

# Westminster Kingsway College

## Inspection report

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**Unique reference number:** 103421

**Name of lead inspector:** Alex Falconer HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 1 April 2011

**Type of provider:** General further education college

**Address:** 211 Gray's Inn Road  
King's Cross  
London  
WC1X 8RA

**Telephone number:** 0870 060 9801

## Information about the provider

1. Westminster Kingsway College is a large general further education college (GFE) in central London. It operates on sites across Camden and Westminster, including a new building at King's Cross completed in 2009. The college also provides community programmes at centres across both boroughs. Around 13,000 learners enrol each year, of whom 80% study on a part-time basis. Over half the learners are aged 16 to 18 and around a third of the learners are over the age of 21. The college offers courses that lead to a wide range of vocational, academic, professional and technical qualifications. Many learners enrol on foundation or intermediate level programmes. In 2009/10 around half of the enrolments to the college were in preparation for life and work, while health and care, hospitality and catering, arts and media, and business and administration made up nearly a third. An increasing number of work-based learners follow apprenticeship programmes in a range of subject areas.
2. Both Westminster and Camden have areas of affluence close by areas of high deprivation, which are characterised by high levels of child poverty, poor-quality housing, and crime. Just over a quarter of residents are from minority ethnic backgrounds and more than half the learners at the college define their ethnic origin as other than white. Most local businesses have fewer than 25 employees and business services, retail and hospitality are the largest employment sectors. There are sixteen local authority secondary schools in the two boroughs, and all but one has sixth form provision. The attainments of Year 11 pupils locally have improved and in 2009/10 around two thirds achieved five grades A\* to C at GCSE.
3. The college's mission is to 'support all of its learners in realising their ambitions as learners within a diverse and fully inclusive educational community'.
4. The college provides training on behalf of the following providers:
  - City University
  - South Bank University
  - London Borough of Camden
  - Compass Limited
  - Travelodge
  - Ministry of Defence
  - London Borough of Islington
  - The British Council
  - ISS UK
  - London Borough of Southwark
  - The Royal Opera House
  - BBC

- London Borough of Westminster.
5. The following organisations provide training on behalf of the college:
- Senate Training Limited
  - Exchange Group
  - Oracle Training Limited.

<b>Type of provision</b>	<b>Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10</b>
<p><b>Provision for young learners:</b> 14 to 16</p> <p>Further education (16 to 18)</p>	<p>189 full-time learners</p> <p>1,747 full-time learners 283 part-time learners</p>
<p><b>Provision for adult learners:</b> Further education (19+)</p>	<p>1,326 full-time learners 6,304 part-time learners</p>
<p><b>Employer provision:</b> Train to Gain Apprenticeships</p>	<p>1,908 learners 463 apprentices</p>

## Summary report

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of provision</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>
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<b>Capacity to improve</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>
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	<b>Grade</b>
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	2

<b>Subject areas</b>	
Health and social care	<b>2</b>
Science and mathematics	<b>3</b>
Hospitality and catering	<b>1</b>
English for speakers of other languages	<b>2</b>
Preparation for life and work	<b>2</b>
Business and administration	<b>3</b>

## Overall effectiveness

- Westminster Kingsway College is a good college with good capacity to sustain improvements. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory overall, although outcomes for learners aged 14 to 16 are outstanding and those for trainees on work-based programmes are good. The quality of provision across the college is good. Hospitality and catering provision, which has around 1,500 enrolments each year, is outstanding. Inspectors judged the provision in health and care, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and preparation for life and work, which together make up over half the enrolments each year, to be good. The provision for science and mathematics has improved and is satisfactory. Learners' attendance is satisfactory, although punctuality is poor in some subject areas in the mornings. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall because learners' experience of lessons is too variable.

7. The range of courses at the college is good and meets the diverse needs of the central London communities the college serves. The college's work with its partners is outstanding and learners receive good care, guidance and support. Leadership and management are good and promote a strong culture of performance management. Procedures for safeguarding learners and the promotion of equality and diversity are both judged to be good. Although self-assessment and quality assurance are rigorous, the college does not use lesson observation fully enough to have a complete picture of the quality of teaching and learning across the college. The financial health of the college is sound; managers have met recent recruitment targets and the college provides satisfactory value for money.

## Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Learners' attainments in hospitality and 14 to 16 programmes are outstanding, and they are good in work-based learning, health and care, ESOL and preparation for life and work. However, the proportion of learners who successfully complete their qualifications remains satisfactory for the rest of the college's provision.
- The proportion of learners who complete their courses improved slightly in 2009/10 and attendance is satisfactory overall. Punctuality, however, is variable across the college and can be low before mid-morning.
- Learners make progress in their studies and training at levels predicted by their prior attainment. They enjoy their work and gain in confidence, qualifications and employability skills. While progress is satisfactory in around half of the college provision, pupils aged 14 to 16 and learners in hospitality and catering make excellent progress.
- The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Inspection evidence revealed variations in learners' experiences between, and within, subject areas. Teachers use a wide range of authentic materials and tasks to help learners develop their knowledge and skills. A minority of lessons, though, are dull and fail to maintain learners' interest.
- Assessment practice is satisfactory. Learners usually receive prompt feedback when undertaking practical tasks at college and also in workplace settings. Their individual learning plans do not always contain measurable and up-to-date targets to help them make good progress.
- The range of courses is good. The college offers clear progression routes from entry level to advanced level and higher education. The college is responsive to local needs and uses local information well to plan provision.
- Collaborative work with partner organisations is outstanding. Highly successful partnerships have resulted in significant numbers of learners, many of whom were previously disengaged from education, successfully following courses that meet their needs. Employers and community partners speak very highly of the college and its commitment to enabling people to gain access to high-quality education and training.

- Learners receive good care, guidance and support. Initial advice and guidance are helpful and enable learners to make informed choices about their future. A good range of support services is available for learners and they benefit from useful specialist advice on careers, higher education, finance, health and welfare and legal matters.
- Leadership and management are good and a clear strategic vision is effectively communicated to the staff. The college is developing a strong culture of performance management, although it does not yet fully evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.
- Procedures for safeguarding learners are good. Very nearly all staff and governors have completed appropriate safeguarding training and they have good awareness of safeguarding issues. Criminal record and other checks are carried out for all staff, governors and volunteers and centrally recorded.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Promotional activities and marketing materials are vibrant and fully represent central London's diverse communities.
- Arrangements for collecting and using the views of learners, employers and other stakeholders are good. A high proportion of learners participate in questionnaires and the results generally show high levels of satisfaction with the college.
- Self-assessment and quality assurance procedures are comprehensive and rigorous. However, some teachers choose not to comply with the college lesson observation system, despite management sanctions. As a result, managers do not have a complete picture of the quality of teaching and learning. Managers are making progress in ensuring that all teachers are observed.
- The financial health of the college is sound. Financial management and control measures are good. Managers have responded well to national changes in funding strategies and learners' recruitment targets were met fully in the previous year. The college has invested heavily in information technology (IT) equipment and this is used well both for teaching and monitoring performance.

### **What does Westminster Kingsway College need to do to improve further?**

- Raise success rates through a more consistent and effective approach to managing punctuality, target setting and tutorials for learners.
- Raise the standard and consistency of teaching and learning by improving the rigour of the lesson observation system and ensuring that all teachers participate. Use the findings of lesson observations to provide high-quality training where needed.

### **Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors**

#### **What learners like:**

- support provided by staff

- accommodation at King's Cross, especially the social spaces
- being treated respectfully
- educational visits
- individual learning support
- cultural diversity
- the friendliness of the college
- advice and guidance about careers.

**What learners would like to see improved:**

- access to computers at the Victoria site
- long queues during enrolment
- the late return of marked work by some tutors.

**Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors**

**What employers like:**

- the college's flexibility in meeting training needs
- regular contact with tutors and assessors
- employability skills gained by learners
- good quality feedback on learners' progress
- the college's willingness to share its facilities.

**What employers would like to see improved:**

- occasional delays in forwarding paperwork.

## Main inspection report

### Capacity to make and sustain improvement

**Grade 2**

8. The overall effectiveness of the college was judged to be good at the last inspection and the college has made further improvements to sustain this level of performance. Most of the strengths highlighted in the previous inspection have been consolidated. Many of the aspects reported as key weaknesses then are now improved, with increased success rates for key skills programmes, a strong culture of sharing good practice and effective management action to tackle areas of poor performance. However, outcomes for learners and the overall quality of teaching and learning remain satisfactory.
9. The college continues to have rigorous quality assurance procedures, characterised by a strong ethos of performance management, that drive forward improvements. The self-assessment process is comprehensive and largely accurate. Staff show a huge willingness to identify and rectify weaknesses. However, a major hurdle to further improvement is the lesson observation system, which currently does not involve all members of staff and is therefore not a comprehensive system for assessing the quality of teaching and learning. The college has many strong features, including some outstanding and good subject areas, the high-quality accommodation at the King's Cross site, good financial health, outstanding work with partners and strong leadership and management, which provide good capacity for further improvements.

### Outcomes for learners

**Grade 3**

10. Outcomes for learners are satisfactory. Over the past two years success rates for learners aged 16 to 18 have remained at recent national averages for similar colleges. Success rates for adult learners declined slightly in 2009/10 and were below national averages. However, success rates for 14- to 16-year-old learners were very high and those for work-based learning were above national rates. For example, qualifications successfully completed by apprentices within the required time were well above the national rates in 2009/10. Outcomes for learners on foundation programmes, both 16 to 18 and adults, were above national averages. Success rates at intermediate and advanced levels both for long and short courses, the bulk of the college provision, remained at or around national averages.
11. Retention rates for learners improved slightly in 2009/10 and were above recent national averages. Again, foundation learners have the highest rates and those for learners on ESOL programmes and, more recently, on science and mathematics courses have significantly improved. Learners' attendance is satisfactory overall, but was low on business programmes during the inspection. Recent strategies to improve attendance have begun to have a positive impact. Punctuality, however, varies across the college and can be low before mid-morning in science and mathematics, ESOL and business provision.



12. Overall, learners make progress in their studies and training at levels predicted by their prior attainment. Pass rates, in 2009/10, were high for learners and trainees on 14 to 16 provision, apprenticeships, hospitality and catering, ESOL and health and care. However, pass rates for the remainder of the college provision were satisfactory and a minority were poor. Male and female learners have broadly similar attainment and learners who receive additional learning support show success rates in line with, and sometimes above, those of their peers. Retention rates are similar for different ethnic groups in the college. However, in 2009/10, attainments for some learners from minority ethnic backgrounds were below college averages. Teachers and managers are aware of this and have analysed the historical data. This work indicates no clear pattern of under achievement. Teachers and tutors are taking steps to identify more quickly those learners making less progress and to support them. It is too early to judge the impact of these measures.
13. Learners enjoy their studies and training and gain in confidence, qualifications and employability skills. Whilst progress is satisfactory in around half of the college provision, learners in hospitality and catering make excellent progress. They successfully develop the skills and techniques that enable them to find employment in a range of prestigious restaurants and hotels in London. Standards of learners' work are also good in health and care, ESOL and preparation for life and work. Often, links with employers allow learners to gain additional experience and skills to enable them to progress with confidence to further study or employment.
14. Learners say they feel safe in the college campuses and safe working practices were observed during the inspection. They particularly like the social spaces at King's Cross. Through a good variety of events and activities, the learners are able to develop their understanding of personal responsibilities and safety and make informed choices about adopting healthy lifestyles. In addition, they successfully make positive contributions to local communities through fundraising for charities and other activities.

## **The quality of provision**

## **Grade 2**

15. The quality of provision across the college is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The college judges teaching and learning to be good, but inspection evidence revealed variation in learners' experiences between, and within, subject areas. The quality of lessons, workshops and reviews ranges from inspirational to inadequate, with the majority lying between these extremes.
16. In the very best sessions, most notably in hospitality, learners and teachers exude passion and pride in their work and have high expectations of what they can achieve. In the good or better lessons, for example, in pharmacy and ESOL, teachers skilfully ensure that all learners achieve to their full potential, using a wide range of authentic materials and tasks. Increasingly, teachers are using video, audio and internet facilities effectively to help learners develop their knowledge and skills.

17. A minority of lessons, though, are dull and fail to maintain learners' interest. Often, this is because teachers do not take into account what learners already know or can do and they do not make best use of individual learning plans. A small minority of teachers are not consistent, or always effective, in the way in which they manage lessons where learners arrive late and/or misbehave, particularly in business, science and mathematics, and on access courses.
18. Assessment practice is satisfactory. Teachers and assessors provide learners with prompt feedback and positive reinforcement, particularly when they are undertaking practical tasks at college and in workplace settings. However, teachers do not always provide sufficient guidance to learners about what they have done well or what they need to do to improve their work, either in oral feedback in lessons or written comments on assignments.
19. The range of courses available to learners is good. The college offers clear and well-established progression routes in most subjects from entry level to advanced level and higher education. The college is responsive to local needs and uses needs analysis information well to plan provision. Working in partnership with a wide range of employers and other partners, and in response to local demand, the college provides apprenticeships in vocational areas including hospitality and catering, business administration, facilities management and creative and cultural industries. Some very successful curriculum development has taken place in response to identified need, for example the 'Next Step' courses for over 400 learners, which combine language learning and support with vocational skills. The college is successful in widening participation through its foundation and intermediate programmes and its community-based provision. In addition, the college provides for almost 200 pupils aged 14 to 16, many of whom have been excluded from mainstream schools.
20. The college's development of partnerships is outstanding. Highly successful and productive partnerships have resulted in significant numbers of learners following courses which meet their needs. Many of these learners were previously disengaged from education and training. Employers and community partners speak very highly of the college and its commitment to enabling people to gain access to high-quality education and training. The college's strategic vision and curriculum are aligned well with local and national priorities. Partnerships with Camden and other London boroughs are strong and the college is viewed as a key player in many local and regional strategic priorities, such as developing programmes for those not in employment, education or training, and economic development in central London. Collaborations in hospitality and catering are particularly strong and involve, for example, development work with Sector Skills Councils and the provision of very successful apprenticeship schemes to meet skills shortages. Employers make good contributions to curriculum development, ensuring courses remain up to date and serve industry's needs well.
21. Learners receive good care, guidance and support. Initial advice and guidance are helpful and enable learners to make informed choices about courses and

careers. A good range of support services is available for learners and they benefit from useful specialist advice on careers, higher education, finance, health and welfare and legal matters. Some of these services are provided in partnership with specialist external agencies. There is a good service provided by Connexions. Of particular note is the college intensive support service which last year handled over 500 referrals for a wide range of reasons. Learners receive effective assessment of their abilities in literacy and numeracy at the time of their initial interview.

22. Pastoral and tutorial support for learners are good and a wide range of additional support mechanisms is in place. Learners benefit from the support they receive and individual support for literacy is particularly valued. Full-time learners benefit from tutorial support in the form of group tutorials and individual meetings with tutors. However, the quality of tutorials is inconsistent. Teachers and tutors monitor learners' progress well and regularly carry out helpful reviews of their progress. Parents, carers and guardians are kept well informed through regular reports and meetings. Target setting for learners has improved, but some targets in individual learning plans are not sufficiently measurable and so do not help learners improve.
23. Teachers receive helpful information and advice on how to support identified learners, but in some instances this is not always followed. There is a good range of enrichment activities on offer, but participation rates are low.

## **Leadership and management**

## **Grade 2**

24. The Principal, senior managers and governors are clear in their strategic vision and communicate this effectively to the staff. Senior managers have made changes which have given staff more accountability and responsibility for their work, and have successfully encouraged an ethos of open communication and strong teamwork. The college is developing a strong culture of performance management, although it does not yet evaluate the quality of teaching and learning comprehensively. A successful accommodation strategy has resulted in high-quality accommodation at King's Cross. Outstanding work with partner organisations has enabled many individuals who may not otherwise have participated in education and training to do so. Provision in hospitality is exemplary and good in other subject areas. Overall success rates dipped slightly in 2009/10, although current in-year retention rates indicate that they will improve this academic year.
25. The college benefits from good governance. Governors have a wide range of skills and provide critical challenge to managers, along with high levels of support. They work well with managers to monitor the overall performance of the college and use their collective professional experience wisely to influence the strategic direction. Committee work is very robust and thorough. The standard of clerking is exemplary. The clerk supports the work of the governing body extremely well and the standard of minutes and supporting papers for meetings is very high. Links between governors and some subject areas are strong, although generally this is not the case.

26. Procedures for safeguarding learners are good. A designated member of staff, with six deputies, ensures safeguarding has a high priority throughout the college. The college safeguarding committee has overseen the production of comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures which are implemented effectively. Close links are established with a broad range of relevant external agencies, including the Metropolitan Police, to help keep learners safe. Learners feel the college is a safe place to learn. Almost all staff and governors have completed appropriate safeguarding training and they have good awareness of safeguarding issues. Staff who teach school pupils aged 14 to 16 receive additional, relevant training. Policies are in place to protect learners against cyber bullying. Criminal Records Bureau and other checks are carried out for all staff, governors and volunteers. This information is recorded on a single register, although records for the checking of references and qualifications are held separately as paper copies. Health and safety procedures are comprehensive. Risk assessments are carried out systematically for all relevant activities, with good monitoring of incidents and accidents, including near misses.
27. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Promotional activities and marketing materials are vibrant and fully represent central London's diverse communities, as does the student body. Staff enable learners to celebrate the college's cultural diversity well and promote the college's ethos of tolerance and respect. The college is very inclusive in its intake of learners, providing many opportunities for disadvantaged individuals. Almost all staff have undertaken training to raise their awareness of equality and diversity matters, and discuss these topics with learners in a sensitive and intelligent way in most subject areas. The college's equality and diversity committee ensures that the college fully meets all its legal duties regarding anti-discrimination. Almost all of the college's estate is accessible to learners with restricted mobility. The proportion of staff of minority ethnic heritage is greater than that of the surrounding population. However, the proportion of minority ethnic governors and senior managers is low and they are seeking to redress the balance. Managers evaluate learners' outcomes, complaints, disciplinary hearings and other key performance indicators closely to monitor the performance of different groups. Analyses show no discernible trend of under performance by specific groups.
28. Arrangements for collecting the views of learners, employers and other stakeholders are good. A high proportion of learners participate in questionnaires and the results generally show high levels of satisfaction with the college. Staff value the views of learners highly. They discuss them with learners and consider them carefully when reviewing the quality of provision and at team meetings, leading to improvements. Most courses have student representatives who meet with staff regularly, although they do not always attend course team meetings. Student ambassadors represent the college well at events such as open days. A disability advisory group ensures the voice of this vulnerable group of learners is reported and acted upon. The views of employers and other stakeholders are treated very seriously by relevant curriculum managers.

29. Self-assessment and quality assurance procedures are comprehensive and rigorous. However, some staff choose not to comply with the college lesson observation system, despite management sanctions. As a result, managers do not have a complete picture of the quality of teaching and learning. Managers are making progress in ensuring that all teachers are observed. Course teams meet regularly and all staff are involved fully in the self-assessment process. Judgements in the self-assessment report are accurate, although the college's assessment of learners' outcomes and the overall effectiveness of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was over generous. Management information is readily accessible and accurate, enabling managers to monitor the performance of learners systematically.
30. The financial health of the college is sound. Financial management and control measures are good. Partly as learners' outcomes are no better than satisfactory, value for money is also satisfactory. Managers have responded well to national changes in funding strategies and learners' recruitment targets were met fully in the previous year. The college has invested heavily in information technology equipment and this is used well both for teaching and monitoring performance. Staff are well qualified and receive good professional training. Resources, including staff and rooms, are utilised very efficiently. The building of the new site at King's Cross was accomplished within budget and to timescale and provides learners with a high-quality learning environment.

## Subject areas

### Health and social care

### Grade 2

#### Context

31. Of the 684 learners in health and social care, the majority are on full-time programmes ranging from entry level through to advanced level. Over 300 are 16- to 18-year-olds and are enrolled on BTEC qualifications. Most full-time adult learners are on access to higher education programmes. At entry and intermediate level, ESOL is embedded alongside the vocational study. Currently, 141 learners are on part-time courses in childcare and pharmacy at intermediate and advanced level. Years 10 and 11 pupils from local schools are taking young apprenticeship programmes in health and social care.

#### Key findings

- Success rates are high on all health and social care, childcare National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) at level 3 and access to higher education provision. Access to nursing and foundation level health and social care success rates improved significantly in 2009/10.
- Success rates on the level 2 NVQ in children's care, learning and development course are low, although current retention and attainment rates indicate an improving trend.
- Learners produce a high standard of vocationally-relevant work. They bring good examples from work experience to share in lessons. Learners on the BTEC certificate in pharmacy value opportunities to share working practices, extending their knowledge of other workplaces such as hospitals or high street pharmacies.
- Learners feel safe in the college and are clear about how to report incidents of bullying and harassment. Security arrangements at the entrance to the college are valued by learners.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most lessons include good learning activities that are highly effective in supporting learners' understanding of how theory links to good vocational practice. For example, teachers explain how to make story telling interesting and how to give advice effectively to patients when dispensing prescriptions. The small proportion of weaker lessons, mainly on access programmes, are dull and lack challenge.
- Assessment of learners' work is good. Assignments are well written and vocationally relevant. Teachers provide prompt feedback on written work, and clear guidance to learners on how to improve. However, for learners on access programmes, teachers do not always adhere to assessment deadlines and feedback is slow.
- The range of provision to meet the needs and interests of learners is good. Programmes are available from entry level 3 to advanced level. Entry and foundation level courses include ESOL support alongside vocational learning in

order to meet the needs of the learners. The BTEC pharmacy qualification is highly valued by learners and employers.

- Links with employers and higher education are good and teachers successfully use these relationships to enhance the curriculum. The wide range of visiting speakers gives a real insight into the world of work and university. Employers make a positive contribution to the development of vocationally-relevant assignments.
- Tutorial support for learners is inconsistent in quality. Tutorials on BTEC and child care programmes are good. Tutors effectively mix pastoral and academic support and set realistic targets for learners. Tutorials on access courses are largely group sessions focused on study skills, with little support for individual learners. Tutorials for learners aged 16 to 18 are successful in raising awareness of safeguarding but do not systematically discuss other aspects of the Every Child Matters themes.
- Leadership and management are good. Managers monitor staff performance effectively. Communications with staff are good, providing a supportive environment for staff and learners. Managers use data well and respond promptly to poor performance by setting and monitoring action plans.
- Arrangements for the promotion of equality and diversity are good. Learners value the diversity of the staff and demonstrate high levels of respect for each other. Most lessons are very inclusive in style and place a high value on learners' contributions. Teachers take prompt actions to support learners at risk of underachievement.
- Staff collect feedback from learners in a variety of ways. However, managers' and course teams' use of learners' opinions to support improvements in provision is not well established. Many learners are unaware of the impact of their views in changing and developing the provision.
- Self-assessment is accurate. Managers and teams have made sound judgements with a clear, well-focused quality improvement plan that addresses the identified areas for improvement.

### **What does Westminster Kingsway College need to do to improve further?**

- In order to raise achievements, ensure that teachers on access programmes provide all learners with prompt feedback, clear assessment deadlines and regular tutorial support.
- Improve the arrangements for providing feedback to learners on the actions taken in response to their views.

## Science and mathematics

## Grade 3

### Context

32. The college offers GCE A- and AS-level qualifications in biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, psychology and applied life sciences. It also offers a BTEC first diploma in applied science and GCSE mathematics and psychology. Of the 385 learners on science and mathematics courses, 313 are aged 16 to 18 and study full time. There are 7 adult full-time learners and 23 part-time in the current year. Mathematics and biology attract the highest numbers of learners. Provision in this curriculum area is offered at the King's Cross site.

### Key findings

- Outcomes for learners in 2009/10 were unsatisfactory. However, A-level biology success rates have remained at or above national average for three years and were good in 2009/10. Success rates were also good for the BTEC first diploma in applied science. In mathematics, chemistry and physics success rates were low for both AS and A level.
- In 2009/10 low retention on GCSE mathematics led to low success rates. In 2010/11 there has been a change in staffing and retention has improved. GCSE mathematics is currently offered as evening, part-time provision only.
- Retention rates across science and mathematics courses have improved by around seven percentage points in the current year. At the same time, attendance rates show some improvement. Significantly, awarding body practical assessment scores have improved in biology, chemistry and physics.
- Assessment of students' work is satisfactory in practical and theory work. Teachers set and return assignments promptly. Teachers mark learners' work thoroughly, but their feedback sometimes lacks sufficient detail for learners to know how to improve. In mathematics, teachers make good use of learners marking their own and others' work.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Technicians support practical work well, help learners develop effective laboratory skills and monitor health and safety. There is some good teaching in biology and mathematics where learners are encouraged to participate actively through skilful use of question and answer and small-group activities.
- In some lessons, the teachers talk for too long and the learners are passive with insufficient checks on learning. Although the teachers know their learners' needs well, they do not always plan to adapt their teaching to meet individual needs. Punctuality remains a concern in classes, particularly before 11am.
- Tutors' use of target setting to help learners improve is poor, with individual learning plans containing few measurable targets. In addition, one-to-one progress reviews do not always take place in a timely manner.
- The college provides good teaching and learning facilities for learners. Laboratories and classrooms are well equipped, well lit and laid out and have learners' work on display.



- Leadership and management are good. Following recent changes to the management of science and mathematics, there has been a very clear focus on improving provision. The science and mathematics team has improved its focus on actions to improve learners' outcomes. Improvement plans now contain clear targets and review dates.
- Realistic targets have been set for individual staff members, supported by training and development and reviews of teaching performance. It is, however, too soon to say whether these targets will be met for the current year.
- Self-assessment is evaluative and generally accurate. Managers' and course teams' analysis of strengths and areas for improvement has improved and steps are being taken to tackle the identified weaknesses. Link governors are involved in the annual review processes.

**What does Westminster Kingsway College need to do to improve further?**

- Further identify and share good practice in science and mathematics teaching to improve the quality of learning and the management of learners' attendance and punctuality.
- In order to improve attainment, provide more constructively critical and specific feedback on written work to help learners understand where they need to improve.
- Ensure that tutors set and regularly review challenging, but realistic, targets for individual learners through their learning plans in order to raise achievement.

## Hospitality and catering

## Grade 1

### Context

33. The college offers a broad range of courses from foundation to advanced level in hospitality and catering for 597 learners, as well as higher education courses for 338 learners. At the time of the inspection, there were 311 learners on full-time programmes, and 286 learners on part-time and short courses. The provision includes 22 pupils aged 14 to 16 and 88 learners on Train to Gain and apprenticeship programmes.

### Key findings

- Attainments on the college-awarded Westminster Diploma and success rates for learners on apprenticeship programmes are outstanding. Success rates on part-time NVQ intermediate level and full-time foundation courses are good. Success rates on Train to Gain and completion rates within a planned timescale were low in 2009/10 and, as a result, the college has withdrawn the provision.
- Learners develop passion, creativity and flair for preparing and serving high-quality food and drink by working collaboratively with their tutors to research and develop their individual menus and signature dishes. Teachers are exceptionally well qualified and all have strong professional links with industry, often working as international ambassadors in their chosen specialism.
- Learners' progression into further training, education and high-quality employment is outstanding. The Westminster Diploma ensures learners are trained to the highest professional standards in kitchen, larder, patisserie and food service and is well regarded by employers, many of whom recruit exclusively from the college. Final year work experience seeks to match learners to the career path and employer of their choice.
- Teaching and learning are outstanding. In the majority of lessons, teachers make sure there is rigorous checking of learners' understanding and good linking of theory to practical techniques. Together with clear identification of customers' expectations, these create a learning environment where learners develop an understanding of cooking and serving food to a world class standard. In a small minority of lessons elementary culinary knowledge is not reinforced and insufficient checking on individual learning creates a passive learning experience for the trainees.
- The college offers a wide range of provision in hospitality and catering. Bespoke training offers well-planned and delivered programmes to help meet the specific needs of individual businesses, and is provided at times and locations most suited to the employers and their staff. Industry 'master classes' in the cooking of specialist meat, game, fish and shellfish are well received and in high demand.
- Work with partner organisations is an outstanding feature of the provision. Collaboration with the food industry, such as the Academy of Culinary Arts and the Craft Guild of Chefs, ensures all learners are continually exposed to

contemporary food and drink trends. Learners enjoy high-quality work placement opportunities.

- Care, guidance and support are good. Teachers provide effective personal support for learners. They have improved the monitoring of learners' progress and this has led to improvements in retention. Teachers provide detailed initial diagnostic assessment for college-based learners, but not all learners who need support for literacy are receiving it.
- Enrichment opportunities for all learners are outstanding. Learners participate, and are successful in an exceptionally wide range of exhibitions, competitions, visits to industry and overseas trips. This enrichment ensures learners have a wide exposure to all aspects of the hospitality industry and are fully aware of its demands and expectations.
- Resources are outstanding. Learners use a wide range of industry-standard equipment and high-quality commodities to develop and extend their technical skills. The virtual learning environment (VLE) is well developed and valued by learners. Vocationally-linked tasks and assignments develop research skills well and video clips of practical activities support revision effectively. Teachers could make better use of existing resources in practical classes to develop and extend learners' study skills.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. Managers' communication with staff is excellent and teachers work together very well to improve provision. Managers use the very good links with the community, employers and industry to ensure that the planning of provision responds well to learners' and employers' needs.
- Actions to improve the quality of provision are good. Managers ensure that self-assessment involves all staff and is informed by learners' views. Managers and course teams are accurate in their self-assessment.
- The management of equality and diversity is good. An active promotion of mutual respect and tolerance and an understanding of customer expectations from a range of international cultures are strong features of all teaching and learning. Sustainability, in terms of the promotion of ethical food sourcing, is a driving force within the curriculum

### **What does Westminster Kingsway College need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that teaching across the curriculum enables all learners to improve their literacy, numeracy and study skills.

## English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

## Grade 2

### Context

34. ESOL courses form a significant proportion of the college provision. Currently, 1,700 learners attend around 100 ESOL programmes from entry level 1 to intermediate level. All college sites and seven community venues offer a range of courses at flexible times. Learners take nationally-accredited qualifications in speaking and listening, reading and writing. The majority of the learners are adults and 34% of learners are male.

### Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Learners make good progress in developing their communication and learning skills. Entry-level learners develop their study skills, organising work skills and examination techniques well. Learners develop good team working skills and gain confidence using computers as an effective learning tool. Most learners progress to further learning or work.
- Pass rates are at, or above, national averages for all entry and foundation level courses which make up the great majority of the provision. Although they declined slightly in 2009/10, college data suggest that current in-year pass rates are high. Learners produce work to a good standard and improve their confidence and ability to use English in the wider community well.
- Attendance rates are below the college average. Teachers actively encourage learners to improve their attendance, and learners are clear about the need to provide a reason for non attendance. Learners can monitor their attendance rates through their learner profile on the VLE as well as making up work missed through unavoidable absences.
- Learners understand fully how their studies are important to gaining future employment. Pathways for progression are clear and progression rates to positive destinations for the large number of learners are high. Rates of progression by learners onto college vocational programmes are good.
- Learners are highly motivated, feel safe, enjoy coming to college and appreciate the way courses are developed to meet their aims. Learners from very diverse ethnic backgrounds work very cooperatively and supportively together. They benefit from a good range of enrichment activities, such as work with the Hampstead Theatre Group to write and perform their own plays.
- Teaching and learning are good. Activities in most lessons are challenging and enjoyable. Learners understand what skills they aim to develop in each lesson. Lessons have a brisk pace and are stimulating. Tutors plan well to meet individual learners' needs. They make good use of authentic learning materials, with topical issues such as the 'Big Society' supported well by relevant websites. Learners have good opportunities to practise the full range of language skills. Tutors give clear, constructive feedback.
- In a minority of lessons, teachers rely too much on lengthy verbal explanations and whole-group question and answer techniques to introduce new language

learning. They do not pay sufficient attention to addressing individuals' literacy needs. Teachers do not always plan a sufficient range of methods to develop learners' reading and writing skills sufficiently.

- All learners have individual learning plans as an integral part of their writing books. The plans record clearly learners' assessment results for speaking and listening, reading and writing, as well as qualifications achieved. Most teachers use the plans to give feedback for marked written work rather than negotiating specific targets with individuals to inform future work.
- The curriculum is very well designed. Teachers have ensured that equality and diversity aspects are well embedded in an ethos of respect. Learners have good opportunities to gain external accreditation for their language learning while gaining an increased understanding of citizenship, health and employability issues. For example, some groups have visits from the local volunteer bureau to learn about the range of opportunities available.
- Teachers support learners well to enable them to succeed. They use the VLE to provide a rich learning environment of activities and listening materials for learners to access online. The college learning centres run conversation classes and book clubs and provide individual support and training in the use of computers and in supporting learners with job-seeking skills.
- Leadership and management are good. Managers organise the subject area effectively across the college sites and in the community. A recent management reorganisation has led to a greater coherence and sharing of good practice between course teams. Managers have carefully planned a strategy to ameliorate the impact of funding cuts and continue to provide learning opportunities for low-income language learners.
- Managers are clear where areas of underperformance exist and work well to address them. The self-assessment report is detailed and generally accurate. Staff at all levels are well involved in the quality improvement process. Carefully-planned staff training programmes and good support for teachers ensure a strong focus on sharing good practice and improving provision.

### **What does Westminster Kingsway College need to do to improve further?**

- Continue to develop the attendance monitoring and support systems to ensure that learners gain greater benefit from their courses through more regular attendance.
- Provide more training for staff to develop a greater confidence, knowledge and understanding of methods that help learners make greater progress in developing their reading and writing skills.
- Make greater use of individual learning plans to support learners in becoming more independent in managing their own learning, and to inform lesson planning so that it better meets the diverse needs of individuals.

## Preparation for life and work

## Grade 2

### Context

35. Currently 96 learners are enrolled on full- and part-time entry level programmes for learners with moderate to severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of learners are adults. Programmes are delivered during the day on main college sites and in the community. Learners gain a range of external qualifications. Learners are from a diverse range of backgrounds and ethnic origins.

### Key findings

- Outcomes for learners and achievement and standards are good. Learners develop a good range of practical skills in, for example, woodwork, arts and crafts, gardening and information technology. The standard of learners' work across all programmes is good. Success rates are high on college-accredited courses for all learners and on courses leading to externally-accredited qualifications.
- The development of learners' advocacy skills is good. Learners gain confidence in making choices and improve their communication skills in a range of situations including the student forum, discussions in lessons, and social and sporting activities. Learners enjoy their studies and training within a safe environment, and make good progress in lessons. Internal progression rates between courses are good.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers manage groups of learners with diverse behavioural needs well. In discussions, teachers actively promote choices for learners and individual decision making. A good range of practical learning activities, including craft work, actively interests and engages learners, promoting independent learning and the development of new skills.
- Teachers create a positive learning atmosphere in lessons, which increases learners' confidence well. They plan lessons well, with clear overall learning targets integrating literacy and numeracy skills. In the majority of lessons, teachers make very good use of learning technology to illustrate learning points in, for example, poster design. In a minority of lessons, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to reinforce learning.
- Teachers make insufficient use of information and learning technology (ILT) in lessons in order to support learners' writing and to give them access to online learning materials. Following the recent move to a new building, some physical resources, for example equipment to support independent living and specialist ILT resources, are not yet fully in place, limiting some activities on the college's main site.
- Teachers' planning to meet the needs of individual learners in lessons is inconsistent. Teachers know their learners well, but individual learning targets derived from initial assessment are sometimes too broad. Individual learning

plans do not always reflect the full range of the skills and knowledge learners need to develop.

- Teachers' assessment and monitoring of learners' progress through qualifications are good. Learners understand well the progress they are making in lessons through regular feedback from teachers.
- Managers and staff have made a good start in developing core programmes in foundation learning and a broad range of community-based leisure, craft and sporting options. All learners enjoy the opportunity to perform in dance, drama and music activities. However, the full breadth of the curriculum, including work experience and some aspects of independent living, is not yet fully in place.
- Work with partner organisations is good. Managers work effectively with a range of groups, including those involved in advocacy, personal care for learners and travel training to support independence in using public transport. They also work with a range of other partners including schools and social services.
- Support for learners is good. Teachers promote a supportive and positive learning environment, instilling confidence in learners. Learners receive good support from learning assistants. Support work is well managed by teachers in lessons. Liaison between teachers and support workers is very good with a strong focus on the attainment of learners.
- Curriculum management is satisfactory overall. The management of learners aged 14 to 18 and that of adult learners is separate. This results in some differences in the quality of practice, especially in planning for individual learning. Teachers miss some opportunities to share good practice in setting learning targets, tracking learners' progress and enabling collaboration on joint projects, for example within the garden.
- Teachers are very experienced and well qualified. Managers focus well on learners' progression and their attainment. Managers and staff give good attention to the safeguarding of learners, including internet safety and the dangers of cyber bullying. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The self-assessment process results in clear actions to improve.

### **What does Westminster Kingsway College need to do to improve further?**

- Improve learners' access to physical resources on independent living programmes, and to ILT in lessons, in order to enhance their learning experience.
- Further develop work experience opportunities for learners to improve their employment opportunities.
- Develop ways of sharing good practice to meet the needs of learners across the subject area.

## Business and administration

## Grade 3

### Context

36. Currently, 485 learners are on courses in accounting and finance, administration and business management. There are 257 females and 227 males. There are 228 learners on apprenticeship and Train to Gain programmes.

### Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are satisfactory overall, and good on work-based learning provision. Success rates are high on GCE A-level business studies, but satisfactory on many other courses. Outcomes are good for apprentices at intermediate level, who successfully complete qualifications within the required time, and for Train to Gain learners. Outcomes are poor for advanced apprenticeships.
- Learners make good progress, gaining employability skills through work placements with a range of local businesses. Teachers successfully use case studies from central London retailers to motivate and engage the learners. Educational visits and speakers from banks and finance houses regularly enrich business courses. The global enterprise week recently provided opportunities for learners to develop their business planning and financial management skills.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most lessons take into account the current economic, political and social climate. Political and financial discussions, for example, allow learners to reflect on social responsibility issues for famous fast-food retailers. Teachers plan most lessons well, and learners are busy and engaged. A minority of lessons, however, remain too teacher led and are uninspiring. In these lessons teachers do not sufficiently engage or challenge the learners. In the few weaker lessons, learners can be disruptive.
- Learners on work-based learning programmes have well-established opportunities for learning which meet all the requirements of their NVQ qualifications. Workplace supervisors have a good understanding of the qualifications, and support the learners by ensuring they have the opportunity to cover the full breadth of the NVQ. Many learners are training in prestigious organisations, including public sector bodies such as hospital trusts, government departments and cultural institutions like the English National Opera.
- Learners say they feel safe in the college. Work-based learners also feel safe and are in healthy and safe working environments.
- The assessment of learners' work is satisfactory, and good in work-based learning provision. On some courses, teachers give comprehensive oral feedback to learners. However, teachers' feedback on written assignments is sometimes insufficiently detailed and does not always help learners improve. Work-based learners produce good learning portfolios and assessors evaluate these carefully.



- The college offers a wide range of courses in business, administration and law. Staff are currently developing pathways in general administration, and legal and medical administration.
- Work with partner organisations is good, including well-established relationships with the Chime Group, British Telecommunications, Camden Enterprise, banks and local financial organisations. There is good progression by learners to a number of universities through progression agreements.
- Attendance during the inspection was low at only 68%. However, in-year attendance rates are around 84%. Disappointingly, some teachers were unable to provide reasons for learners' absences. Tutors provide support for all learners, adapted to meet their needs. However, tutors do not consistently complete progress reviews at key times in the year.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers have taken actions to improve success rates through more rigorous tracking and monitoring, regular tutorials and timely interventions for learners identified as under performing. In-year retention rates have improved across most courses, but it is too early to judge the full effects. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory.
- Self-assessment is evaluative and accurate. However, the outcomes from observations of teaching and learning in this area do not lead to quality improvement. Governors and teaching staff work with managers during annual course reviews. The quality improvement plan includes relevant actions to improve success.

**What does Westminster Kingsway College need to do to improve further?**

- Improve outcomes for learners by ensuring that all lessons are carefully planned to engage the learners and involve them in interesting activities.
- In order to improve student attendance and punctuality, teachers should make sure that they consistently apply college procedures and ensure that learners are fully aware of the benefits of good attendance.
- Improve learners' attainments and progress by ensuring that teachers' written feedback on assignments contains helpful comments on how to improve.

## Information about the inspection

37. Four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and seven additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's director of strategy and performance, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding bodies, 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.
38. 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 college. They observed lessons, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the college offers.

**Record of Main Findings (RMF)**  
**Westminster Kingsway 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 <b>using the 4 point scale</b> 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive
<b>Approximate number of enrolled learners</b>					
Full-time learners	3,494	183	1,913	1,398	
Part-time learners	4,579		225	2,970	1,384
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	2				
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3				
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3				
How well do learners progress?	3				
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2				
How safe do learners feel?	2				
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	2				
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	3				
<b>Quality of provision</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3				
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2				
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	1				
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2				
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>				
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2				
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	2				
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2				
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?	2				
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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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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