



# Weston College Group Annual Report 2015/16

This year in numbers...

**99%**

A Level  
pass rate

**98%**

Technical and  
professional  
course pass rate

**24%**

Weston College graduates  
who received First Class  
Honours Degrees (against  
a national average of 19%)

**93%**

2015's graduates in further  
study or employment within  
six months of graduating

**90%**

Weston College apprentices  
offered permanent positions by  
their employers at the end of  
their training programmes



# Welcome

The 2015/16 academic year has given the Weston College Group (WCG) much to be proud of.

Not only have we maintained a strong position, in terms of both academic and fiscal performance, but we have laid some firm foundations for our future.

2015/16 was a landmark year for higher education, thanks to an outstanding Higher Education Review together with the launch of the University Centre Weston (UCW) brand.

This followed last year's award of University Centre status from the University of the West of England Bristol (UWE), having already achieved this with Bath Spa University. We continue to work with both universities to further develop our HE provision.

The Inspirational Futures Trust (IFT) is expanding: we have seen the completion of the superb North Somerset Enterprise and Technology College (NSETC) facilities at the Weston Academy site.

We have implemented many changes, driven by a need to respond to the political and funding landscape, the new common inspection framework, demographics and LEP priorities, and other factors.

This last year has seen a re-organisation and re-branding of faculties to better align to sector and economic priorities; re-distributed curriculum to purpose-built facilities; put in place the right structure and strategy to tackle the apprenticeship agenda and centralised student services, increasing the connectivity between various elements of the learner journey, which remains at the forefront of everything we do.

In order to provide the best outcomes for our learners, we are continuing to invest in creating first-class facilities, working in closer collaboration than ever with a wide range of partners, businesses and employers, and proudly playing a key part in the regeneration of Weston-super-Mare and the wider region.

There are undoubtedly more obstacles ahead in the education sector, but by working with our many partners, I am confident we can face those challenges together and help to create a brighter future for our students, our Group, our partners and the region.

**Dr Paul Phillips OBE Ph.d D.Litt Ed.D**  
Principal and Chief Executive



I am immensely proud of all we have achieved as Weston College Group in 2015/16.

We have benefited greatly from capital investment and have succeeded in providing truly inspirational facilities for our learners. The quality of our provision has been further endorsed by the success of our Higher Education Review, and our continued focus on working in partnership and putting learners first has enabled us and our learners to achieve success in a challenging environment. Along with our partners we have made a significant contribution to improving the life chances of our learners and to local and regional regeneration, and in so doing have truly 'created brighter futures'.

**Jude Ferguson**  
Chair of Corporation



## Leading development of skills in the West of England

The mission of the Weston College Group (WCG) is 'creating brighter futures', and leading the development of skills in the West of England plays a vital role in achieving that.

The Group continues to cultivate inclusive, mutually-beneficial, relationships that contribute to the success of learners at all levels and that positively support regional regeneration and growth.

It is working closer than ever with strategic partners, ensuring businesses are involved in curriculum decisions, to equip its learners with the specific skills employers seek and need when selecting their staff, and to meet the skills needs of the West of England.

The Group is working to identify and respond to the many opportunities that will be generated by the Hinkley Point C development.

There has been much work done this year with the Construction Industry Training Board, looking at construction/highways and scaffolding training, and to explore how we can support health sector employers meet their many workforce, skills and recruitment challenges.

The range of partnership activity continues to grow as the WCG is increasingly recognised as a trusted high quality partner. Collaboration between the WCG, the LEP, North Somerset Council, the business community, voluntary and community sector and many others, is vital for securing the best opportunities for the region and its people.

### Institute of Professional Education

Weston College and the University of the West of England are creating an Institute of Professional Education.

This will provide learners and employers with a single point of entry from which they can access a complete range of professional and technical training programmes and knowledge services, from entry-level vocational skills through to world-class specialist research.

It will provide clear routes of progression between further and higher education, with clear career pathways.

Dr Paul Phillips OBE, Principal and Chief Executive of Weston College Group, said: "I don't believe there's an institution in existence that can meet all an employer's requirements on its own. When it comes to meeting skills needs, you have to take a bit of further education, a bit of higher education, and all the constituent parts of the two, and combine them into an overarching learning concept, and work as a partnership to address them."

Professor Steve West, Vice Chancellor of the University of the West of England, said: "The future is about us developing and equipping people with the right skills, knowledge and attributes to be able to enter and advance in the workplace and make a positive contribution to society.

"The technical and professional education taught at Weston College will lead into degree-level education."

# Inspirational Futures Trust

A Weston College-sponsored multi-academy trust



## Supporting school improvement

In 2013 Weston College was approved as an academy sponsor and established Inspirational Futures Trust (IFT) as a multi-academy trust in partnership with a higher education institution and businesses within the region. Its aim is to provide consistently high quality education through building best practice to all ages within the area, enabling young people to unlock their full potential.

Since 2013, Inspirational Futures Trust has become home to:

- North Somerset Enterprise and Technology College (NSETC)
- Herons' Moor Academy
- Bristol Futures Academy (BFA)
- St Katherine's School
- Crockerne Church of England Primary School.

## Highlights

- NSETC moves to new £12 million campus
- Bristol Futures Academy successfully opens
- Herons' Moor Academy receives good Ofsted rating
- St Katherine's School enjoys record A Level A\* grades
- Crockerne trail-blaze green screen learning.

IFT recognises that a 'one size fits all' approach does not guarantee success. Our approach of encouraging and supporting difference, although ambitious, allows academies to maintain their character and uniqueness while raising their overall quality standards.



Nursery • Primary • Secondary • Alternative • Special

## Vision

The vision of Weston College, as a sponsor of IFT, is to enable students to fulfil their potential through excellent teaching, and strong support and guidance. Rated as outstanding in all areas, it is driven to achieve this through the development of a learning culture that is inclusive, aspirational, and focused on assuring success and progression.

"Bristol Futures Academy supports the needs of the most vulnerable learners.

"The specialist model of support that has been developed by Weston College will transform the lives of the students at BFA and the training and support for staff from IFT is of a really high quality.

"The values and ethos of IFT supports BFA perfectly."

Caroline Down, Principal,  
Bristol Futures Academy

"The range of facilities and experiences available to students will provide a richness that would not be possible without the ongoing support of IFT and Weston College. As a 14-19 provider, NSETC is set to revolutionise learning and recruitment. The days of measuring success by academic qualifications alone are gone. Transferable skills, justifiable confidence, and real-world experience are what employers are asking for."

Darran George, Interim  
Principal, NSETC

"Herons' Moor Academy opened as a new school in 2003 and has developed into a popular and successful primary academy.

"We have established a reputation for being forward-thinking and we are delighted to have been given the opportunity to join the Inspirational Futures Trust.

"We are looking forward to working as part of IFT to enhance the excellent education we provide for all our pupils."

Julie Fox, Headteacher, Herons' Moor Academy

## Values

- improving education for all children and young people across North Somerset and beyond
- providing a high quality education pathway from nursery to higher education
- encouraging uniqueness and championing the 'one size does not fit all' approach
- refusing to compromise on quality across all functions and academies
- identifying specialisms and areas of outstanding practice within each academy to establish cross-organisational support
- allowing every young person across IFT to benefit from specialist facilities and resources
- facilitating the mobilisation of expertise across organisations
- sharing good practice and experience across academies
- providing high quality motivated staff with opportunities to expand their experience and expertise.

"We are very pleased to have joined IFT and look forward to working with the other academies within the Trust to provide the best possible education for all our students.

"St Katherine's will continue to provide the nurturing environment that our students currently enjoy, enhanced by the strength of IFT."

Justin Humphreys, Head of School,  
Katherine's School

"Crockerne is delighted to have joined IFT; we will continue to be a church school, at the heart of our community, which prides itself on working in partnership with parents, nurturing and valuing individuals and developing our children as learners. We look forward to working with the other providers in the Trust on our exciting journey towards outstanding."

Geeta Verrell, Co-Headteacher,  
Crockerne Church of England Primary School



## A snapshot of just some of the many headlines

### University Centre status

Weston College was granted University Centre status by the University of the West of England Bristol. Having already achieved this with Bath Spa University, the College is able to significantly expand its HE provision.

### Beacon Award success

Weston College was honoured with two prestigious national Beacon Awards from the Association of Colleges; the UCAS Progress Award for Careers Education and Guidance, and the Council for Learning Resources in Colleges Award for Effective Integration of Libraries/Learning Resource Centres in Curriculum Delivery.

### Children's University at Weston College

Weston College was launched as the North Somerset centre for The Children's University, which encourages youngsters to try new experiences, develop new interests and acquire new skills.

### Engineering centre opens

A £2.5 million engineering centre was opened, enabling Weston College to provide a full engineering and manufacturing curriculum.

### Celebration of Success

The many outstanding achievements of Weston College students, staff and business associates were honoured at the annual glittering Celebration of Success event.

### Funding secured

Weston College Group received confirmation of funding to create a Law and Professional Services Academy in Weston-super-Mare, part of which involved the College formally taking over the Winter Gardens from North Somerset Council.

### National BTEC Awards

Jordan Tucker won Outstanding IT Student of the Year at the National BTEC Awards, having started his studies at Weston College with very little computing experience. After winning the WorldSkills regional final, he is training for a chance to compete in the international competition in Abu Dhabi in 2017.

### New 3G pitch

A £115,000 scheme has transformed the former Grove Park Tennis Courts into a state-of-the-art 3G multi-use sports facility.



## and highlights of the past academic year

### Virtual reality project

Students learning about animation and computer games put their new-found skills into practice by developing a virtual reality training scheme for learner drivers.

### Business Awards

Business Administration student Toni Squires took the prestigious Principal's Award for Apprentice of the Year, winning a gold trophy and £500 cheque, donated by Flexiform, at the annual Weston College Business Awards.

### 100 in 100 success

A campaign to create 100 new apprenticeship places in 100 days smashed its target, receiving 345 pledges.

### Student scoops top design title

Graphic design graduate India Lawton was named New Designer of the Year at the prestigious New Designers exhibition and awards ceremony in London, beating more than 1,000 finalists from 78 colleges and universities nationwide.

### A Level results

Weston College maintained its high standards with an overall A Level pass rate of 99%, an outstanding result in light of a considerable growth in student numbers.

### Principal awarded third doctorate

Dr Paul Phillips was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Education by the University of the West of England in recognition of his leadership over the development of the Weston College Group.

### Another record year for graduations

More than 500 University Centre Weston students – continuing the run of year-on-year record numbers – celebrated achieving their degrees at three ceremonies.

### Graduate's inspirational story

John Byrne, 51, graduated with a BA in Counselling despite having suffered from throat cancer during the academic year; he gave an inspirational speech at the graduation ceremony, encouraging people that it's never too late to return to education.



# Strategic Partnerships



**As the Weston College Group continues to develop and grow, closer collaboration with a growing number of key strategic partners will be crucial to its continued success.**

“The West of England LEP continues to recognise the impressive nature of Weston College’s high-quality education and skills delivery. The College’s approach to working in partnership with key stakeholders from both the public and the private sectors enables them to be highly responsive to the needs of employers and learners while also supporting the overall economy of the West of England.”

**Patricia Greer, Interim Chief Executive, West of England LEP**

“The partnership between UWE Bristol and Weston College continues to go from strength to strength. We are uniquely positioned to meet the skills needs for the region and have a shared ambition to provide the highest quality practice-based and professionally-oriented education to all our learners.

“Weston College prides itself on delivering excellence for all its students and stakeholders and, as a strategic partner of the College, we have benefited from this professionalism and commitment.

“This is why we have committed to growing the partnership through the establishment of the Institute of Professional Education, which will enable us to further enhance existing provision and explore new opportunities, such as the growth in apprenticeships.”

**Jo Midgley, Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of the West of England, Bristol**

“We are proud to work with Weston College, as they continually strive to provide one of the best learning environments in the country. As well as providing outstanding opportunities for learners in North Somerset, the College is a real driving force behind our economic growth ambitions, supplying training and skilled workers in key sectors including digital and creative industries, engineering, construction and professional services. The College’s track record of delivery and outstanding performance has enabled us to attract major investment in new and improved facilities over the past year. The establishment of the Law and Professional Services Academy, the Future Technologies Centre and the University Centre Weston is at the heart of our regeneration plans for the town, and the North Somerset Enterprise and Technology College – together with the HIVE and planned Food and Drink Innovation Centre – forms part of a dynamic ‘enterprise cluster’ within the J21 Enterprise Area. The next 12 months promises to be just as exciting, as Weston arrives as a ‘university centre town’, Hinkley Point C goes into full swing and no doubt new opportunities appear on the horizon.”

**Mike Jackson, Chief Executive, North Somerset Council**

“Bath Spa University is committed to partnership with Weston College in the delivery of higher education and looks to that partnership thriving in the future. The University understands that the College, as a high-class provider in a different market, can offer a distinct type of course to that offered by the University itself, and this delivery strengthens the University’s commitment to inclusivity. Students from Weston College have gone on to complete their courses through articulation arrangements with University courses and have demonstrated that they are very able.”

**Chris Elliott, Registrar and Director of Student Services, Bath Spa University**



# Strategic Partnerships

“Uniting employers with education is key to ensuring the economic success of not only our business, but also our region. It is well known that there are significant skills gaps across many industries and the responsibility to solve that lies in a partnership approach.

“Wessex Water has identified that a crucial method of addressing our skills requirement is to find and support high quality training providers, such as Weston College, to design, develop and deliver courses, programmes and apprenticeships to fulfil our business needs.

“This year we launched our first ever higher level apprenticeship in civil engineering in partnership with Weston College, and we fully endorsed the College’s submission to the West of England LEP for Skills Capital Funding to improve construction skills training in the region.

“We’re excited to see what our joint future holds, how we can work together to ensure our local and wider communities understand the possibilities and opportunities within our industry, and how we can support each other to ensure Weston College continues to provide outstanding training which is relevant, business led and, most of all, effective.”

**Becca Thurston, Apprenticeship Coordinator, Wessex Water**

“Working collaboratively with Weston College, for example in supporting the proposed new Health and Active Living Skills Centre, will allow us to support the local community and our staff to improve health and wellbeing.

“Weston College plays an important role in the training and education of students, both locally and more widely, delivering a well-developed programme of training in health and social care.

“As demand for care, health and wellbeing services increases, it is essential that employers have access to the skills and training provision which will provide a flexible, multi-skilled and resilient workforce.

“Our aim, through partnership with the College, is to create a centre and student experience where teaching and clinical practice can be brought together for the benefit of patients and staff, where our partnership brings real and lasting benefits to the communities of North Somerset through improved health, regeneration, employment and economic growth.”

**James Rimmer, Chief Executive, Weston Area Health Trust**

“From the beginning of the procurement selection process to identify a possible additional training provider, GKN were impressed by the professionalism and proactive approach demonstrated by Weston College.

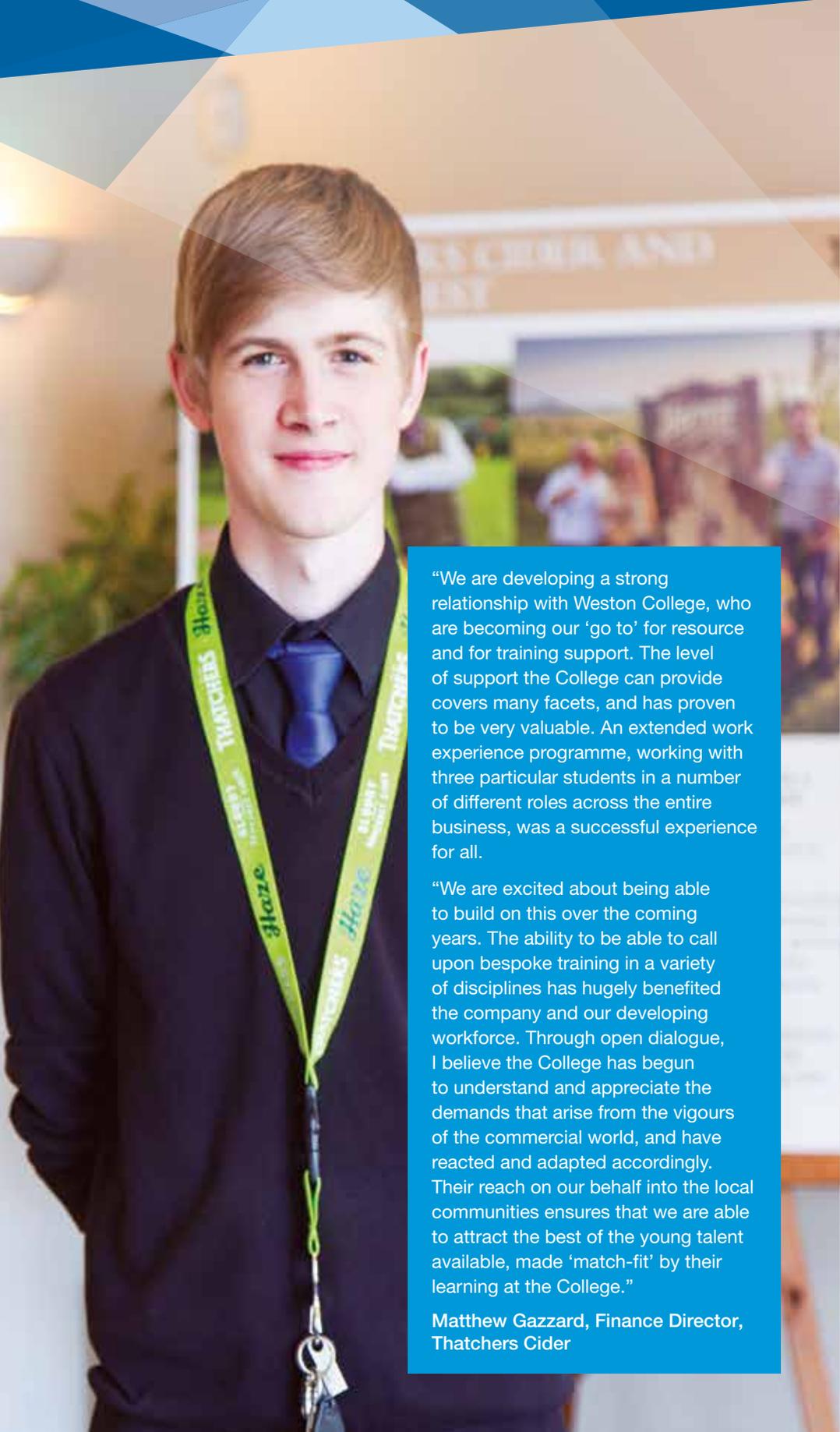
“Since the selection of Weston College by GKN, and the first year of delivery of our programme, GKN’s experience of this approach from all levels of the Weston College team has continued. This has been clearly demonstrated by feedback from both the GKN apprentice training team, but, as importantly, from our apprentices, who have had nothing but positive comments regarding their experiences attending Weston College.

“Such is GKN’s confidence in Weston College that we are now working in partnership on several upcoming initiatives, one of which is preparing for the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy, where GKN and Weston College have both been invited by the SFA to take part in the pilot of the Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS).”

**Paul Ashbee, Technical Training Manager, GKN Aerospace Services Limited**



# Strategic Partnerships



“We are developing a strong relationship with Weston College, who are becoming our ‘go to’ for resource and for training support. The level of support the College can provide covers many facets, and has proven to be very valuable. An extended work experience programme, working with three particular students in a number of different roles across the entire business, was a successful experience for all.

“We are excited about being able to build on this over the coming years. The ability to be able to call upon bespoke training in a variety of disciplines has hugely benefited the company and our developing workforce. Through open dialogue, I believe the College has begun to understand and appreciate the demands that arise from the vigours of the commercial world, and have reacted and adapted accordingly. Their reach on our behalf into the local communities ensures that we are able to attract the best of the young talent available, made ‘match-fit’ by their learning at the College.”

**Matthew Gazzard, Finance Director, Thatchers Cider**

“The excellent reputation of Howards Motor Group has been established over four decades since opening our first vehicle workshop in Weston-super-Mare in 1972.

“Our promise is to consistently provide customers with the very best in quality, value and service, whether they are buying their next car or servicing their existing vehicle. This promise can only be delivered if our people have the right skills, knowledge and attitude to exceed customer expectations. As such, people are the most valuable asset we have.

“By engaging with Weston College, and through our growing and strengthening relationship, we have discovered a previously untapped resource of bright, motivated and ambitious young people. By employing their services, we are enjoying the positivity they bring while growing our future talent from within. In return they are learning their skills and gaining confidence in a supportive environment as they position themselves for a rewarding career within a highly reputable and successful local company. It really is a win-win situation for both parties.

“We will strive for an ever closer relationship with Weston College as the positive experience of working with this centre of learning and their students becomes ever more apparent to us. This rich vein of talented people is one of the core foundations upon which our future growth and success can be built.”

**Peter Haynes, General Manager, Howards Group**



“As the largest independent used car retailer in the South West, we need to ensure a constant supply of motivated and enthusiastic talent to fill the roles we have available.

“Working with Weston College is a new endeavour for us. However, it has been like a breath of fresh air.

“They truly understand that, from an employer’s perspective, their role is to prepare their intake for the employment market.

“Our first interface is the establishment of an apprenticeship programme which will hopefully lead to a long-term and mutually beneficial relationship.

“As a locally-based company, we are always looking for ways of further integrating into the community, and what better way than creating and maintaining long-term employment opportunities for young people.”

**Gordon Veale, General Manager, Carbase**

“Alliance Homes receives first-class support and is proud of our strategic partnership with Weston College, collaborating on key business priorities and wider regeneration activities.

“In partnership with Weston College, we have established the award-winning Care Academy, which helped Alliance Living Care to access a new talent pool of 50+ staff, and the Team North Somerset partnership, which has supported nearly 200 disadvantaged people into employment.”

**Michael Williams, Business Enterprise Manager, Alliance Homes Group**

“There’s a quiet revolution going on in Weston, as we change from a town with below-average staying on rates and skills into a high skill, well-educated university centre town. Weston College has been the engine and catalyst of the change, and the entire local community supports it.”

**John Penrose, MP for Weston-super-Mare**

# Curriculum change: 16 to 18 years



One key area of focus has been around the continual development of maths and English for all students while studying with the College, whether this is through a formal qualification or within their main qualification. We saw a two-fold increase in the number of students needing to retake GSCE Maths and English, which saw over 1,200 entries for last year's June examinations and success rates well above the national benchmark.

The student experience and the development of teaching, learning and assessment will always appear at the top of our priority list as we measure and monitor ourselves. Learners once again rated Weston College as the best in the West of England for the fourth successive year!

Continued investment in facilities across each of the College campuses has ensured we are able to offer students professional and up-to-date places to learn. This is another factor that has a positive effect on the learning taking place, the behaviour and engagement of students, and the continued high levels of achievement.

Highlights from the year include:

- FE and HE Music students performed at the AoC Annual Conference
- student wins Outstanding IT Student of the Year at the National BTEC Awards
- computing student wins silver medal in WorldSkills and goes for gold in Birmingham November 2016
- College electrical student beats over 3,000 competitors to represent the South West at the National Electrical Apprentice of the Year competition
- art and design student wins the National BDC Award of Designer of the Year
- students secured work experience with Balfour Beatty during construction of the Weston College Academy

- sixth form student becomes British Maths Olympiad
- sports achievements: Kirby Ngan, Team GB Badminton, SW Colleges Badminton Champion; Chloe Edrich, SW Colleges Swimming Champion 200IM and Breaststroke; Charlie Bircham-Davies, South West England Counties Rugby; Alex Jones and Jack Richardson, Bath Rugby
- three IT and Computing students are to be called up for the next WorldSkills finals in Russia
- regional Skillbuild Gold winners in carpentry
- our media qualifications gained the industry-recognised Creative Skillset 'Tick' for quality
- engineering workshops open to full-time students and apprentices, including GKN and Ipeco apprentices
- bespoke civil engineering apprenticeship programme developed for the four West of England unitary authorities
- 49% of vocational students achieved the highest grades
- continued growth in recruitment in the numbers of 16 to 18-year-olds choosing to study full-time at the College
- continued growth in 16 to 18 apprenticeships in Law, Business, Engineering and Construction
- seamless support enabling learners from all backgrounds to succeed and progress
- focus on curriculum expansion in regional priority areas including Advanced Engineering, Creative and Digital, High-Tech and Professional Services
- record numbers of students being offered university places up by 4%.

This has been another outstanding year for our 16 to 18 curriculum. An improvement on our overall results continues to place us in the top 25% of colleges nationally and we continue to successfully enable 16 to 18-year-old learners to progress onto further study, higher education, work-based learning and employment.

The College has developed a strong programme of study methodology, designed to enable learners to develop the knowledge, skills and personal attributes necessary to successfully progress into further learning or into the world of work. Each learner's study programme is made up of the following elements:

- academic, vocational or technical qualifications
- maths and/or English skills development
- work experience and/or employability skills
- personal and social development
- independent study skills.

This curriculum framework, coupled with increased opportunities for learners to experience and get involved in competition work, social enterprise, volunteering, fund raising events and a range of sports and enrichment activities, has helped enable young people at Weston College to meet the 'success equation':

**Personal Development + Challenging Academic Progress = Success and Progression**



## Major profile change over 16 years just keeps improving year-on-year

Comparison table	2000	2015	2016
A Level achievement A*-E	69%	99%	99%
A Level achievement A*-B	23%	36%	41%
University-level courses	6	33	38
Number of full-time college courses (not including A Level courses)	45	100+	100+
Number of A Level courses *16 to 18-year-olds	23	26	28
Number of different apprenticeship areas	0	52	67

Student numbers	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
16 to 18 full-time	2,683	2,913	3,011

# Curriculum change: 19+ years



**Education and training for adults at Weston College is focused on developing the skills, attributes and behaviours they need to secure work, progress to higher paid roles or change careers. The curriculum considers and reflects the skills demanded by employers and industry, regionally and locally.**

In partnership with key stakeholders, the College has constructed and delivered a curriculum that supports:

- unemployed learners who need help into work
- learners wanting to secure their first full Level 2 or 3 qualification in a technical discipline
- learners to achieve key qualifications in English and maths
- learners who want to gain access to higher education
- learners to gain higher level qualifications
- learners who want to re-train and pursue a career in new professional or technical disciplines.

The College continues to invest in resources and facilities to help adults gain access to training in sectors that will drive and fuel the regional economy for the future. Examples include the

development of bespoke facilities for Engineering, future technologies and Law and Professional Services.

Highlights and key facts from 2015/16 include:

- successful delivery of over £5 million of adult-funded provision
- significant increase in the proportion of adult learners working towards and successfully completing maths and English qualifications. 34% of learner starts were in maths and English.
- more than £2 million worth of adult apprenticeships were delivered, up 23% compared to 2014/15
- expansion of Access to HE pathways: more than 94% of learners secured their first choice university place (19% above the national average for Access to HE programmes)
- more than 6,700 students studied towards funded qualifications



- 89% of adult learners who started their courses successfully achieved them
- 92.4% of adult learners had a positive progression outcome on completion of their courses
- 60% of Job Centre Plus referrals completing employment readiness training and support are in full employment within six months
- significant success with Sector Based Work Academies (SBWA) e.g. over 70% of participants in the Alliance Living Care SBWA's gained employment with the company.

**This quote from an Access student from 2016 encapsulates what adult education achieves for learners at Weston College:**

**“After years of being told I would never achieve, now so many doors are open, and I feel my dream job is within reach.”**



# SEND provision

(Special Educational Needs and Disability)

The specialist SEND provision for learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LDD) continues to expand at Weston College, offering inspiring, innovative and high quality programmes that continue to improve the progression opportunities for LDD learners as well as influencing the delivery of inclusive practice nationally.

## Supported Internship programme exceeds national average for LDD employment opportunities

The results for the 'Into Work' programme at Weston College - a structured programme of study for 16 to 24-year-olds with LDD who want to move into employment and need extra support to do so - have been incredible with:

- 100% success
- 55% progressing into higher level work based learning
- 45% of learners securing paid employment, which exceeds the national average of 6% of people with learning disabilities in paid employment.

## Students showcase 'Woodcutters Cottage' at the Malvern Show and win a Silver Royal Horticulture Society Award

A team of LDD students and staff won a Royal Horticulture Society silver medal for bringing a local gardener's designs to life and exhibited at the Malvern Spring Festival. The silver medal was presented to the team by the RHS Ambassador Mary Berry at the festival, which this year attracted over 90,000 visitors.

## South West achievement for Weston College LDD football academy students

A very successful season for the LDD Football Academy students ended on a high note when they were presented with certificates to mark their achievements by the Principal, Dr Paul Phillips OBE. Two teams of students qualified to represent the South West at the English Colleges Football Association Ability Counts National Cup Final, competing against 12 other colleges from around Britain.

"While this has been a challenging and hardworking experience, it has also been worthwhile and beneficial. Visiting St Georges Park was a 'bucket list' experience. I felt that the whole day was a chance for staff and students to work together as a team. Overall I feel this has given me the opportunity to learn and develop new skills for outside of football such as discipline, motivation and the confidence to try new things."

Anton Reynolds, student

## Bridging the gap - Weston Bay learner progresses to university

"Weston Bay staff and the autism team have been absolutely fantastic at giving Farrah all the support she needed both in and outside of college to complete her diploma for which she achieved a distinction this summer, as well as managing her independence.

"We highly recommend Weston Bay. It not only prepared my daughter for adulthood and university life - it prepared us too! You are all outstanding!"

### Parental feedback



## Local, regional, international initiatives

As a leader in the field of LDD, Weston College has extended its partnership links in this important field to include:

- a 'vision for the future' – a unique approach for SEND progression within North Somerset
- a collaborative approach for the Rainbow Project with Bristol stakeholders based around those with complex needs
- a showcase for best practice from international visitors. "I have to say we are deeply impressed by Weston College's provision for students with disabilities." Feedback from International Visitors Vienna.



# Curriculum change: University Centre Weston

UCW UNIVERSITY  
CENTRE  
WESTON



2015/16 will be remembered as a landmark year for higher education at Weston College due to an outstanding Higher Education Review along with the successful rebranding to University Centre Weston.

Reviewers from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) visited Weston College in April and the College's university-level provision and Higher Education Directorate achieved a commended outcome for the quality of student learning opportunities – the top judgement possible.

The review team also endorsed the overall academic standards in HE, could find nothing wrong, and made no recommendations for improvements. In fact, they highlighted four other areas where the College is excelling.

The QAA concluded that Weston College demonstrates good practice in the use of student and employer involvement in the design, development and validation of its degrees; has effective processes in place to support teaching practices; benefits from the professional and proactive approach of its support teams; and maintains productive working relationships with its partner universities, Bath Spa University and the University of the West of England Bristol.

Over the course of 2016, the Higher Education Directorate and Weston College's Marketing and Communications Department rebranded the College's longstanding HE provision to University Centre Weston, or UCW.

The new name – together with improvements to facilities, the launch of [ucw.ac.uk](http://ucw.ac.uk), and renewed marketing efforts through social media and innovative advertising – will be vital in order to meet the growth targets set out in the Higher Education Strategic Plan.

In August, the annual National Student Survey saw UCW students award it a score of 88% for 'overall satisfaction' – above the sector average of 80% – and placed the institution in the top quartile of HE providers in Britain in the categories of 'assessment and feedback', 'academic support' and 'personal development'.

A successful launch of the Foundation Degree in Games and Animation Production was followed during the academic year by approval for new programmes in Aerospace Engineering Manufacturing, Environmental Health and Practice, Professional and Commercial Dance, and Professional Music Performance and Production.

UCW also continues to outperform national averages in key degree-level benchmarks: almost a quarter of honours students achieve First Class degrees and 93% of 2015's graduates were in further study or employment within six months of graduating.



# Apprenticeships: new futures for learners

Weston College has an extensive apprenticeship offer that looks to meet the needs of businesses. Our approach is to work in partnership with organisations to help them understand how apprenticeships can be used as an integral part of their recruitment and training strategy.

The College is investing in new areas of apprenticeship delivery. For example, we are expanding our range of construction and engineering apprenticeships to help narrow the national skills shortages in this sector, support the opportunities that will be created by the Hinkley Point C development and other large infrastructure projects, and also to prepare for the impact these major initiatives will have on smaller building projects in the region.

Our apprenticeship provision spans all the key sectors in the region including Health, Construction, Engineering, Business and Professional Services, Hospitality and Catering as well as many more traditional apprenticeships such as Hair and Beauty. We offer programmes from intermediate through to higher levels and are developing a number of degree apprenticeships in partnership with UWE Bristol.



With so many changes to the funding and delivery of apprenticeships Weston College has set up a Levy Solution Service for all employers who want to understand how these changes will impact on them and, of course, how they maximise their Levy contribution. We can help them learn how to take advantage of the government funding and incentives for non-levy paying employers. Our team of advisors can help with information around funding, planning and designing bespoke approaches to enable you to embed apprenticeship in your business.

The College also offers a free recruitment service helping you make the most of the talent pool of students that the College has but also advertising your vacancies nationally and regionally to get the best calibre of candidates for you.

However, apprenticeships are not just about recruiting new staff or indeed young people – you can also use the funding to support existing staff, regardless of age, to re-train, and up-skill employees. The new degree apprenticeships offer a fantastic opportunity for professional development in areas such as IT.



# Offender Learning Services

Weston College is a top performing provider of offender and detainee learning recognised for:

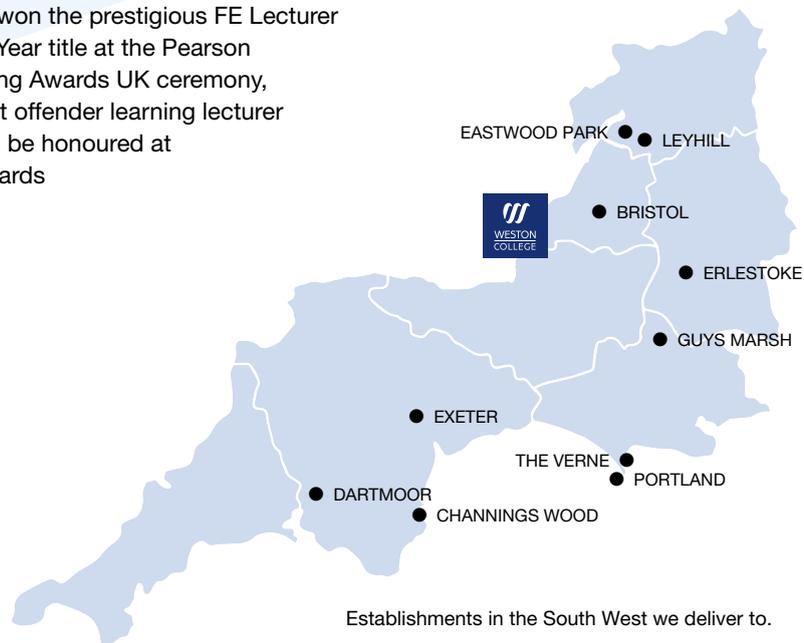
- total learner focus
- prison/IRC partnership approach to business planning to ensure each establishment's curriculum meets both learners' and employers' needs
- excellent teaching, learning and assessment
- consistently high success rates particularly for functional skills
- prioritisation of full Level 2 qualifications to improve employability
- robust and accurate quality assurance
- strong leadership and management
- meeting key financial targets every year of the contract
- a positive and aspirational 'can do' attitude.

## Highlights

- positive contribution to 'Unlocking Potential' - the review of education in prisons and hosting successful visits to prisons for Coates Review panel members
- aligned future actions with Governors to prioritise and promote a whole prison approach to education
- 83% lesson observation grades at good or better – an improvement of 8% from previous year
- three very positive HMIP/Ofsted inspections at HMP Exeter, HMP Leyhill and HMP Channings Wood, with reports awaited
- the recycling lecturer from Channings Wood won the prestigious FE Lecturer of the Year title at the Pearson Teaching Awards UK ceremony, the first offender learning lecturer ever to be honoured at the awards

- the OLASS teams from HMP Dartmoor and IRC The Verne both received Certificates of Excellence from the Pearson Teaching Awards
- the Curriculum Manager from IRC The Verne was shortlisted in the national Excellence in Diversity Awards
- 'Creating Brighter Futures' shortlisted for the 2016 national Association of Colleges' Beacon Gateway Award for Widening Participation – another first for offender and detainee learning
- a successful Institute of Leadership and Management-endorsed leadership programme for OLASS managers was delivered
- introduction of the new accredited induction programme for staff working in custodial environments with units for managers, teaching staff and administrators
- support provided to the prisons to improve quality assurance, preparation for inspection and the successful delivery of the Award in Teaching to the Band 4 prison instructors
- advanced practitioners had a positive impact supporting teaching staff in the prisons
- success rate of 95% for all vocational courses
- success rate of 75% for Functional Skills English and Maths

- installation of the "Do It Profiler" to support learners' progress by enabling assessment of learning needs and recommending individual support to improve own learning and performance
- successful embedding of English, maths, employability and personal and social development in all subjects
- Celebration of Success events for learners in all prisons including family attendance to support and strengthen relationships
- piloted Level 3 unit delivery to provide progression for learners and introduced Level 3 Sage Diploma at Dartmoor
- ex-offenders secured employment on release in many sectors including hospitality and catering, cleaning, construction, manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, recycling and barbering plus specialist niche markets such as dry stone walling
- commencement of the mattress recycling programme at Channings Wood, embedding qualifications and leading to interviews for employment on release
- establishment of the Releasing New Potential Community Interest Company (CIC) developing social enterprises in the prisons
- support for Soap Baa – a new business established on release by women from Eastwood Park
- six of the South West prisons achieved awards in the Reading Agency's annual Reading Ahead challenge including two prisons achieving Gold Awards - Eastwood Park and Erlestoke
- from over 8,500 entries in the national creative arts Koestler Awards competition, there were 118 prize winners from eight of the South West prisons and from the IRC – including one Platinum Award from Leyhill; five Gold Awards from Channings Wood, Erlestoke, Guys Marsh and Leyhill; and four Silver Awards from Bristol, Channings Wood and Exeter
- one exceptional ceramicist from Erlestoke was offered a place on The Koestler Trust Scholarship Arts Mentoring Award pathway and will receive up to ten free mentoring sessions over a 12-month period from an experienced ceramics mentor. These sessions begin in custody and then extend into the community on release to support resettlement
- organisation of the inaugural creative art competition, 'A Brush With Nature', for offenders and detainees, culminating in an art exhibition at Weston College in September 2016
- innovative projects undertaken in IRC The Verne – collaboration with the Red Cross on a music project with Robert Plant to support displaced people worldwide and the establishment of the Bikes for Africa workshop developing bicycle maintenance skills and working with the charity to send refurbished cycles to Africa where they are often the only form of transport to school or work.



Establishments in the South West we deliver to.

Learner Engagement and Achievement	
Total Number of Learners	4,211
Total Number of Assessments - English and Maths	8,169
Total Number of Qualifications Achieved	7,749



# Bringing investment to the West of England

The Weston College Group has invested more than £50 million in creating some of the very best learning environments in the West of England, and beyond.

These fantastic facilities will not only benefit learners across the country but also the local community.

Dr Paul Phillips OBE, Principal and Chief Executive of Weston College Group, said: “This investment demonstrates the magnitude of expertise that the College can bring to creating buildings which exceed the normal standard of educational accommodation offered to learners.

“I believe they will set the scene for a dynamic learning environment for the future.”

## Weston College Academy

This is the £15 million home of the North Somerset Enterprise and Technology College, a STEM-focused (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) school with strong links to businesses and employers. The new-build contains innovative ‘super-labs’, a science terrace, indoor and outdoor sports facilities plus design and technology workshops.

## Future Technology Centre

This £4 million investment provides a high-tech learning environment for the engineers of the future. It brings together top-of-the-range engineering equipment and industry professionals to deliver the most advanced engineering qualifications in the Somerset and Bristol area.

## Law and Professional Services Academy

This is a unique flagship enterprise to provide industry-recognised vocational routes into employment. It offers courses in law and justice services, finance and accountancy, and professional services such as leadership and management, HR and event management.

## University Centre Weston

University Centre Weston (UCW) is the new name for the Weston College Group’s university-level provision, following Weston College being awarded university centre status last year by the University of the West of England Bristol, (having already achieved this status with Bath Spa University). UCW will be based in the redeveloped rear section of the Winter Gardens site, which will contain a library, lecture rooms and computer suites. The historic Pavilion portion of the building – including the iconic ballroom – is being refurbished and will remain available for community use.

Other investments over the 2015/16 year include:

- a £115,000 3G multi-use sports pitch was opened on the site of the former Grove Park tennis courts.
- a £2.5 million engineering training centre was officially opened.



# The impact on students



## NHS Apprentice

"I chose to take a higher apprenticeship at North Bristol NHS Trust because it was a more appealing route than the traditional university degree."

"Weston College has very strong links with local NHS Trusts, and was able to help me secure a placement at the South Bristol Dialysis Unit."

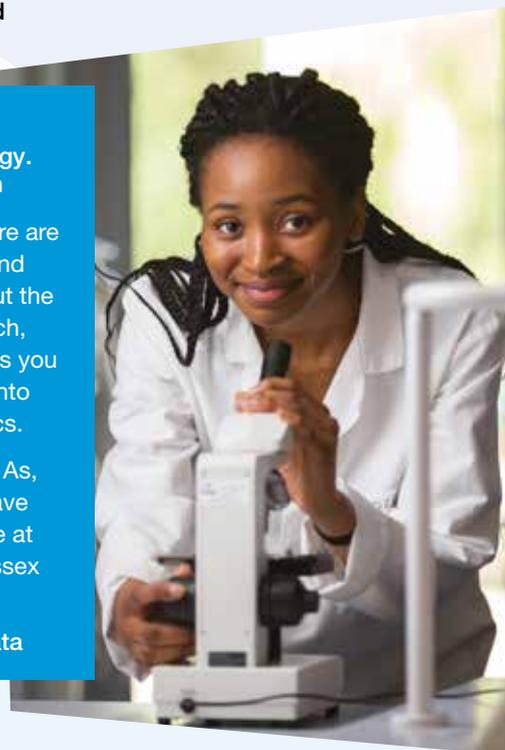
**Amy Sheppard**

**A Levels: Maths, Chemistry, Biology. AS Level: French**

"The teachers here are really engaging and enthusiastic about the courses they teach, which encourages you to delve deeper into the different topics."

"I achieved three As, which means I have secured my place at Brighton and Sussex Medical School."

**Anjolaoluwa Apata**



## IT Practitioner

"Studying at Weston College has given me a deeper understanding of computing, and has helped me to find employment in the IT department at Thatchers Cider."

"The teachers have a great understanding of their subjects and are able to share this knowledge and experience with their students."

**Jacob Coates**

**Access to Higher Education: Nursing, Health and Social Care**

"Studying at Weston College was one of the most rewarding years of my life. It has opened my mind to different ways of thinking, and a whole new world of possibilities for the future."

"I have grown in confidence and self-belief, and now I can look forward to studying at university."

**Graham Honeybourne**



## IT Practitioner

"Weston College has enabled me to improve my web development and employability skills, and has shown me what I can achieve in such a short period of time."

"I was very proud to be selected for the WorldSkills UK team, which will give me the opportunity to demonstrate my creative and technical skills in a live competition environment."

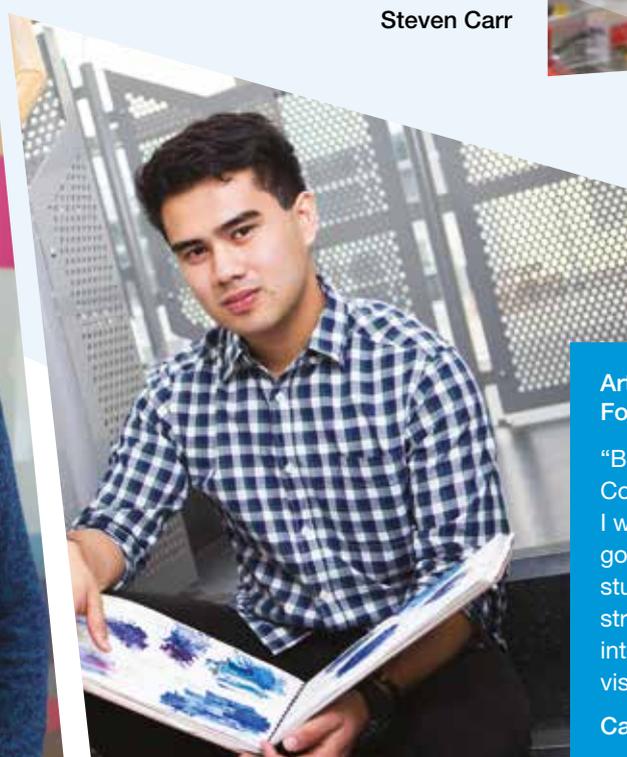
**Jordan Tucker**

## Engineering Apprentice

"Weston College has supported me throughout the course, and has taught me the transferable skills that I need to become a better engineer."

"The facilities at the College are impeccable; the workshops are spacious and full of equipment and all the resources you need to learn about engineering."

**Steven Carr**



**Art and Design UAL Foundation Diploma**

"Before coming to Weston College, I had no idea of what I wanted to do or how I was going to accomplish it, but studying here has given me structure and a clear direction into the expansive world of visual design."

**Carlo Hornilla**

# The impact on employers

## “Priddy Engineering’s core values are underpinned by a collaborative partnership ethos.”

This year we have strengthened a positive interdependency with Weston College. They have a fundamental objective of meeting the demands of business and matching this with the education and skills needed. Our business has been strengthened not just by the learners we have who attend the College, but also by the relationship the College is building with industry. They are a fully inclusive learning centre, with objectives that look at future needs and supporting business. We have been part of the development of new facilities that support the engineering industry. The College listens to employers like us and works to meet the challenges we face in the changing skills landscape. We are delighted to have a partner in Weston College.”

Andrew Blunsdon, Managing Director, Priddy Engineering Services Ltd

## “We have continued to nurture our relationship with Weston College, focusing on apprenticeships and professional qualifications.”

This year has seen a new development with the Business Enterprise Centre, which provided a strategic planning document on the Apprenticeship Levy and a sector-specific apprenticeship standard. With our growing network of contacts we have within the College, we now run sector-based work academies to support our recruitment activity, work trials and experience sessions via Team North Somerset. We have even sponsored events with student support to raise money for local charities. We clearly believe Weston College is a strategic partner as we continue to grow and develop our staff for the future.”

Katie Dominy, Head of HR, Castelan Group

## “At the heart of Dribuild Group’s values is providing a consistent approach for collaborative working within our local communities, and the reciprocal support we get from Weston College has greatly enhanced this.”

Our synergies with Weston College have complemented the partnership we have enjoyed this year and we are delighted to have been able to support so many students.

“We hope this partnership has been of benefit to young learners by providing not only financial assistance but also additional opportunities within their learning journey.

“This is a relationship that has truly added value on both sides and is a unique success to be proud of. We look forward to this continuing for many years to come.”

Matt Tyler, Managing Director, Dribuild Group

## “The relationship we have with Weston College is one of working in collaboration to achieve a high standard of Early Years practitioners.”

“The apprentice scheme has meant that we, as employers, have been able to offer staff the chance to train while they work; also, we know that they are trained to our very high standards.

“Even after they have finished their Level 3, a large majority of our staff go on to do the degree at the College. Weston College has always delivered a high level of education, communication, help and support. We always recommend them to others in our sector.”

Bernadette Rosewell, Area Manager, The Honey Tree Day Nursery and Preschool

# Facts and figures

More and more people and organisations are choosing the Weston College Group for their education and training needs as a result of our reputation for educational excellence, fantastic facilities and proven progression.

The Weston College Group remains financially stable while carefully investing to ensure we offer a continually-evolving diverse provision.

## Weston College Group financial statement – 12 months ended 31 July 2016

Income	(000's)	Expenditure	(000's)
Funding body grants	42,627	Staffing costs	35,938
Tuition fees & educational contracts	11,454	Other operating expenses	15,621
Other income	701	Depreciation	1,057
Investment income	104	Interest and other financial costs	794
<b>Total income</b>	<b>54,886</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>53,410</b>
Operating surplus/deficit	1,476		

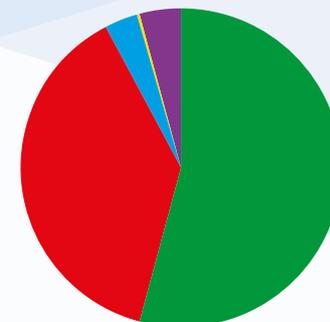
Source: year-end management accounts

All accounts unaudited and subject to approval at time of going to print.

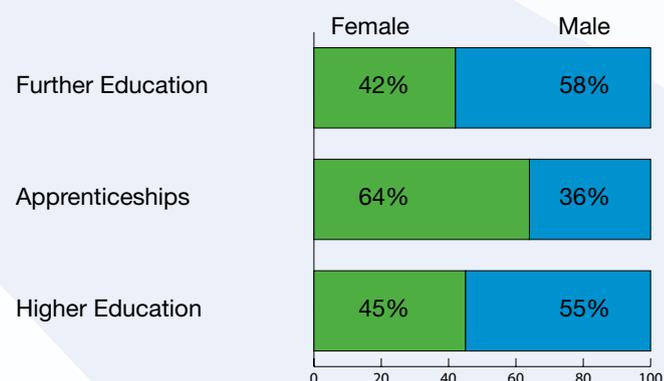
## Further and Higher Education enrolments

(Excluding offender learning)

Further Education (full-time)	13,468
Further Education (part-time)	9,409
Higher Education (full-time)	867
Higher Education (part-time)	27
Apprenticeships (inc. partners)	1,019
<b>Total enrolments</b>	<b>24,790</b>



## Percentage of enrolments by gender



Governor	Role	Background
Mark Canniford	Lead Governor for Safeguarding	Commercial
Chris Carter	Vice Chair of Corporation Chair of Finance Committee	Legal
Tim Cowley	Governor	Industry/Legal
Gemma Day	Governor	Commercial/Human Resources
Jude Ferguson	Chair of the Corporation Chair of Forward Futures Board Chair of Brighter Futures	Guidance
Andrew Leighton-Price	Governor Chair of Audit Committee	Audit/Finance
Jo Midgley	Vice Chair of Corporation Chair of HE Quality and Curriculum Committee	Education including Higher Education
John Penrose	Corporation Associate	MP Weston-super-Mare
Ian Porter	Lead Governor for Health and Safety	Industry
Dr George Reah	Vice Chair of Corporation Chair of FE Quality and Curriculum Chair of Offender Learning Services Board Chair of IFT	Industry
Sheila Smith	Governor	Education
Donna Turner-Kot	Vice Chair of Audit Committee	Industry
Fiona Waters	Staff Representative	Education
Maxine Park	Staff Representative	Education
Abigail Farrant	FE Student Governor	Student
Kasha Miller	HE Student Governor	Student
Dr Paul Phillips OBE	Principal and Chief Executive	Education, Business and Finance

A snapshot of the very latest news as the Annual Report went to press and a look ahead to the future

Weston College bids for a new project to develop wellbeing for the area, in partnership with North Somerset Council and Weston Area Health Trust.

New developments are occurring in support, allowing the SEND specialisms of Weston College to be applied to the higher education environment.

Weston College is approved to develop and run a new Teaching School.

Work is under way on revamping Weston-super-Mare's iconic Winter Gardens complex.

BBC Radio Bristol broadcast a live, three-hour, show from the Knightstone Campus, focused on the regeneration of Weston-super-Mare and North Somerset.

College Beacon Award success is recognised at the National Association of Colleges Conference.

Weston College embarks on new groundworks bid to complete the full offer in both Construction and Engineering.

[www.weston.ac.uk](http://www.weston.ac.uk)

[enquiries@weston.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@weston.ac.uk)

#### Knightstone Campus

Knightstone Road, Weston-super-Mare BS23 2AL  
01934 411 411

#### University Campus

Loxton Road, Weston-super-Mare BS23 4QU  
01934 411 600

#### South West Skills Campus

Locking Road, Weston-super-Mare BS22 8NL

Automotive Technology Centre (ATC)  
01934 411 777

Business Enterprise Centre (BEC)  
01934 411 594

Technology, Engineering and Construction Centre of Excellence (TEC)  
01934 411 777

#### North Somerset Enterprise and Technology College

Weston College Academy, Beaufighter Road, Weston-super-Mare BS24 8EE  
01934 411 611



Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained within this publication is fair and accurate at the time of going to press. However, the courses, services and other information included may be subject to changes from time to time. Consequently no guarantee can be given that changes will not be made following publication due to circumstances beyond our control.