

Forster Community College

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 50215

Name of lead inspector: June Cramman HMI

Last day of inspection: 20 May 2011

Type of provider: Voluntary

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Information about the provider

1. Established 29 years ago, Forster Community College (FCC), formerly known as Bradford Cathedral Centre, is a voluntary and community sector provider in Bradford. FCC provides learning activities for disadvantaged groups, many of whom face poverty, ill health, disability and exclusion from the world of work. FCC offers learning programmes at its main site, at outreach centres and through several partner providers. FCC offers learner responsive and adult safeguarded learning through Personal and Community Development Learning, and First Steps provision in eight subject areas, funded by the West Yorkshire Skills Funding Agency. FCC delivers these programmes through subcontracting arrangements with two other providers. A large part of the provision is Skills for Life and provision below intermediate level. FCC has a contract to provide New Deal and Train to Gain programmes.
2. FCC was last inspected in June 2007; all aspects of the provision were judged to be satisfactory except equality of opportunity, which was good. Two focused monitoring visits found progress was reasonable in most areas but was unsatisfactory in some, including work on learners' initial assessment and target setting.
3. In the period since the last inspection, FCC has undergone a major restructuring of both internal staffing and the board of trustees. FCC is managed by a chief executive officer who is supported by a full-time data manager and a part-time quality manager. Five heads of school now have day-to-day responsibility for the delivery of the programmes. They manage 15 tutors, 14 administrative and six facilities staff.
4. Bradford Council is the fourth largest metropolitan district in England, with a population of 467,665. According to the 2001 census, 22% of that population is from minority ethnic groups. Unemployment in the area is higher than the regional and national average, currently 9.8%. A quarter of the population has poor literacy, numeracy and language skills. Around 98% of the provision is government funded.
5. FCC provides training on behalf of the following providers:
 - Aspire-i
 - BEST Training Ltd
6. The following organisation provides training on behalf of FCC:
 - The St Hughes Centre (adult safeguarded learning)
 - Baildon Community Link (adult safeguarded learning)

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
Provision for young learners: Foundation learning, including Entry to Employment	62 learners
Provision for adult learners: Further education (19+)	705 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain	85 learners
Adult and community learning	985 learners

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Grade 3
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	3
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	2
Subject Areas	Grade
Information and communication technologies	3
Adult safeguarded learning	3

Overall effectiveness

7. The overall effectiveness of FCC's provision is satisfactory. Outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management are all satisfactory as are the arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults. The promotion of equality and diversity is good.
8. Success rates are satisfactory overall, although some pockets of under performance remain. Learners across provision enjoy their courses, they learn good skills, particularly for employment, increase their health and well-being satisfactorily and are involved in a range of community projects. Learners make satisfactory progress during learning sessions.
9. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some well planned and taught sessions. The observation of teaching and learning process reports accurate judgements and shows a steadily improving trend from satisfactory to good. The system that recognises and records progress and achievement is insufficiently robust and is not an accurate tool to measure learners' progress. The range of provision is satisfactory, including community based programmes and vocational provision. FCC works well with partners to improve and extend the range and quality of provision. Support and guidance for learners are good.

Main findings

- Overall success rates on certificated further education programmes are satisfactory and around the national average although pockets of under-performance remain. Success rates, for the small numbers of learners, on accredited adult safeguarded courses are high and they make satisfactory progress. Success rates for Train to Gain learners are satisfactory.
- Learners improve their economic and social well-being well through learning and development. Learners with mental health issues such as depression benefit greatly from interacting with other learners. Learners from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds find common ground in classes and so interact much better in their own and wider communities. Some learners enter employment as teaching assistants or in related jobs.
- Learners are able to make suitably informed choices about their own health and well-being. They feel safe and have a satisfactory understanding of health and safety. Learners' work on wider community projects encourages them and their families to become more active and gives refugees more information on healthcare services. FCC does not sufficiently evaluate the impact of these opportunities.
- Learners' contribution to the community is good. In adult safeguarded provision, learners from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds form pressure groups that enable them to influence the services for their community. Many learners are active in a range of voluntary work. Foundation learners complete project work to raise money for charities and organise events.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most sessions stimulate learners. Tutors use a good range of teaching strategies to develop learners' understanding. Learners are generally well motivated in sessions and participate fully. Peer support is good. Target setting and the process for recognising and recording learners' progress and achievement are not sufficiently consistent or specific enough to reflect their development accurately.
- FCC has good partnerships with community and voluntary organisations, statutory agencies and private employers. It is well represented on many of the key community networks. FCC has insufficiently developed their formal service level agreements with partners and has no central plan to develop partnership work or map progression routes.
- Staff support learners very well and help many overcome some very difficult problems. Tutors use a good network of partners to support the specific needs of learners. Learners use the information, advice and guidance service well, sometimes working with external partners specialising in advice and guidance to ensure a coherent approach. However, not all learners have access to the full range of provision. FCC insufficiently evaluates this service.
- Managers have accomplished the re-structuring sensitively and very effectively. Team work is good. Staff morale is high despite the difficult changes. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of how their own targets contribute to the provider's aims. However, FCC places too much reliance on overall targets rather than tailoring them to match individual department or course performance.

- The board of trustees gives suitable guidance and challenge to FCC. The current board is relatively new, with revised terms of reference and much improved controls and accountability. Between them, board members have a good range of skills, experience and training to challenge staff. However, it is not yet monitoring all aspects of performance and members have not been in post long enough to have a sustained impact on provision.
- FCC meets government legislative requirements on safeguarding. Learners feel safe and appreciate the arrangements that ensure their welfare. The provider handles complex safeguarding cases sensitively and well. Staff introduce internet safety practices during learners' induction but they do not always reinforce these throughout programmes.
- The provider's arrangements for promoting equality and diversity are good. Learning is widely provided throughout the area with the majority of provision in areas of high economic deprivation. FCC works with a very wide range of minority ethnic communities and has excellent networks with community leaders. While FCC includes equality and diversity on session plans, not all tutors consistently integrate these into the curriculum.
- Quality assurance is satisfactory. The self-assessment process is clear, comprehensive and accurate and leads to improvements. The college's analytical use of data is much improved. The self-assessment report reflects many judgements made by inspectors but fails to reflect fully the issues in adult safeguarded learning. Arrangements to monitor subcontractors are insufficiently formalised.

What does Forster Community College need to do to improve further?

- Improve the success rates for all learners, particularly for those learners where rates are below the national average, by continuing to identify both poor and good practice across provision.
- Develop strategies to ensure cross-service themes such as health and well-being and contributing to the community are promoted consistently for learners; develop processes to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the strategies.
- Ensure that processes to recognise and record progress and achievement, particularly in regard to target setting, are robust and are able to give secure information to learners and staff about learners' progress.
- Develop a central plan for community provision and partnerships to ensure greater clarity of provision and coherence of progression opportunities.
- Develop information, advice and guidance so that all learners have access to this provision and develop data capture systems both internally and with partners to evaluate its effectiveness.
- Further develop the use of target setting with staff so that, in particular, success rate targets are based on realistic goals in each subject area or context, rather than a generic over-arching target.
- Review the arrangements for managing adult safeguarded provision to ensure the programme is managed in a cohesive, considered way that complements

other provision and is accountable and measurable. As part of this, improve the arrangements with subcontractors.

- Further develop the promotion of equality and diversity and safeguarding, particularly the embedding of e-safety, in teaching and learning sessions by more actively using observation processes and staff training to share good practice.
- Develop the good work in the use of data to bring about improvement by adjusting data collection to ensure that staff can use progression information more accurately.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the friendly and welcoming atmosphere
- improving their skills
- the friendly and helpful staff
- the supportive tutors
- being given a second chance
- feeling part of Forster Community College, which is like an extended family
- being treated respectfully
- making new friends.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the range of courses
- the building
- the cold classrooms
- disruptive learners
- the insufficient one-to-one support for some learners.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 3

10. Since the last inspection, the provider has maintained success rates around national figures. FCC has improved success rates on most of its further education provision. In the newly developed work-based provision, overall success rates are low although rates for achievement within the planned time are satisfactory; in-year data shows an improving trend for both. In community learning, very short accredited courses have high success rates.
11. Self-assessment is largely accurate. The process is thorough and the provider uses it well to secure improvements. The college uses the quality improvement plan appropriately to improve. The observation process reports accurate judgements and FCC uses it well to improve performance in teaching and learning. However, the process for recognising and recording learners' progress and achievement is still not effective.
12. Leaders and managers set a good example and motivate staff well. They have managed recent changes very well. Staff motivate and stimulate learners to succeed and aspire to higher goals. Since the last inspection, where quality systems were judged an area for improvement, FCC has established effective systems and procedures and improved the use of data. Staff and managers now understand these well and use them increasingly as tools to improve. Staff ensure board members are appropriately informed and involved in planning and delivery of provision. The collection of users' views is mostly well established and used to improve provision. Formal systems to collect employers' views are less well developed although staff use information gained informally to improve provision.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

13. Overall outcomes are satisfactory. Learners across provision enjoy their learning experiences, develop good personal and social skills and make good progress. A significant proportion of learners come to the college with either entry or foundation level starting points. FCC recruits the majority of learners from the most deprived wards in the city, most have low aspirations; they make good progress in developing skills that raise their self-confidence.
14. Success rates are satisfactory. Success rates for learners on further education provision have improved substantially from an extremely low base to around the national average. Long-course success rates improved from 62% in 2007/08, to 66% in 2008/09 but dipped in 2009/10. FCC has improved short-course success rates well and is in line with the national average.
15. Success rates for Skills for Life improved significantly from 62% in 2007/08 to 73% in 2008/09 but they dipped in 2009/10 to below the national average. Success rates on Skills for Life intermediate level long courses are low. Progression and achievement rates for learners on Entry to Employment

- courses improved to satisfactory. FCC has discontinued this provision and is now delivering foundation learning. Success rates of the first cohort of learners completing functional skills qualifications are high.
16. Performance on adult safeguarded provision is satisfactory. Learners develop good skills and improve their levels of confidence and self-esteem well. Success rates on the small number of very short courses are high. The processes for recognising and recording learners' progress and achievement are insufficiently robust to use this data with confidence.
 17. Success rates on Train to Gain are satisfactory. In 2009/10 success rates on Train to Gain provision declined and were low. In-year data shows an improving picture and achievements are now at the national average. The proportion of Train to Gain learners completing in the planned time improved in 2009/10 to just below the national average and there are further improvements so far this year.
 18. Learners improve their economic and social well-being well, they also gain friends and networks of support. Older learners in information and communication technology (ICT) benefit from developing the skills to improve communication with the outside world. Learners with mental health issues, such as depression, benefit greatly from interacting with other learners and gain a sense of self-worth. Learners from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds find common ground in classes and interact in their own and wider communities much better. Some learners enter employment as teaching assistants or in related jobs. Train to Gain learners develop appropriate workplace skills and work in challenging environments.
 19. Learners have a satisfactory awareness of safeguarding issues and use safe working practices appropriately. Learners feel safe and very welcome in both the central premises and partner organisations. They know how to get help for any support issues and appreciate the trustworthy nature of staff that enables them to ask for support. All learners show at least a satisfactory awareness of health and safety measures.
 20. Learners are able to make suitably informed choices about their own health and well-being. FCC has begun organising themed events on specific issues such as drugs awareness and knife crime. The café has extended its menu in response to learners' feedback. Work on wider community projects encourages learners and their families to become more active and gives refugees more information on healthcare services. FCC does not sufficiently evaluate the impact of these opportunities.
 21. Learners' contribution to the community is good. In adult safeguarded provision, learners from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds are active in forming or joining pressure groups, influencing how they can gain services within the community. Many learners are active in a range of voluntary work, both in supporting other learners and in wider community projects, such as conservation work. Foundation learners complete project work to raise money for charities and organise events.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

22. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Tutors engage learners well and use a good range of teaching strategies, including the use of information learning technology. Learners develop good skills that they use very well in the workplace or at home. Learners are supported well in group sessions and teachers are caring and sensitive about learners' individual needs. Peer learning is encouraged in group activities and this is effective in bringing together a very diverse group of learners. FCC's judgements about the quality of teaching and learning are accurate and show improvement, although the current grade profile remains satisfactory. Arrangements to support learners to develop their literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory.
23. Most staff use the virtual learning environment effectively. The content is mostly of good quality. Staff and learners can access resources on the virtual learning environment outside the college but not all courses are on it at the moment. The college building is old but the improvements that FCC have made make it a welcoming learning environment. Learners appreciate the secure and friendly atmosphere.
24. Tutors use initial assessment appropriately and place learners on programmes that suit their individual learning needs. Partners delivering advice and guidance contribute well to the assessment process and long-term target setting. FCC's procedures for recognising and recording progress and achievement are ineffective. They do not set clear and challenging targets that enable learners and tutors to capture the learners' development and the range of skills they acquire. Training and assessment for Train to Gain learners are satisfactory but the college's arrangements to monitor learners' progress are not always sufficiently rigorous.
25. FCC meets the needs of learners and employers satisfactorily. It responds to the needs of the community well and engages new learners by focusing on how it can help them become more economically independent. It identifies sectors where jobs are available and where skills gaps exist by talking to employers and using local data. FCC offers qualifications in areas such as catering and hospitality and customer services and childcare in response to the needs identified. The college has introduced short courses such as paediatric first aid and these are delivered in the community in response to local need. FCC recently launched a 'men into childcare' programme that was well attended and helped learners gain work in this sector. The provider is steadily increasing work with employers through its Train to Gain provision, although the current range is relatively narrow.
26. FCC has good, well established partnership arrangements with community and voluntary organisations, statutory agencies and private employers. The college is well represented on many of the key networks that bring community groups together and influences the strategic direction of community development and regeneration. Many of these partnerships offer additional specialist support for college learners, lead to employment and greatly improve the quality of their

lives. For example, training and volunteering opportunities alongside employers at conservation sites throughout Bradford; and a project to promote learning, language skills and healthy living to groups from different ethnic backgrounds, asylum seekers and refugees, which helped to improve their well-being, reduce isolation and break down cultural and racial barriers. Many of the partnerships lead to further project work and extend links in the community.

27. While most partnerships are long standing, FCC has insufficiently developed their formal service-level agreements. Links and partnerships are continuously evolving but FCC has no central plan or strategy to inform the development of partnership work or the planning of progression routes for learners.
28. Staff support learners very well. They value highly the extra time given by their tutors to help them in their learning. They often feel that without their support they would have extreme difficulty in overcoming barriers. The induction of learners is very effective in reassuring them and engaging them to stay on course. Tutors use a good and established network of partners to support the specific needs of learners. Staff often escort learners to external agencies specialising in counselling or homelessness advice. Learners use the information, advice and guidance service well, sometimes working with external partners to ensure a holistic approach. Tutors generally give effective information at the end of courses to help learners progress. However, FCC insufficiently evaluates these services. Not all learners, particularly in the community or on Train to Gain provision, have access to the level of support available in the centre.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

29. Inspectors agreed with FCC's self-assessment report that leadership and management are satisfactory. FCC has gone through a sustained period of change and restructuring of both staffing and the board of trustees. Managers have achieved this change sensitively and effectively. Team-work is good. Staff morale is high despite the difficult changes. FCC is positioning itself well for a new strategic direction with more emphasis on accountability of staff who will have devolved budgets. Strategic planning for this new model is appropriate. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of how their own targets contribute to the provider's aims. However, FCC places too much reliance on overall targets rather than tailoring these to match individual department or course performance. FCC's plans align well to local and national targets, for example, by reaching the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in the area. FCC is highly regarded by the local community.
30. The quality of resources to support learning is satisfactory in the main centre, and good in many outreach or partners' premises. The provider plans continuing professional development appropriately, focusing on priorities such as staff understanding of safeguarding. Team working both between and across teams is good and staff are beginning to share good practice. Management meetings are well focused and recorded appropriately.

31. Staff routinely analyse and discuss data at monthly management meetings. Curriculum managers discuss attendance and retention rates with staff and set targets to improve rates. FCC uses data appropriately to monitor performance. Staff use data on equality and diversity suitably to identify issues such as the lower performance by women or by learners from particular ethnic groups. The provider has taken effective actions and has made progress in narrowing the achievement gap.
32. The board of trustees gives suitable guidance and challenge to FCC. The current board is relatively new, with revised terms of reference and much improved controls and accountability. The chair of governors has good experience in the sector to lead the provision. The composition of the board is representative of the wide range of minority ethnic communities in Bradford. Board members have a good range of skills, experience and training to support and develop provision. Staff inform the board satisfactorily on performance and individual members give adequate support. However, the full board is not yet monitoring all aspects of performance in a systematic way and have not been in post long enough to have a sustained impact on provision.
33. FCC's arrangements for safeguarding are satisfactory. They meet government legislative requirements. Learners feel safe and appreciate the arrangements that ensure their welfare. They have confidence in the sensitivity of staff and know how to report concerns. Staff complete appropriate risk assessments. FCC liaises closely with appropriate agencies to ensure that it supports learners' health and well-being. All staff have completed appropriate training in safeguarding. The number of incidents and issues reported to FCC increased following the introduction of the revised policy and staff training. The provider handled these often complex cases, sensitively and well. Staff introduce internet safety practices during learner induction but they do not always reinforce these throughout course delivery. The designated responsible officers communicate regularly with the local children safeguarding board.
34. The provider's arrangements for promoting equality and diversity are good. Managers target provision for those in greatest need. Learning is widely provided throughout the area with the majority of provision in areas of high economic deprivation. FCC has effectively worked to involve learners from groups traditionally under-represented in learning. The provider works with a very wide range of minority ethnic communities and has excellent networks with community leaders and groups. All staff have been trained in equality and diversity and in integrating equality and diversity into teaching and learning sessions. However, the effectiveness in establishing the active promotion of equality and diversity in the curriculum is variable. FCC has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures. Learners receive appropriately adapted versions of relevant policies in their handbook.
35. An internal group monitors learners' views and the implementation of appropriate actions. A good range of methods are used to obtain learners' views. These include end-of-course evaluations, induction questionnaires, a book that records comments on the reception desk and 'case study' cards that

focus on specific issues. The results, and actions to improve, are appropriately publicised through 'you said, we did' posters.

36. The provider's systems to collect employers' views are not as well established. Staff collect the views of employers informally and use this information appropriately to improve. Some work has begun on collecting information from employers through surveys but it is very new so the information is limited. FCC collects stakeholders' views through partnership meetings although it does not yet do this in a structured way.
37. Quality assurance is satisfactory. The self-assessment process is clear, comprehensive and accurate and leads to improvements. Curriculum managers and wider staff contribute well to the plan and use the views of learners and partners. FCC has some external processes to help ensure some impartial moderation of judgements, although they do not apply these consistently. The self-assessment report reflects many judgements made by inspectors but fails to reflect fully the issues in adult safeguarded learning. FCC insufficiently monitors the two subcontractors. A service level agreement is in place, however this is not reviewed annually. The college holds regular meetings with subcontractors but it does not sufficiently record discussions or actions. The quality manager visits provision regularly and conducts detailed and effective observations of practice.
38. Value for money is satisfactory. Financial management is effective. Over the last three years FCC has turned a substantial deficit into a small profit. The management and deployment of resources are satisfactory and staff costs are substantially reduced. Staff are highly committed to the learners. The main centre, while being highly accessible to learners, is old and requires a substantial financial commitment to its upkeep. FCC is effective in using a range of funding streams to benefit learners.

Subject areas

Information communication technology

Grade 3

Context

39. The majority of the ICT provision takes place at the college's main centre. FCC offers a small number of courses at other premises to meet the needs of specific client groups. Courses last from a few weeks to a full year ranging from entry to foundation level. During the week of the inspection, 65 learners were studying ICT courses. During 2009/10 245 learners were enrolled.

Key findings

- Overall success rates are satisfactory and above the national average. However, there are significant differences between courses. Success rates on short foundation-level courses are well below the national average. FCC has identified the reasons for this poor performance and has taken appropriate actions to improve.
- Learners develop appropriate ICT skills and some demonstrate very high levels of skill in using the standard office software in word processing, spreadsheets and databases. Learners enjoy their lessons and speak positively about their experiences in the college. They feel that FCC provides a safe and welcoming learning environment.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most lessons are planned well. In the best sessions, tutors support their learners with care and sensitivity. One-to-one teaching is effective. Tutors recognise learners' individual needs. In workshop sessions, tutors use small group sessions effectively to bring learners together and put the skills that they are learning into context.
- Target setting and recording of progress for many learners is ineffective. Although some targets are meaningful, many are insufficiently specific, for example, they state that the learner should improve their ICT skills with no target date. Tutors record some learners' progress in detail, whilst for others their progress is poorly recorded, often just noting the unit achieved. The college recognises this area for improvement in its self-assessment report.
- Support for learners to develop their numeracy and literacy skills is satisfactory. Learners with an identified need are provided with additional literacy and numeracy sessions but not all learners take up the offer. The numeracy and literacy courses are satisfactory but tutors make insufficient links to the main ICT qualification. ICT tutors informally discuss learners' progress with the numeracy and literacy tutors.
- The range of courses offered by FCC is satisfactory and broadly meets the needs of learners, offering suitable progression routes from entry to intermediate level. The college has appropriate processes to update the courses offered, although this involves insufficient consultation with local communities to determine what they would like.
- ICT staff use their links with other organisations well to provide courses for particular groups of disadvantaged learners. For example, courses in the use of

standard software for older learners at a community centre and at a drop-in centre for homeless adults, and a course in digital imaging at a project for recovering alcoholics.

- Support and guidance are good. Learners feel comfortable speaking to their tutor regarding issues of concern and tutors often refer learners to specialist agencies. The take up of information, advice and guidance is good. Tutors receive information about follow on courses offered by other providers although they do not all pass this information on to learners.
- Day-to-day management is effective. ICT team meetings are held weekly to ensure that all staff are aware of any developments. Staff discuss regularly progress towards retention and achievement targets, as well as working on plans to develop the provision.
- The arrangements for safeguarding learners are satisfactory and all ICT staff have received appropriate training. During their induction, all learners receive information about staying safe whilst using the internet. However, there is insufficient reinforcement of internet safety during the course.
- Equality and diversity are promoted appropriately and staff receive regular training. Tutors treat learners with high levels of respect and there is an atmosphere of mutual trust in lessons. Lessons have a good mix of learners in terms of age, ethnicity and gender. However, tutors place insufficient emphasis on actively raising learners' understanding of equality and diversity.
- The self-assessment process is satisfactory. It is appropriately inclusive with all ICT staff contributing towards the subject report. The report is self-critical, recognising most of the strengths and areas for improvement identified by inspectors. However, it includes additional strengths that are no better than normal practice.

What does FCC need to do to improve further?

- Improve the success rates on all courses, and in particular, on short foundation level courses, through the further implementation of FCC's management actions, including improved monitoring of learners' progress.
- Extend the training programme for tutors in recording learners' progress and monitor practice to ensure that all tutors record the progress that learners have made accurately.
- Extend the training programme for tutors in target setting for learners to ensure that both short and long term targets are specific and measurable and are used to motivate learners.
- Develop more staff training and packs of material offering information, advice and guidance to enable staff to better guide learners at the end of their courses.
- Ensure tutors reinforce learners' understanding of the safe use of the internet in lessons throughout their course.

Adult safeguarded learning

Grade 3

Context

40. At the time of inspection there were 777 learners on adult safeguarded learning. FCC delivers provision from its centre in Bradford and from a number of outreach venues. Around 17% of the provision is delivered by two subcontractors; 34% of learners are from minority ethnic groups and 59% are men. Learners undertake a range of accredited and non-accredited learning, including quilting, e-communication, first aid and teaching.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Learners develop good practical skills and improve their confidence, self-esteem and social skills. Some learners progress into work placements and employment. Learners' success rates on very short courses are high. Attainment of learning goals is satisfactory. However, the processes for recognising and recording progress and achievement are insufficiently robust to use this data with confidence.
- Learners have fun and enjoy their learning. They improve their social well-being considerably. Older learners and learners with mental health problems are combating depression, anxiety and isolation well through classes. Learners develop team working skills and take responsibility for themselves and others.
- Learners feel safe. They are welcomed into sessions and feel safe to work with a wide range of learners in a variety of different settings. Learners are able to recognise discrimination and abuse and feel comfortable in reporting an incident if it occurs. Their understanding of health and safety is satisfactory.
- Learners' ability to make informed choices about their own health and well-being is satisfactory. A health trainer encourages them to stop smoking and supports them to access counselling. Learners benefit from the expertise of a range of external agencies that provide confidential support.
- Learners make a very positive contribution to the community. Learners come from a wide range of backgrounds and they engage well with a variety of local community projects, for example, a local sewing class making furniture for a school. The adult safeguarded provision brings people and communities together, challenging stereotypes and contributing to community cohesion.
- Teaching, training and assessment are satisfactory. Teachers use a range of teaching styles and different activities that learners enjoy and participate in fully. Tutors use e-learning effectively to enhance the learners' experience. However, the recording of targets set and progress made by learners is weak. Written targets are not always sufficiently detailed and do not always address individual needs well enough.
- The provision meets the needs of learners and the community satisfactorily. FCC offers courses across the geographical area and uses partners' premises well to improve the range of provision. The college is flexible and provides training at times and of duration to suit learners' needs. Enrichment activities

complement learners' cultural and social development. However, planning of provision with partners, particularly to map progression routes, is not sufficient.

- Partnerships with schools and community groups are good. FCC consults well with partners in the design and development of new programmes, reaching out to the hardest to engage groups. The college has a wide range of partners that directly enhance the learners' experience through offering support or by giving a wider range of provision. Partners from different minority ethnic groups help FCC understand the needs of these learners.
- Tutors are highly supportive of learners and have a good understanding of their individual needs. They use a wide range of partners to give specialised support for learners. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory but not all learners in the community access impartial guidance to inform their progression. FCC uses good links with external agencies to supplement advice and guidance. The management information system does not sufficiently capture learners' progression to further study.
- Operational management is satisfactory. Staff are highly committed to learners and work well as a team. Staff development is satisfactory as are quality improvement arrangements, including the self-assessment process. The management of this provision is spread across several subject areas and this affects FCC's ability to oversee and coordinate the programme.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are satisfactory. Staff have adequate training and are very protective of learners. The provider enforces health and safety measures appropriately and ensures that partners have adequate safeguarding measures in the range of community venues.
- FCC promotes equality and diversity well. The college has a culture of inclusion and respect and learners from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, age groups and abilities work well together. Learners develop a good understanding and appreciation of different cultures and religions that tutors reinforce through taught sessions and social activities.

What does Forster Community College need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the target setting, assessment and review processes are consistently applied across all adult safeguarded provision to monitor learners' progress and improve success rates.
- Improve the management of adult safeguarding learning provision to ensure the offer is clear and progression routes coherent.
- Further develop the management information system to ensure that data on progress and progression to further learning is complete and easily accessible.
- Improve the arrangements to monitor subcontracted provision by developing more formal contract management structures and reviewing service level agreements.

Information about the inspection

41. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's quality manager, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding body, 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.
42. 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 provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Forster Community 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	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive	Adult safeguarded learning
Approximate number of enrolled learners				
Full-time learners	1394	511	106	777
Part-time learners	0	0	0	0
Overall effectiveness	3	3	3	3
Capacity to improve				
Outcomes for learners	3	3	3	3
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3			
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3			
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?	3			
Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*	3			
How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*	2			
Quality of provision	3	3	3	3
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3			
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	3			
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2			
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2			
Leadership and management	3	3	3	3
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	3			
How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*	3			
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3			
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?	3			
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3			
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	3			

*where applicable to the type of provision

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