their apprentices, and they work closely with them to provide very high quality support and training. Apprenticeship coordinators conduct thorough reviews of apprentices' progress which contribute to ensuring that a very high proportion of apprentices complete their course within the planned time.
- Coordination of on- and off-the-job training is outstanding. Employers have a very good understanding of what apprentices are learning at college and plan a good range of interesting workplace tasks to reinforce these skills. Consequently, apprentices make rapid progress. For example, apprentices who are learning how to programme computer numerical controlled machines use these machines at work and at college.
- Off-the-job training is excellent. Sessions are interesting and teachers very effectively link theory to practice so that apprentices develop a thorough and detailed understanding of the skills and knowledge that they need to perform their job roles well. Tutors make very good use of apprentices' own work experiences to extend other apprentices' knowledge.
- The assessment of apprentices' starting points against the new standards is thorough and includes previous learning, skills and aptitudes. As a result, staff closely tailor apprentices' programmes to their individual requirements.
- Assessors provide very helpful, frequent feedback to apprentices which enables them to improve their work to a very high standard. Managers use internal quality systems very effectively to review and improve assessors' feedback to apprentices.
- Apprentices develop excellent personal skills and are polite, articulate, confident and professional. They recognise the significant improvements that they make in developing their self-confidence and their technical skills.
- Apprentices understand how their work contributes to the business, and many apprentices can explain how they have taken on more responsibility at work. They are enthused by the tasks and responsibilities that they are given, and they discuss the knowledge that they have gained in their job roles confidently.
- Most college-based apprentices improve their English skills very well so that they can present information clearly and to a high standard in writing and verbally. Many college apprentices continue to develop and apply their mathematical skills including, for example when calculating value added tax amounts and working out total costs. Staff are less effective at developing the English skills of engineering apprentices.
- Apprentices feel safe at college and at work, and have a detailed understanding of safe working practices and how to raise any concerns. Apprentices demonstrate only a superficial understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism and how these relate to their lives.

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

- Currently, 82 students receive high-needs funding from four local authorities. Levels of study range from entry level to level 3. Just over half are studying vocational 16 to 19 study programmes and just under half follow discrete programmes of study, including 20 at the centre in Ripon.
- Teachers ensure that students develop good independence and communication skills that will support them well in their future lives. Students benefit from the social aspects of college life and become more confident in speaking out and offering their opinion.
- Staff enable students to access a range of appropriate individual work placements in the community; as a result, students develop a good understanding of the skills that they will require in the future, such as team-working. Students in a variety of retail settings learn good customer service skills, such as how to serve and communicate with members of the public. Managers have not yet developed supported internships for students with high needs.
- Students receive effective careers guidance. Staff provide effective training in how to search for jobs that match students' skills and interests, how to complete a job application to a high standard, and how to prepare for interviews. Almost all students progress to a positive destination.
- Staff have appropriate expertise, and use their skills to provide good support to students and manage challenging situations with confidence. Staff support students with some significant personal difficulties to overcome these barriers to learning; as a result, students who were previously unable to participate fully are now participating enthusiastically in learning activities, growing in confidence and developing new skills.
- Teachers ensure that students develop English and mathematical skills well. Students develop their technical vocabulary and make good progress in developing their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Teachers use well-planned activities to develop mathematical skills. For example, students accurately produce pie charts to review their consumption of different food groups in order to evaluate how healthy their diet is. Teachers ensure that students take ownership of their learning and evaluate their progress accurately in their learning plans.
- Staff identify students' starting points accurately, and use this information to put effective support in place quickly. Progress support assistants use their knowledge of their students to provide unobtrusive effective support in sessions. As a result, students make good progress on accredited courses.
- The recording of progress for students on non-accredited courses is frequent but insufficiently precise. The targets set for these students are too broad; they do not give students step-by-step help towards their goals. As a result, they do not enable students to make sufficient progress or fulfil their potential.
- Students are kept safe by their teachers and support staff. Students demonstrate a good understanding of the code of conduct and understand how to behave well in college and out in the community. Too few students on discrete courses know how to stay safe and protect themselves online.

- Staff ensure that students understand the core values of the college such as respect and tolerance, preparing them effectively for life in modern Britain. Staff are less effective at providing students with sufficient understanding of the dangers of the threats posed by extremist views, or the risks of radicalisation.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130591
Type of provider	General further education college
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	6,020
Principal/CEO	Robert Bellfield
Telephone number	01756 791411
Website	www.craven-college.ac.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	64	203	315	380	711	115	–	–
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	170	90	180	152	3	35		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
		–		–		–		
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	–							
Number of learners for whom the provider receives high-needs funding	82							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Derwent Training Association Go4it UK Ltd Aspire Sporting Academy							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the vice-principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of students and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

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