

**12 March 2014**

## **Forster Community College praised for work with socially and economically excluded**

Forster Community College in Bradford has been awarded a Grade 2 rating from Ofsted, at the most recent inspection in February 2014. The increase in grade to *Good* is reflective of strong leadership and the dedication and commitment of well qualified experienced staff, in pursuit of excellence. This is a significant achievement against Ofsted's rigorous new Common Inspection Framework.

A team of three experienced inspectors observed classes, spoke to learners, employers, and staff, and robustly tested all aspects of College policies, during the comprehensive inspection visit.

Ofsted praised the fact that learners from diverse backgrounds with a complex range of challenging personal experiences learn together well.

The report acknowledged that the College uses its extensive knowledge of Bradford communities to develop courses and has shaped the curriculum successfully to develop learners' vocational skills in sectors with an increasing employment opportunity. For example, the development of the well-resourced Forster's Bistro & Deli on Bradford City Park which provides good opportunities for work experience for an increasing number of learners.

The inspectors recognised the strong culture of inclusion, respect and opportunity for all learners at the College. They noted that "dedicated managers, tutors and staff know their individual learners well and support them very effectively to overcome their barriers to participation and progress."

The lead inspector commended the very effective management of change;

*"In view of the College's significant budget reduction in the recent years, very effective management of change supported by dedicated staff has ensured that the College meets its mission. Since the last inspection, the College has focused well to improve the quality of the provision and the vast majority of learners succeed well."*

It was also recognised that learners are supported in improving their personal, social and employability skills significantly. The skills enhance their capacity to take control of their lives and improve their life chances and that of their children and dependents.

*"Forster's is a jewel of Bradford. Its restaurant in City Park is an ambitious statement of the intention to transform learning and this Ofsted judgment now validates the quality of the College"*

- Gareth Dawkins, Executive Principal Bradford Academy & University Academy Keighley

*"Forster Community College is incredibly proud of its journey to success. Inspectors recognised our supportive ethos for working with learners, almost all of whom are at high risk of social and economic exclusion and have multiple substantial barriers to participate in learning. Our commitment to working together to improve their personal, social and*

*employability skills significantly is a key driver for the College. High success rates (90.5%) are also demonstrable of our continued pursuit for excellence and providing the best educational provision for our learners.*

*Leading a remarkable team and providing life changing opportunities is a privilege.”*

– Sheila Philpott CEO

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### **Notes to editors:**

The full report can be read here: <http://www.forster.ac.uk/>

- Forster Community College (FCC) was established 32 years ago. It is a successful social enterprise providing vocational education and training across the Leeds City Region. Our mission is to inspire learning and support communities to prosper through the engagement of hard to reach priority groups. The majority of provision is delivered in Bradford.
- The College offers a range of education and training for adults and young people including; apprenticeships, classroom learning, bespoke workplace training, community learning and will soon be delivering traineeships.
- The courses offered by the College include, Hospitality & Catering, Health & Social Care, Childcare, Education and Training, Retail and Customer Service, Maths, English, ICT. Enrolment dates available all year round, please see website.
- CEO: Sheila E Philpot MBA
- More information about the college can be found here <http://www.forster.ac.uk/>
- Applications to the College can be made to [admissions@forster.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@forster.ac.uk) and enquires send to [info@forster.ac.uk](mailto:info@forster.ac.uk)
- Contact Details:
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